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# School of Social Work

## **PhD Program Student Handbook**

(2025-2026 edition)

# PhD Program Student Handbook

## 2025-2026 Edition

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## **WELCOME TO THE LSU SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK DOCTORAL PROGRAM!**

*On behalf of the LSU School of Social Work faculty and staff, it is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the PhD program! Your acceptance to the program is, without doubt, a major milestone in your life, and the faculty are eager to support, encourage, and sometimes challenge you, as you pursue a knowledge-generating path that will contribute to the betterment of the social work profession.*

*We hope you take full advantage of the learning opportunities availed to you by our internationally recognized faculty who, quite literally, have no reason to be here without you. We look forward to getting to know each and every one of you.*

*Welcome!*

*Catherine Lemieux*

This handbook gives PhD students a valuable roadmap regarding the School's educational programs, services, opportunities, and student rights and responsibilities. Requirements and procedures specific to the PhD program are discussed in the handbook and additional information is available on the [School of Social Work](#) web page. This guide is intended as a supplement to the [LSU General Catalog - The Graduate School](#), which is the authoritative source for academic regulation of the University. It is the responsibility of graduate students to be familiar with the contents of the [LSU General Catalog – The Graduate School](#), the LSU [Graduate Student Handbook](#), as well as this handbook. Students are also responsible for being aware of and meeting all graduate deadlines posted on the Graduate School web page: [Graduate School Calendars](#).

This current handbook was updated in Summer 2025 by the PhD in Social Work Program Director and reviewed by both the School of Social Work Director and the Director of Student Services.

All information in the handbook is subject to change.

We at the LSU School of Social Work believe that doctoral education in social work must involve first and foremost a passionate commitment to learning, and a specific commitment to the pursuit of new knowledge that can improve the lives of our client populations. The PhD Program at the LSU School of Social Work prepares the next generation of social work educators, researchers, administrators, and policy-makers to contribute to the creation of the knowledge base of our profession. We prepare students, above all else, to conduct empirical research that targets the pressing needs of our client populations and service systems. Social work practitioners must have the highest quality, up-to-date knowledge to strengthen the evidence base of their work, and it is the job of doctoral-trained social workers to provide this.

### **Mission Statement**

The PhD Program at the LSU School of Social Work equips the next generation of social scientists to conduct rigorous transdisciplinary research to contribute to the knowledge of issues facing individuals and community systems, advance the profession, and further efforts toward social justice.

### **Educational Outcomes**

At the conclusion of the PhD in Social Work Program, doctoral students will be able to:

- Articulate the historical and contemporary contexts of social science and social work research;
- Differentiate between social research methods to answer research questions or test hypotheses;
- Conduct original research, including developing research questions or hypotheses, analyzing, synthesizing, and interpreting relevant data, and producing manuscripts for publications, presentations, and reports;
- Translate research findings to policy, practice, and education; and
- Design and deliver effective and research-informed instruction in the field of social work.

The LSU School of Social Work doctoral program is the only PhD in Social Work program in Louisiana. Students are expected to explore diverse areas and traditions of inquiry and use a variety of research methods, all the while keeping a sharp focus on the need for information to inform social work practice. It is important to note that ours is not an advanced practice program. The course of study in the doctoral program is completely oriented toward mastering the skills needed to design and conduct empirical social work research. The social work profession increasingly demands evidence-based knowledge and expertise in research and evaluation. Recently, the [Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education in Social Work \(GADE\)](#), a consortium of social work PhD Program Directors, completed a national study that found that social work programs at virtually all levels in the United States face a tremendous shortage of doctoral-trained academicians to fill the ranks of the social work programs in our colleges and universities. Thus, there is a tremendous need for social work academicians who are properly trained, passionate about pursuing the answers to important questions affecting client populations, and eager to take on the challenges to improving social work practice and the well-being of our clients. The LSU School of Social work faculty is well-equipped to effectively mentor, support, and guide doctoral student research.

## **DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

**Minimum time & course credit requirements:**

- 6 semesters (3 years) full-time enrollment
- 54 graduate credit hours

**Expected & maximum time for completion of degree:**

- Between 3 to 5 years of continuous, full-time enrollment
- Between 4 to 6 years of continuous, part-time enrollment
- Not more than 7 years

**Phases of doctoral study:**

**1. Coursework (39 credit hours)**

- Core courses – 21 credit hours in social work core doctoral courses
- Interdisciplinary Research Methods & Statistics – 12 credit hours MINIMUM methods & statistics
- Interdisciplinary & Electives – 6 credit hours MINIMUM of elective coursework

**2. General Examination**

- Upon completion of a MINIMUM of 39 hours of required and elective coursework, students must sit for and pass a General Examination

**3. Dissertation**

- Enrollment in a MINIMUM of 15 dissertation credit hours post General Examination
- Completion and oral defense of dissertation project proposal
- Completion of a traditional 5-chapter dissertation **or** a three-paper dissertation
- A formal, successful oral dissertation defense!

## DOCTORAL CURRICULUM TIMELINE

The table below provides an overview of a general timeline to meet the requirements of the doctoral curriculum, the components of which are described in detail in subsequent sections.

Year Credits	Semester 1	Semester 2	Summer
<b>1</b>  (≥ 18 credits)	SW 7200: Social Research Methods I  Stats 1  SW 7208: Theories in Social Work	SW 7201: Social Research Methods II  Stats 2  *Elective/**Qualitative Research  Annual PhD Student Activity Report Due Third Friday in May	*Elective (If available)
<b>2</b>  (≥ 21 credits)	SW 7202: Issues and Research Problems in Social Policy  SW 7204: Issues and Research Problems in Social Work Intervention  Advanced Methods or Stats	SW 7206: Research Practicum SW 7207: Integrative Seminar  *Elective/Advanced Methods or Stats  Select & confirm Major Professor by last semester of coursework  Annual PhD Student Activity Report Due Third Friday in May	*Elective (If available)
<b>3</b>  (≥ 15 credits)	General Examination (No Defense Required)  SW 9000: Dissertation Hours (≥ 3 credits)	Dissertation Proposal (Defense Required)  SW 9000: Dissertation Hours (≥ 3 credits)  Annual PhD Student Activity Report Due Third Friday in May	*Elective (If available)

**Years 4 & Beyond**

General Exam &/or Dissertation Proposal, if not yet complete  
Dissertation

SW 9000 Dissertation Hours ( $\geq 15$  credits total post General Examination)

Submission of Annual PhD Students Activity Reports

Electives according to interest/need

\*Students are encouraged to work with their Major Professor (also called "Chair") to determine the most appropriate electives that support their dissertation research.

\*\*As of Fall 2025, a qualitative research methodology course taken outside the department is required.

## DOCTORAL COURSEWORK

The coursework in the doctoral program in social work covers three (3) areas: core courses, interdisciplinary research methods or statistics, and interdisciplinary electives. Upon completing coursework, students must complete a General Examination, and then complete and orally defend a dissertation (referred to as the "Final Examination" by the LSU Graduate School).

### Area 1: Core Social Work Doctoral Courses: 21 credit hours

The following 7 courses comprise the 21 required credit hours of core social work courses:

**SW 7200 Social Research Methods I:** Introduction to social science research and research proposal development.

**SW 7201 Social Research Methods II:** Advanced methods for conducting social science research and developing research proposals.

**SW 7202 Issues and Research Problems in Social Policy:** Issues and problems in social welfare policy; research focus on policy formulation. Focuses on research design of projects focused on policy-relevant questions.

**SW 7204 Issues and Research Problems in Social Work Intervention:** Social work intervention with individuals, families, groups, and communities; formulation and development of problem-solving research agendas. Focuses on research design of projects conceptualizing and testing interventions.

**SW 7206 Research Practicum:** No more than 6 hours can be taken in one semester. Can be repeated for up to 9 credit hours. Supervised research experience; demonstration of collaborative and/or independent research.

**SW 7207 Integrative Seminar:** Development of research questions and hypotheses, and initial drafts of the dissertation proposal, including introduction, literature review, and methodology sections.

**SW 7208 Theories in Social Work:** Critical analysis and discussion of the epistemological, philosophical, theoretical, empirical, and practical foundations of social work.

### Area 2: Interdisciplinary Research Methods or Statistics Courses: 12 credit hours MINIMUM

A MINIMUM of 12 credit hours in research methods and statistical analysis.

**Stats 1:** Taken outside of department (e.g., ELRC 7006, POLI 7962, SOCL 7201)

**Stats 2:** Taken outside of department (e.g., ELRC 7016, POLI 7963, SOCL 7203)

**Qualitative Research Methodologies** (*Required as of 2025*): Taken outside of department (e.g., ELRC 7243, MC 7014, SOCL 7213)

**Advanced Research Methods:** One additional research or advanced statistics course chosen in consultation with Major Professor/Chair or Advisor and related to dissertation research (e. g., ELRC 7280 [Applied Research, Measurement & Evaluation], MKT 7558 [Advanced S. E. M.], SOCL 7213 [Longitudinal/Spatial Data Analysis])



### Area 3: Interdisciplinary Elective Courses (6 credit hours MINIMUM)

A MINIMUM of 6 credit hours of interdisciplinary, elective coursework is required. SW 7205 (Social Work Pedagogy and Teaching) is available to students who desire to teach and it is offered within the department. With an additional exception regarding non-MSW students (described in next paragraph), electives should be taken in departments outside the School of Social Work. Students may consider courses in one or more of the following disciplines: Anthropology, Economics, Education, Finance, History, Management, Marketing, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology. Other disciplines not listed may also be considered with approval from the PhD Program Director.

**Doctoral Students Without the MSW Degree:** Students who are admitted to the program who do not hold the MSW degree must enroll in the 3-credit course, SW 7004, Human Diversity and Oppression. SW 7004 will count as an elective for doctoral students without the MSW degree.

#### ***Independent Studies***

An Independent Study is an individual-instruction course. A student does not attend class on a formal basis, but instead works with an individual professor on a subject of interest that is not taught in a core, research-related, or elective course.

- Each Independent Study is worth 3 credit hours
- A maximum of 6 credit hours of coursework may comprise an Independent Study
- Prior to enrollment in an Independent Study, a written plan of work must be submitted to and approved by the student's Major Professor/Chair or Academic Advisor
- Written evidence of approval must be presented prior to registration

### Dissertation Hours (15 credit hours MINIMUM)

While preparing for and completing their General Examination and dissertation research, students may enroll in dissertation hours (SW 9000). These credit hours permit students to work independently on their dissertation projects. Students are assigned a P/F grade, not a letter grade. *SW 9000 cannot be used as a substitute for: 1) core social work, 2) interdisciplinary research or statistics, or 3) interdisciplinary elective courses.*

*After successfully completing their General Examination, students must enroll in at least 15 credit hours of SW 9000 Dissertation hours **before** they can be considered for graduation.*

## GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS (GRAs)

In GRA positions, students work closely with a faculty member who serves as the student's supervisor. The primary outcomes for GRAs are to (1) gain experience in conducting research and (2) learn about faculty responsibilities in academia. The PhD Program Director coordinates the appointment of GRAs and distributes notices for assignments. GRAs and their work are governed by [Policy Statement 21](#).

As a doctoral-level GRA, students may work on a research project in the faculty member's area of interest, which may or may not align with the student's area of interest. Depending upon their level of engagement and quality of work, students may be given the opportunity to be included in scholarly activities that result from their work (e.g., submission of abstracts for conference presentations, co-authoring publications, development and submission of research grant proposals). GRAs may also fulfill other administrative duties related to learning the responsibilities of a faculty member.

GRA appointments require 20 hours per week of work in both the Fall and Spring semesters. Location and schedule of work are negotiated by the student and the faculty member who supervises their work.

As stated in [Policy Statement 21](#),

*"GRAs are appointed on a semester by semester basis with appointments starting one week before classes start or on the day of International Student Orientation, whichever is first, and ending before Holiday Break (Fall) or on the following Commencement (Spring and Summer). The nine- and twelve-month appointment periods follow a semester-by-semester format. Ten-month appointments start earlier and end later. Students are expected to begin their responsibilities when the appointment period begins. All GAs are entitled to official University Holidays (i.e., when the University is closed). GAs are students, and attendance at national and international meetings is often required for career advancement; therefore, a GA may request permission to attend a meeting in lieu of assigned responsibilities; this request shall not normally exceed one week per semester."*

**As of Fall 2026, a GRA appointment funded by the School of Social Work will be for three (3) years.** Summer GRA appointments funded by the School of Social Work are not guaranteed and are offered on a case-by-case basis, only.

### Criteria for GRA Appointment

- Enrollment in a minimum of 9 credit hours in both fall and spring semesters
- GPA of 3.00 or higher

### Supervision & Evaluation

- GRAs are supervised by their assigned faculty member
- The supervising faculty member evaluates the GRA's performance in the Graduate School's *InfoReady* online portal and is based on the following criteria: productivity, time commitment, dependability, initiative, willingness to learn, relational abilities, skills, and behavior
- Additional feedback may be offered by the PhD Program Director, based on information provided in the student's Annual Activity Report

### **Resolution of GRA Concerns**

- GRAs are expected, if at all possible, to discuss any concerns regarding their work responsibilities with the faculty member supervising their work
- In the event that a student either believes that the faculty supervisor has not adequately addressed their concerns, or reports that they are uncomfortable speaking to their supervisor about their concerns, students should then direct their concerns to the PhD Program Director
- In the event that the student has first spoken with their faculty supervisor and the PhD Program Director, and their concerns remain unresolved, the student should follow the steps outlined in [Policy Statement 21](#), with emphasis on Sections J (Evaluation) and K (Appeals and Grievances)

## SELECTION OF MAJOR PROFESSOR/CHAIR & DOCTORAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Major Professor/Chair is the faculty member who leads the doctoral advisory (DA) committee that oversees the General Examination, dissertation research and oral defense. Students are expected to identify and obtain the agreement of a faculty member who will serve as their Major Professor/Chair *no later than the final semester of coursework*. During the coursework phase, students should meet with School of Social Work faculty broadly in order to identify potential faculty members who they would like to serve as their Major Professor/Chair. **Students are urged to take the time to get to know School of Social Work faculty to make an informed decision.**

The Major Professor/Chair becomes the student's primary academic advisor, and henceforth, is responsible for authorizing, reviewing, and signing all doctoral degree forms. Once students have secured their Major Professor/Chair by mutual agreement, they should deliberate with the Major Professor/Chair to determine the other faculty members who will serve on their DA committee. Together, the student and Major Professor/Chair will then choose the rest of the DA committee membership to recommend to the Graduate School. In most cases, the composition of the DA committee remains constant for both the General Examination and the student's dissertation project. The requirements for composing the DA Committee are detailed below. *Please note that [Graduate Faculty Status](#) is distinct from LSU's ranking of full-time academic personnel as outlined in [PM-23](#) in sections 1.e. (Assistant Professor), 1.g. (Associate Professor), and 1.i. (Professor).*

The Director of the PhD Program will email a representative from the Graduate School who can confirm whether students' proposed DA committee satisfies the composition requirements stated below.

### DA Committee Composition Requirements

- The Major Professor/Chair must be either an associate or full member of the LSU Graduate Faculty
- Two faculty members may serve as Co-Chairs
- A minimum of three (3) faculty members is required, plus the Dean's Representative assigned by the Graduate School
- At least one half the members must be full-time tenured or tenure-track LSU faculty
- A minimum of two (2) faculty members must be from the School of Social Work
- Other members may be from the School of Social Work or outside of the School of Social Work if pertinent to the area of concentration, so long as at least one is a full member of the graduate faculty
- A member from another university may serve in addition to LSU graduate faculty members if approved by the PhD Program Director and the Dean of Graduate School
- Any declared outside minors require representation, either from among the first three members of the committee or by additional appointments to the committee

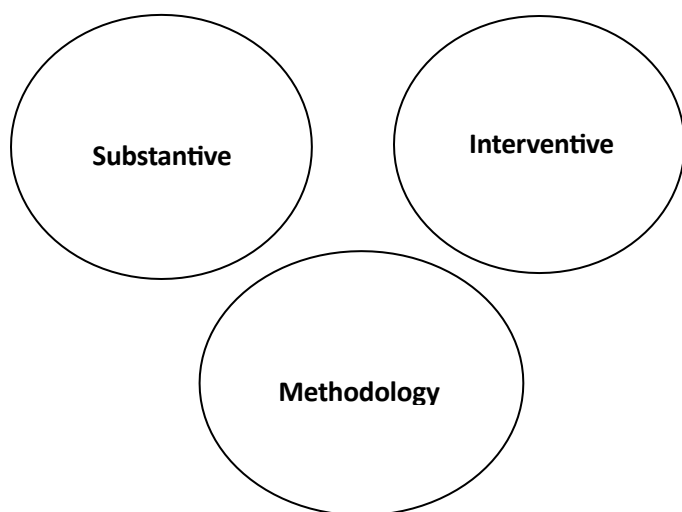
## GENERAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION: DISTINCT GOALS

First and foremost, it is critical to distinguish between the overarching goal of the General Examination and that of the dissertation. The purpose of the General Examination is to *analyze and describe* existing knowledge, whereas the purpose of the dissertation research and SW 7206 (Research Practicum) is to *develop or produce* knowledge. Although the actual content of the General Examination and dissertation will and should overlap, the different goals of each academic exercise dictate the different processes undertaken by all doctoral students.

## PHD IN SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM: GENERAL EXAMINATION PROPOSAL

The processes for *analyzing* and *describing* knowledge that already exists enable doctoral students to assess the quality of the research that has produced the knowledge. In this respect, the General Examination proposal is highly individualized.

As depicted in the circles below, three topical areas typically comprise the General Examination proposal, with the sizes of the circles varying according to the degree of specificity.



**The above image depicts three distinct circles specific to the Substantive, Interventive and Methodology Areas comprising the General Examination proposal.**

The Substantive Area identifies and describes a major social work challenge or problem; whereas the Interventive Area provides a description of select interventions best suited for addressing the challenge/ problem, which may be micro (e.g., prevention, treatment), macro (e.g., local, state, federal policy), or both. The research Methodology Area describes the social science research methods used to explore, describe, or explain both the problem and intervention topical areas. For example, the Substantive Area often consists of descriptive-correlational research (e.g., surveys) and well-written conceptual pieces; whereas the Interventive Area may employ experimental or quasi experimental designs to determine the relative effectiveness of different interventions employed at different levels. The Methodology Area, which should be developed after the Substantive and Interventive Areas are sufficiently fleshed out, requires doctoral

students to demonstrate their knowledge of relevant social science research methodological procedures used in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method approaches (e.g., sampling, measurement, instrumentation, data collection and analyses).

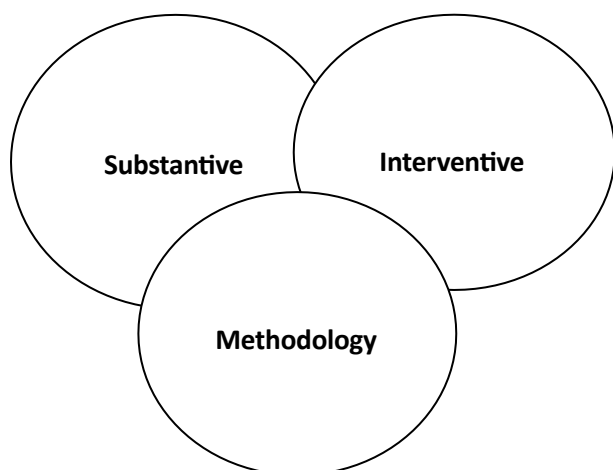
Thus, the overarching goal of developing the General Examination proposal process is for doctoral students to demonstrate consistency in how they assess the quality of the knowledge comprising the Substantive and Interventive topical areas. Thus, established criteria for evaluating empirical studies should be used when developing strategies for shaping and focusing each area. Numerous rubrics specific to the social/family sciences are available to assist students with this task, and the Appendix to this handbook contains a worksheet that can be adapted or modified to accomplish this critical task (i.e., Critique of Research Report Worksheet). Thus, the process of focusing the General Examination proposal topical areas provides doctoral students with the opportunity to develop and demonstrate expertise that few of their student-colleagues will have. All doctoral students should ask themselves the following questions:

- What are the areas?
- If I am striving to be an expert in these areas, what types of information do I need?
- What knowledge retrieval tools can I use to generate ideas about this area?
- Do the studies comprising the body of research in each area meet the criteria of exploration, description-correlational, causation, or a combination of two or more?
- What are the theoretical bases and general conceptual frameworks?
- Is the empirical research sufficient to produce the knowledge being sought?
- How would I critically assess the research in terms of bias, representativeness, methodology, design, etc.?
- What needs to be done to produce better knowledge?
- What do I *not* know?
- Is the substantive area within the domains of social work? Do scholars define the Substantive Area as an undesirable problem to be improved?
- Are the interventions micro, macro, or both?
- Generalizability:
  - Is Substantive knowledge generalizable?
  - Is Interventive knowledge generalizable?
  - What is generalizable and what is not?
- Are the areas sufficiently developed for me to test?
- Is there enough information to teach a course in the Substantive and Interventive Areas?
- Manageability:
  - Would narrowing down or expanding the areas make it more manageable?

As demonstrated below, the nexus between the Substantive and Interventive Areas should neither be too narrow nor focused. The overlap suggests where the knowledge gaps exist, and it may be necessary to make a theoretical or conceptual link between the two areas.

The overlap of the Methodology Area with both the Substantive and Interventive Areas illustrates why the Methodology Area should be done last, as this area dovetails in relation to both the challenge/problem and interventions.

Finally, although both the Substantive and Interventive content of the General Examination proposal address theory, the Major Professor/Chair or any DA committee member can require an additional topical area (circle) in theory.



**The above image depicts three overlapping circles, suggestive of where the knowledge gaps exist among the Substantive, Interventive and Methodology Areas comprising the General Examination proposal.**

### **Organization of the General Examination Proposal**

As students move through the doctoral program, they will develop a specialization or area of focus within social work. In the content of the General Examination, the student will be expected to demonstrate a broad and integrated knowledge of policy, research, theory, and practice; as well as to show an understanding of how these apply to the substantive area of focus.

The student and the Major Professor/Chair of the DA committee will decide upon the structure and scope of each content area to be covered in the exam, which must be comprehensive enough to demonstrate expert competence over broad segments of social work and demonstrate a high degree of familiarity with the content of and current progress in the area of focus or the declared minor, if appropriate. If the student has declared an outside minor, the minor department has the right to decide the format and structure of its part of the General Examination.

In consultation with the Major Professor/Chair and the other members of the DA committee, the student will prepare and submit a General Examination proposal consisting of the following: three content areas (and theory, if requested by a DA committee member), approximately 4-6 broad learning objectives, and a comprehensive bibliography for each content area. The expected narrative for both the Substantive and Interventive content areas of the General Examination proposal are approximately 15-20 pages each, whereas the Methodology area is approximately 10-15. Bibliographies should go well beyond prior classroom reading, thereby prompting students to deepen their understanding of each area and to expand knowledge about the area of focus. Students will be held accountable for all sources included in the bibliographies accompanying each area; therefore, students should carefully consider both the quality and quantity of entries they include. The student should individually confer with DA committee members throughout this process to confirm that the student's General Examination proposal is sufficiently comprehensive to proceed with testing. The General Examination proposal *does not need to be defended* prior to completion of the written/oral components.

## PHD IN SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM: GENERAL EXAMINATION

The purpose of the General Examination is to evaluate students' knowledge and application of the material covered in coursework undertaken in the PhD program. Additionally, the General Examination asks students to develop and demonstrate expertise, as well as to integrate social work knowledge in an area specific to their academic interests. Finally, the content of the General Examination should substantively contribute to the development of the students' dissertation literature review, theoretical framework, and methods.

Due to the comprehensiveness and depth of the General Examination, students should set aside a concentrated study period, *usually several months*, to prepare for the written and oral components. The timing of the General Examination is ultimately determined by all parties: the Major Professor/Chair, DA committee members, and the student.

DA committee members, who typically are responsible for overseeing one or more sections of the exam, will provide questions to the Major Professor/Chair that are anchored in students' learning objectives specific to each content area, which can be answered using the sources listed in the bibliography. The General Examination date is the date of the oral exam, not the written exam portions. The oral exam must be scheduled on a day that the DA committee agrees to meet and on a day that the University is open. The General Examination may be completed during the summer if all DA committee members are available.

### Structure of the Written General Examination

Students may choose, in consultation with the Major Professor/Chair, one of two options for the written General Examination: in-house (on campus) or take-home, when approved by the Major Professor/Chair and DA committee members. Both options require an oral defense of the exam. The Major Professor is responsible for coordinating the logistics of both exam options. The in-house examination is the compulsory option. The take-home examination may be allowed in exceptional circumstances, specifically, students with documentation from the LSU Office of Disability Services germane to accommodation for the take-home option.

*The take-home option must be approved by the Doctoral Program Committee at least two weeks prior to the General Examination.*

For the in-house exam, the student will write the General Examination on campus, over the course of 3-4 days, but within a 1-week period of time. The Major Professor/Chair will locate suitable space for test taking, as well as provide a computer that does not have Internet access. The amount of time provided to write each question on each day will be determined by the Major Professor/Chair and DA committee members, in consultation with the student. Exam questions formulated by DA committee members will be provided to the student at the start of each designated time period. Questions will be vetted in advance by the Major Professor/Chair to eliminate any redundancies. If approved by the Major Professor/Chair and DA committee members, students may use annotated bibliographies, although students should be aware that this can be distracting and therefore, counterproductive. Students may bring only snacks and keys into the exam room. All other personal items should be stored while taking the exam.

For the written take-home exam, the student will receive the General Examination questions from the Major Professor/Chair at a predetermined time. The student will then have 72 hours to complete and submit the written exam to the DA committee members.



The Major Professor/Chair will assume responsibility for disseminating the completed written exam to all DA committee members. The student will proceed to the oral defense of the General Examination following the approval of the Major Professor/Chair and the DA committee. This oral exam serves two functions: The first is a supplementary function, permitting the student to enrich and enlarge upon material in the written exam. The second is an integrative function, providing the student with the opportunity to apply knowledge about practice, policy, research methodology, and theory to issues within the substantive area of focus.

### **Written and Oral Defense of the General Examination: Grading & Scheduling**

In order for students to proceed to the oral defense of the General Examination, the DA committee first determines that the student has passed the written portion. A student deemed to have not passed the written examination does not proceed to the oral defense of the examination. Further, the first not-passing assessment of the examination is reported to the Graduate School as such. The written exam can be retaken once. In retaking the written exam, the student will rewrite only those portions of the exam that the student has not passed.

Following the completion of a written General Examination that has been deemed, "Passing" by the student's Major Professor/Chair and DA committee members, the student and Major Professor/Chair will complete the [Request for Doctoral General Defense and Degree Audit Form](#) to ensure that the form accurately documents all courses required in the PhD in Social Work curriculum and is signed by all DA committee members before forwarding it to the PhD Program Director for approval. When approved, the PhD Program Director will sign and then forward the form to the Graduate School for final approval by the Dean of the Graduate School. *Consistent with Graduate School policy, the [Request for Doctoral General Defense and Degree Audit Form](#) must be submitted to the Graduate School at least three (3) weeks prior to the date of the General Examination oral defense, which allows the Graduate School to assign a Dean's Representative.* Oral defenses of the General Examination should be scheduled in a manner consistent with this time frame.

In order for students to pass the oral General Examination, there may be no more than one dissenting vote. The School of Social Work uses two (2) assessment tools corresponding to the written and oral components of the General Examination, both of which are included in the Appendix. The PhD Program Director annually reports anonymized doctoral student General Examination scores, as required by LSU's [Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#).

All doctoral degree request and examination forms can be downloaded from the [Graduate Student Forms](#) website.

## **DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**

The dissertation is a work of original scholarship that contributes in a meaningful way to the expansion of knowledge in social work. It is the final written document of a research study planned and conducted by the student with the advice and guidance of the Major Professor/Chair and members of the DA committee. A student is expected to demonstrate expertise in a topic area, conduct independent research to answer a question within that area, and generate original findings that contribute new knowledge to that area of study. A successful oral dissertation defense is the final requirement for receiving the PhD in Social Work. Dissertation research may be undertaken only after completion of the General Examination *and* successful defense of a dissertation project proposal.

### **Dissertation Hours**

Students are expected to enroll for a minimum of three (3) hours per semester while working on their dissertation. Students must complete a minimum of 15 hours of dissertation study, total. Further, after successfully completing their General Examination, students must enroll in at least 15 credit hours of SW 9000 Dissertation hours **before** they can be considered for graduation.

- After successfully completing the General Examination, the Graduate School requires continuous enrollment. Dissertation hours do not count toward the accumulated hours of elective coursework
- Students must be enrolled in at least three (3) dissertation hours in the semester they graduate OR be approved by the Graduate School for "degree-only" status

### **Dissertation Process**

With the ongoing guidance of the student's Major Professor/Chair and DA committee, the dissertation process consists of identifying one or more specific areas of research interest, preparing and defending a dissertation proposal, completing the research, writing the dissertation, and orally defending the dissertation. *The oral defense of the dissertation (Final Examination) cannot occur earlier than three calendar months subsequent to the date of successfully completing the General Examination.* Students may choose between two dissertation formats, the traditional 5-chapter format or the three-paper format, each described in the Appendix.

An emeritus member of the Social Work faculty with full Graduate Faculty status at the time of their retirement may co-chair the dissertation work of students already in progress, providing the student has successfully completed both the General Examination and the dissertation proposal, and that a currently active faculty member tenured in the School of Social Work with full Graduate Faculty status serves as co-chair for the remaining work. Outside such circumstances, the student must select a new Major Professor/Chair and may retain the emeritus member as a voting member of the committee with appropriate approvals by the PhD Program Director and the Graduate School.

Any potential conflicts of interest among DA committee members or between the student and DA committee members shall be disclosed to the PhD Program Director, who will have the final say in deciding whether a faculty member may serve on the student's doctoral committee. All such decisions may be appealed via LSU's established appeals and grievance processes.

### **Dissertation Proposal & Proposal Defense**

The dissertation proposal is the first step in the writing of the dissertation. Unlike the General Examination for which a formal defense is not required, *a formal defense of the dissertation proposal is required by the School of Social Work and an internal form was developed to document this meeting*. The purpose of the dissertation proposal defense is to inform all members of the DA committee of the direction and substance of the proposed research and to seek their advice and approval. The dissertation proposal defense also clarifies the areas that need further development and serves both as the research design for the study and a contract between the student and the DA committee.

The student will develop the dissertation proposal with the guidance of the Major Professor/Chair and DA committee members. In consultation with the members of the DA committee, the Major Professor/Chair and the student will set a date for the formal review of the dissertation proposal. At the conclusion of the dissertation proposal defense, the Major Professor/Chair and DA committee members will complete a PDF-fillable dissertation proposal defense form, and then submit the form to the Director of the PhD Program. *Students must provide a complete dissertation proposal document to all DA committee members at least two (2) weeks prior to their scheduled dissertation proposal defense, as well as comply with all other LSU Graduate School requirements.*

### **Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval**

Upon the DA committee's approval of the dissertation research proposal, the student must apply to the LSU IRB for approval to conduct human subject research. Unless the student is working on a professor's project that has already been approved by the IRB, the Major Professor/Chair should ensure that all IRB requirements are satisfied prior to allowing the student to either use pre-existing data or collect data from research participants. *Under no circumstances may data be collected for the student's proposed dissertation study prior to the date of the dissertation proposal defense meeting AND receipt of IRB approval.*

### **Dissertation Defense ("Final Examination")**

The Major Professor/Chair and student deliberate with the DA committee to set a defense date once the Major Professor/Chair determines the student is ready to present and defend their findings. Students must provide their written document to the DA committee at least two (2) weeks prior to the defense, as well as comply with all other "Final Examination" requirements stipulated by the LSU Graduate School.

The oral defense of the dissertation is the DA committee's opportunity to review and evaluate the dissertation project findings, the written documentation of the project, and allow for the student's oral explanation of the study.

The School of Social Work uses two (2) assessment tools corresponding to the written and oral components of the dissertation, both of which are included in the Appendix. The PhD Program Director annually reports anonymized doctoral student Final Examination scores, as required by LSU's [Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#)

Prior to the beginning of the meeting, the Major Professor/Chair excuses all non-committee members to privately discuss any emergent concerns about proceeding with the defense. Providing no major concerns are raised, non-committee members are invited back into the meeting so the oral defense can proceed. During the defense, the student presents a summary of the dissertation project, including a statement of the problem, major research questions, theoretical base, methodology, results, and conclusions.

DA committee members then raise questions or ask for clarification. At the conclusion of the defense, the student and all non-committee members are excused, and DA committee members privately discuss any revisions required to improve the written document and vote on whether to pass the student.

In order for the student to pass the oral dissertation defense, there can be no more than one dissenting vote. If the student is asked to make revisions, the committee can choose whether these need to be approved by the entire DA committee or only by the Major Professor/Chair. The student will complete all requested revisions prior to submitting the written dissertation document to the Graduate School.

In keeping with LSU's standard practices and generally accepted doctoral program convention, the dissertation defense is a public meeting, open to any member of the University community including faculty and students, and any member of the public. Guests may not participate in the defense and ensuing discussion unless specifically invited to do so by the Major Professor/Chair and only after DA committee members have been satisfied. No dissertation defense shall be conducted as a "closed" meeting unless the scientific data upon which the work is based is restricted for security purposes by a state or federal governmental entity.

### **Graduate School Policies Governing Remote Participation in Milestone Examinations**

The Graduate School strongly encourages General and Final Examinations (Dissertation Defenses) in which all participants are present in person. Remote participation should be used only when there are serious impediments to physical presence and not be used simply for the convenience of a committee member. The Major Professor/Chair should aid the student in finding a meeting time at which all DA committee members can be present, as well as assist the student in arranging for necessary equipment and technical assistance. Only a single committee member, *excepting the Major Professor/Chair and Dean's Representative*, may participate remotely. Please see the [Request for Remote Participation in Graduate Committees](#) for additional information.

Should extraordinary circumstances make it necessary for the Major Professor/Chair, the student, or a second committee member to participate remotely, approval must be sought from the Dean of the Graduate School at least three (3) weeks prior to the scheduled examination. That is, it is possible for two persons at the meeting to be present remotely *except for the Dean's Representative*. The [Remote Participation Form](#) must be signed OR approved by email by all DA committee members and submitted to the Graduate School before remote participation of two persons will be approved.

The circumstances under which a student may participate remotely must be severe and extraordinary. The details of the student circumstances must be documented and submitted by the Major Professor/Chair in a separate petition to the Dean of the Graduate School AND endorsed by the Director of the School of Social Work. Acceptable circumstances include long-term illness or disability; whereas examples of unacceptable reasons include employment elsewhere, lack of funding, family inconvenience, or residence in a foreign country. *In general, students are required to be present at their milestone examinations in person.*

### **Timely Completion of the Degree after the Final Defense**

Graduation may not be postponed for reasons having to do with funding availability, continuation of research projects, or other matters tangential to the awarding of the degree. The Graduate School requires that all dissertation documents and corrections must be approved no later than the regular semester following the oral defense of the dissertation. A passing dissertation defense may be voided by the Dean of the Graduate School for failing to submit an approved document in a timely manner.

**Electronic Dissertation Requirements**

The LSU Graduate School provides guidelines for correctly preparing the dissertation document for final submission on the worldwide web. LSU is a member of the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations, an international organization dedicated to promoting the adoption, creation, use, dissemination, and preservation of electronic theses and dissertations. Further, the LSU Graduate School has developed guidelines that provide uniform standards for meeting LSU's document requirements, while allowing for differences across disciplines. All dissertation documents must be consistent with the [guidelines established by the Graduate School](#).

## **DOCTORAL PROGRAM POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

### **Admission to the Social Work Doctoral Program**

The doctoral program admits students proportional to the number of tenured or tenure-track faculty members able to mentor students once coursework is completed. Thus, admission is highly competitive and the typical cohort consists of 5-7 students composed of both full- and part-time students. The process is as follows: The School of Social Work Graduate Admissions Coordinator places the admission file in the SLATE queue for the PhD Program Director, who then sends out the file individually to members of the Doctoral Committee with a request to review within a specific time frame and make a recommendation. If the recommendation of the Doctoral Committee members to admit/deny is unanimous, then the applicant is admitted/denied. If the recommendation is mixed, then the applicant is discussed during the latter part of scheduled Doctoral Committee meetings until consensus is achieved, which may include a recommendation of "hold." The PhD Program Director maintains a log that lists critical dates and decisions for all prospective students who submit applications to the Graduate School for admission to the LSU PhD in Social Work Program.

### **Academic Advising in the Doctoral Program: PhD Program Director and Major Professor/Chair**

The PhD Program Director serves as the primary faculty advisor to all students during the coursework phase of the program. Doctoral students are expected to meet at least once per semester with the PhD Program Director while completing coursework to ensure that they are properly sequencing courses required in the doctoral program curriculum.

Toward the end of the coursework phase, students work more closely with a DA committee that is facilitated by a Major Professor/Chair, who then serves as the primary academic advisor. To reiterate, the student is expected to select a Major Professor/Chair *no later than the last semester of coursework*. Doctoral students are expected to routinely meet with their Major Professor/Chair, at least once per semester during the school year, to discuss additional coursework and progress toward passing both the General and Final Examinations. It must be noted that many students begin preliminary work on their dissertation research projects during the last year of coursework or while preparing for the General Examination. The Major Professor/Chair ideally remains constant until the student graduates. Students are encouraged to meet with their Major Professors/Chairs as often as necessary to ensure continuity in the program or to resolve any problems.

Students should consult with either the PhD Program Director or their Major Professor/Chair before dropping a course or adding a course outside of the university and/or in another campus department. A dedicated Graduate Admissions Coordinator liaises between the Graduate School and the School of Social Work, monitors reports on students who may be experiencing difficulty, and keeps students' records current.

### **Registration for PhD Courses**

Registration is done online through a Workday Student account. Incoming students receive registration information from the PhD Program Director during the preceding summer, whereas continuing students meet with their academic advisor (PhD Program Director or Major Professor/Chair) to determine suitable courses. Routed through LSU's Office of Student Services, a representative from the Graduate School will facilitate registration of courses undertaken with a primary instructor for an individual student, including Independent Studies (SW 7905 or 7906) and dissertation hours (SW 9000). The maximum course load for full-time doctoral students is 9 hours during the fall and spring semesters and 6 hours during the summer term. Requests for permission to schedule more than the maximum number of hours must be submitted in writing to the PhD

Program Director. Registration is defined as a student paying tuition and fees. Until a student's fees are processed by the Bursar's Office, a student is not registered and may be purged from classes.

### **Part- and Full-Time Enrollment in the PhD Program**

There is no residency requirement stipulated by the LSU Graduate School; thus, students may pursue either a part-time or full-time program of study. Students who work full-time outside of school must remain enrolled in the part-time program. If work circumstances change such that full-time enrollment is feasible, students may switch from part-time to full-time enrollment if approved by PhD Program Director and/or Major Professor/Chair, and those who want to switch from full-time enrollment to part-time enrollment may also do so with approval. *However, it should be noted that full-time students who receive funding and/or tuition exemption may become ineligible for said funding/exemption when the student changes from full- to part-time enrollment.*

### **PhD Student Appeals of Admission Decisions**

Applicants who have been denied admission to the doctoral program, including reenrollment and readmission, have the right to appeal. Appeals must be submitted in writing and directed, first, to the PhD Program Director, who may request that the Doctoral Committee re-examine its decision. If the student is not satisfied with the result of this review, the student may appeal the decision directly to the Director of the School of Social Work. If the student is not satisfied with the result of the School of Social Work Director's review of the application, the student may appeal to the Dean of the College of Human Sciences & Education.

### **Reenrollment and Readmission of PhD Students**

When a previously enrolled student does not enroll for two consecutive semesters, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, and subsequently wishes to reenroll; the student must submit a written request for reenrollment to the PhD Program Director. Requests for reenrollment will be reviewed by the PhD Program Director and the Doctoral Committee. Reenrollment decisions will be based on student's performance in the doctoral program and relevant input from faculty who have interacted with the student while in the program. Reenrollment is not guaranteed to formerly-enrolled students who apply for reenrollment. When a student has not enrolled for three or more consecutive semesters, inclusive of the summer term, Graduate School policies governing readmission will apply.

### **Annual PhD Student Activity Report**

Students are expected to complete and submit an Annual PhD Student Activity Report and updated CV by the third Friday in May. The report enables the PhD Program Director and Doctoral Committee to ensure that all doctoral students are completing coursework that will lead to their success as they matriculate through the program. Students who are awarded a GRA are strongly encouraged to complete a self-assessment form with input from the supervising faculty member.

### **PhD Program Grade Requirements and Grade Appeals**

No more than six (6) credit hours of grades of "C" will be counted toward the PhD degree. Grades of D or F will not count toward the PhD degree and those courses must be repeated. Students who obtain grades of C or lower may be placed on probation or dropped by the Graduate School if the semester and/or cumulative GPA drops below a 3.0. For more information consult the LSU General Catalog section on [Grade Appeals](#). Formal appeal procedures are outlined in the [LSU General Catalog - The Graduate School](#). Students have the right to use appeal procedures without fear or coercion, harassment, intimidation, or reprisal for making the appeal, a right which the School of Social Work will safeguard. A student who is dissatisfied with a grade should first

meet with the faculty member who assigned the grade to discuss the situation and attempt to arrive at a solution. If the matter is not resolved between the student and faculty member AND the student still wishes to appeal further, the student may submit a written appeal to the Director of the School of Social Work. If the student is not satisfied with the decision reached, the student may appeal to the Dean of the College of Human Sciences and Education. More information on grade appeal process can be found in the [LSU General Catalog - The Graduate School](#).

### **PhD Course Credit Transfer**

Course credit may be transferred and the specific number and types of courses are determined on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the PhD Program Director, who solicits input and advice from the Doctoral Committee and the Office of Student Services. In general, courses may be considered for LSU School of Social Work doctoral credit if:

- The course(s) were taken as part of another PhD program and are comparable to LSU School of Social Work doctoral level courses;
- The course(s) were taken within the 5 years prior to application to the LSU PhD program;
- Grades of A or B were earned in the course(s); and
- Other relevant criteria are met, as set forth in the [LSU General Catalog - The Graduate School](#)

### **Time Limit for Completion**

The LSU Graduate School maintains a policy that the doctoral degree must be completed within 7 years. Extensions beyond year 7 are not automatic and require a formal meeting of the student's DA committee to:

- Address the validity of the petition/written request by the student;
- Endorse the quality of the student's preparation/research;
- Establish a reasonable expectation for completion given student's circumstances. Outcomes from this meeting will be formally documented by the student's Major Professor/Chair and then authorized by the Directors of the PhD Program, Student Services, and the School of Social Work. The written petitions will be submitted to the LSU Graduate School for a final decision. More than a single, one-year extension should only be granted for truly exceptional cases.

### **Tuition Awards for Graduate Students**

The Dean of the Graduate School may award up to 200 tuition exemptions, pending availability of funds, to LSU graduate students from underrepresented groups. These tuition awards are routed through the College of Human Sciences and Education and provide for an exemption from either or both the resident and nonresident fee. Recipients are responsible for paying required University fees. Preference is given to students who identify as belonging to underrepresented cultural backgrounds. Students must be a new admission to a graduate program at LSU and be nominated by their departments. The PhD Program Director, in consultation with the Doctoral Committee, nominates qualified students who are newly admitted to the PhD in Social Work Program.

### **Information Sharing Policy in the PhD Program**

Information disclosed during student meetings or correspondence with faculty, faculty advisor, or administrative staff will not be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about the student's professional and/or academic performance. Faculty and administrative staff will share pertinent information



with each other and the student for the professional purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. To work together effectively, it is essential that relevant information be shared between involved parties.

### **Codes of Ethics & Practice Standards: PhD Students**

Doctoral students who hold either the BSW or MSW degree are expected to abide by the [NASW Code of Ethics](#), and the [Louisiana Practice Act: Rules, Regulations, and Procedures of the Practice Act](#). Doctoral students with other degrees and from other professional disciplines are expected to be knowledgeable about the [NASW Code of Ethics](#) and abide by their respective disciplines' corresponding codes of ethics and statutory practice standards.

### **Termination of PhD Students from the Social Work Program**

Students may be terminated from the PhD in Social Work program for academic reasons, which include inability to pass courses and *not* satisfactorily completing the milestone exit requirements, including the General Examination and/or the Final Examination (Dissertation Defense).

### **Student-Initiated Removal of a DA Committee Member**

When a student requests that a DA committee member, including the Major Professor/Chair, be removed from either the General Examination or Dissertation committee, and that committee member does not voluntarily resign from the committee, then the Major Professor/Chair will call a meeting of the DA committee at which time the issues involved in the case will be discussed. The DA committee then may make a recommendation as to whether the DA committee member in question should resign. If the issue is not resolved, it may be brought by either the student or the DA committee member in question to the PhD Program Director and Doctoral Committee for a review, and; subsequently, if the issue remains unresolved, to the Director of the School of Social Work for a final decision. A student-initiated change of the Major Professor/Chair late in the student's course of study is regarded as very unusual and will be considered only in extraordinary circumstances. Examples may include cases where there is a dual relationship, major conflict of interest, or where the Major Professor/Chair is clearly and demonstrably not providing, or is unable to provide, adequate guidance to the student.

### **Committee Member-Initiated (Self-) Removal from a Student Committee**

When a DA committee member wishes to remove themselves from a student's General Examination or Dissertation committee, the DA committee member should write a memo to the student explaining why this course of action has been taken. The memo should be copied to the Major Professor/Chair, PhD Program Director, and the Director of the School of Social Work. The student and Major Professor/Chair may then select a faculty member to replace the outgoing DA committee member. In the event that the Major Professor/Chair removes themselves, the student, in consultation with the PhD Program Director, will select a replacement. It is not the responsibility of the Director of the School of Social Work to replace DA committee members who have removed themselves.

### **Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education (GADE)**

Founded in the late 1970s, the primary purpose of the [Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education \(GADE\)](#) has been to promote excellence in doctoral education in social work, especially through networking,

information sharing, and advocacy. The LSU School of Social Work, PhD Program in Social Work is a member of GADE. Members of GADE:

- focus on sharing experiences to support innovation and excellence in teaching and learning and the advancement of the quality of doctoral research;
- support the success and professional development of doctoral students in all their diversity;
- promote recognition of doctoral students' achievements and contributions;
- commit to identifying and sharing potential funding sources or other resources that support doctoral education;
- provide guidance and support to new and developing doctoral programs here and abroad;
- disseminate "Guidelines for Quality in PhD Programs;" and
- represent and promote the interests and concerns of social work/social welfare doctoral programs in the larger profession.

## NAVIGATING LSU & ESSENTIAL POLICIES

### (In Alphabetical Order)

#### Academic Integrity

At the heart of the intellectual process lies the principle of academic integrity. Students are expected to do their own work, and where the work of another is used, to give proper credit for the source. To falsify one's work or to steal the words or ideas of another is to corrupt the process by which knowledge is advanced and is a violation of the [Code of Student Conduct](#). According to LSU policy, academic misconduct is defined as any of the behaviors outlined in Section 10.1 of the Code and will not be tolerated. Likewise, behavioral misconduct is defined as any of the behaviors outlined in Section 10.2 of the Code and will not be tolerated.

When a faculty member has a reasonable basis for believing that a student has committed a violation of the Code, they are bound to submit evidence of the violation to the [Office of Student Accountability and Advocacy](#) (SAA). LSU faculty are not permitted to take any disciplinary or punitive actions for Code violations outside this formal process. SAA investigates the violation and may determine the necessity for a hearing. Students found responsible by SAA for violation(s) of the Code will be subject to penalties determined by SAA. Sanctions levied against students who are not U.S. citizens can result in additional serious consequences that include loss of financial assistance and change in immigration status.

#### Address Changes

Students whose physical address and/or telephone numbers change during the course of the year must update this information with the University Registrar's Office. Address changes can be made online by using the student's Workday Student account.

#### Administrative Structure and Governance of the School

The Director of the School of Social Work is responsible for the overall operations of the school, while the faculty administers the BSW, MSW, HDFS, and PhD programs. The Director of the PhD Program works closely with the faculty and students to ensure that graduates are prepared to fulfill roles in research, policy analysis, teaching, and the development of new knowledge for interventions that addressing social problems and social welfare issues. The Doctoral Committee reviews applications, monitors the PhD curriculum components and timeline, and ensures that doctoral students are represented via standing committees of the School of Social Work. The Director of Student Services works closely with students, faculty, and the university at large to facilitate all aspects of student services and admissions. For more information about the history, vision, mission, and goals of the LSU School of Social Work, please visit the [School of Social Work web site](#).

#### Communication

Email using LSU's *myLSU* is the primary method of communicating with students and all students are required to obtain a *myLSU* Email address and regularly check their Email. Email addresses are maintained for *myLSU* accounts only. Forwarding *myLSU* mail to another service provider mailbox is the responsibility of the student.

#### Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Statement

We believe diversity, equity, and inclusion enrich the educational experience of our students, faculty, and staff, and are necessary to prepare all people to thrive personally and professionally in a global society. Therefore, LSU is firmly committed to an environment that affords respect to all members of our community. We will work to eliminate barriers that any members of our community experience.

To make LSU a place where that can happen, we must recognize and reflect on the inglorious aspects of our history. We now acknowledge the need to confront the ways racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, classism, LGBTQIA+ phobia, intolerance based on religion or on national origin, and all forms of bias and exploitation have shaped our everyday lives.

We accept personal and professional responsibility to eliminate bias and oppression wherever they are found. We understand our obligation to speak up when we see bias whether it be in our teaching, study, or daily work. Our community will educate themselves proactively and continuously about how to intervene and bring bias to the attention of others with commitment and compassion.

We will hold ourselves accountable for our actions and inactions, and for maintaining intentional, measurable, and meaningful efforts to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion, including through ongoing evaluation of our policies, practices, and procedures.

### **Dropping and Adding Courses**

The University sets specific deadlines for adding and dropping courses each semester and places these dates on numerous academic calendars. Students should pay particular attention to last day to add and drop dates as dropping courses may affect graduation. See the academic calendars at [Academic Calendar](#).

### **Examinations and Grading**

The faculty of the School adheres to the University's general policy on examinations and grading as stipulated in the [Graduate School Catalog](#) - The Graduate School, which students are urged to read carefully. Students should pay particular attention to the circumstances under which the incomplete (I) grade can be awarded and the responsibilities of the instructors and the student to have this grade removed. Failure to remove the "I" grade by the specified date will result in the "I" grade becoming a permanent "F".

Student grading is governed by [Policy Statement 44](#). At the beginning of each course, instructors publicize the nature and weighting of the components that they will factor into the final grade. Grading is based on assigned work and is evaluated equitably, with no special consideration given to individual students. All instructors are required to either hold a final examination or justify its absence and to issue the final grade in a timely manner. Upon completion of any course, students may ask instructors to review and explain their examination grades and final grade. Students can obtain their final grades by utilizing their *myLSU* account or Workday Student (please see information about Workday Student below). Students should be aware that not all grades will be reported at the same time.

### **Fees and Financial Aid**

Details for current University fees, expenses, scholarships, and financial aid are found in the LSU General Catalog. Students who need financial aid, especially loans, should contact: [Financial Aid and Scholarships](#), Pleasant Hall, LSU. The most recent cost calculator specific to graduate students can be found [here](#).

### **Information Technology Science (ITS) Service Desk Hours**

Sunday: 12 PM - 7 PM

Monday - Thursday: 7 AM - 8 PM

Friday: 7AM - 7:30PM

The [ITS Service Desk](#) can be contacted by phone at 225-578-3375, by email at [servicedesk@lsu.edu](mailto:servicedesk@lsu.edu), or you may visit us in person on the first floor of the Frey Computing Services Center or the first floor of the LSU Library.

## **Library**

The LSU Library is the main library within the LSU Libraries system and is a repository for extensive holdings and collections, state and U.S. government publications, newspapers from around the state, region, nation, and world, extensive microform holdings, and listening rooms with extensive collections of recordings. The LSU Library also houses a computer lab, individual and group study areas, a graduate reading room, and a coffee shop. Assistance is available from subject specialists and through a centralized reference service, and a government documents reference desk. Students may check out books at the LSU Library with an LSU ID/TIGER card. The Interlibrary Loan program allows students to borrow research material not found in the LSU Library. More information regarding library services, including computerized literature searches, may be found at [LSU Libraries](#).

## **Nondiscrimination, Sexual Harassment, & Title IX**

LSU provides equal opportunity for all qualified persons in admission to, participation in, or employment in the programs and activities which the university operates without regard to race, creed, color, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, or veteran's status. LSU has implemented a procedure to address complaints for those who believe they have been subjected to discrimination and/or harassment in violation of this policy. Please know that your instructors are here to support you and listen to your experience. We also want you to know that we are mandatory reporters and must report what we know to the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX. All LSU employees, with few exceptions, are required to report instances of sex- or gender-based harassment and discrimination, including sexual misconduct and power-based violence (e.g., sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual exploitation, retaliation, etc.) for which they may not be the victim, but of which they are aware.

The Office of Civil Rights & Title IX is the LSU office responsible for investigating complaints regarding any type of discrimination, sexual harassment, or power-based violence. The Office of Civil Rights & Title IX is located in 118 Himes Hall and the phone number is (225) 578-9000. If you are aware of an individual who has been victimized, you are encouraged to contact the Office of Civil Rights & Title IX or file an online report by visiting [LSU's Domestic & Sexual Violence Support and Reporting](#) website and clicking the [Report an Incident](#) box. If you have been assaulted, harassed, or a victim of violence, we encourage you to contact the Office of Civil Rights & Title IX. Please reach out for help immediately. Some excellent resources available to Baton Rouge residents include:

- STAR (Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response; 24/7 hotline: (855) 435-STAR (7827)
- IRIS Domestic Violence Center; 24/7 hotline: (800) 541-9706
- The Lighthouse Program; (225) 578-5718
- VIA LINK; (800) 273-TALK (8255) [national line but answered from New Orleans]

National resources include:

- RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network); 24/7 hotline: (800) 656-4673
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center

For additional information, visit [www.lsu.edu/civil-rights](http://www.lsu.edu/civil-rights) the [Office of Civil Rights & Title IX](#) and review [PM-73](#) (Prohibiting Power-based Violence, including Sex- and Gender-based Harassment and Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct).

SOURCE: [LSU Office of Academic Affairs Syllabus Statements](#)

### **Office of Disability Services**

The University is committed to making reasonable efforts to assist individuals with disabilities in their efforts to avail themselves of services and programs offered by the University. To this end, Louisiana State University will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with documented qualifying disabilities. If you have a disability and need accommodations, you must register with [Office of Disability Services](#) in 124 Johnston Hall where required and recommended accommodations will be conveyed to instructors. Students will not be given accommodations without proper registration, documentation and consultation with the faculty member about the accommodation. Main Office Phone: 225-578-5919; Testing Office Phone: 225-578-2613

### **Office of Global Engagement**

LSU's [Office of Global Engagement](#) connects the world to LSU and connects LSU to the world. LSU is a global institution, and services and opportunities are provided to support students, faculty, scholars, and partners. The [International Student Services](#) unit provides [US immigration guidance](#) and advising to LSU's international student community. The members of this unit are Designated School Officials who can assist with visa questions, work authorization, student petitions, I-20 and SEVIS documents, and student health insurance. Students can visit the Main Office, 101 Hatcher Hall, for in-person appointments, immigration support, study abroad information, and general questions. At the Global Community Center, 3365 Dalrymple Drive, students can access resources like the swap shop, the computer lab, and attend cultural events.

### **Parking**

Parking for students is available for an annual fee on the LSU campus. When students register, the Office of Parking & Transportation will mail a commuter parking tag. This tag should be visible at all times and it allows the student to park in any blue commuter lot. Special provisions are made for those students who have special physical or medical problems that prevent them from walking the 3-6 blocks from the parking areas to the classroom areas. Students are only permitted to park in assigned lots and designated areas; deviating from these areas will result in a parking ticket or having the car towed away. Students must satisfy all parking tickets (as well as all outstanding fines) in order to register for the subsequent semester, obtain a transcript, receive grades, or graduate. After 4:30 p.m., students can use most campus parking spaces as long as the parking pass is properly displayed. Additional information about parking can be found [here](#).

### **Prohibited Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

The use of generative AI programs for the purpose of completing course work is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, using AI-generated essays, reports, code, or any other submissions as a substitute for your own original work. If you have questions about the use of specific tools or technologies in relation to course work, seek guidance from your instructor beforehand. Suspensions of the use of AI programs in academic work will be reported to the [Office of Student Advocacy & Accountability](#) for review under the [Code of Student Conduct](#) and may negatively impact to your assignment and/or course grades.

### **Residence Food Services**

Residence Food Services offers different meal plans for [resident](#) students. Several restaurants are housed in the Union and a campus cafeteria is located within the Pentagon cluster of dormitories. Other options are available [on-campus](#) and [off-campus](#).

### **Security**

Student safety and security is a major priority of LSU; the campus makes every effort to keep the environment as safe and well-lit as possible. Personal items should be kept with a student at all times. Most buildings on campus are open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. The campus has its own police force, and an [escort service](#) is available for students during the evening hours. Please view the training videos and safety tips at the [website for LSU Police](#) under "Student Safety."

### **Student Evaluation of Teaching**

At the end of each semester, students have the chance to evaluate their courses, which provides feedback to instructors, with the goal of improving the quality of instruction. Course evaluations are completed electronically through links provided by the University at designated times. Students' evaluations are anonymous.

### **Student Health Center**

During the registration process, all full-time students are required to pay a health service fee. Part-time students may elect to pay this fee, thereby entitling them to use the Health Center services on the same basis as regular students. Dependents, however, are not entitled to use the service. In addition to the outpatient medical clinic, the Health Center offers a mental health clinic, pharmacy, medical laboratory, x-ray, and physical therapy. The Center charges reduced rates for some prescriptions, tests, x-rays, and physical therapy. Students with serious conditions are referred to outside physicians and hospitals at the student's expense. Detailed information about the Student Health Center may be found at the [Student Health Center](#) website. Student hospitalization insurance is available at nominal rates at registration for those who wish to purchase it.

### **Student Identification Card**

Upon paying fees to the university, all new students are required to obtain a student identification card, the Tiger Card. The Tiger Card Office is located in the Student Union. Students must present this ID for a variety of services and functions. For example, the Tiger ID is needed to check out library books, take advantage of student rates at the Union recreational areas, attend campus functions at a discount rate, and obtain student tickets to athletic events. Some area businesses also offer discounts to students who present their ID. The student Tiger Card is also used as a debit card, which allows the student to make purchases around campus. Additional information about student identification cards can be found [here](#).

### **Student Rights & Responsibilities**

As citizens, LSU students possess the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, the state of Louisiana, and federal, state, and local laws. Among these are freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom to petition, due process rights, and equal protection under the law. There are, however, limitations on the time, place, and circumstances in which constitutionally guaranteed freedoms and rights may be exercised. U.S. courts have recognized that reasonable university regulation of student conduct is necessary and have also established standards by which to judge those regulations.

The School of Social Work shares a commitment to applying these student rights in the classroom and in all transactions with School faculty, administration, and staff. In addition to the basic rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and interpreted by the courts, LSU recognizes rights specific to students in the student-university relationship.

Students have the right:



- to participate in activities of the University free from discrimination or harassment on the grounds of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or veteran status;
- to the opportunity for a quality education;
- to know the University's regulations, rules, and policies by which they are governed;
- to participate in the formulation of University policies and to advocate changes in University regulations, rules, and policies;
- to a formal grade appeal procedure, in which the student may request consideration of an action by the University through one of its employees which the student believes adversely affected them; and
- to confidentiality of all student educational, disciplinary, medical and psychiatric records

With student rights come student responsibilities. Federal court decisions affirm that, by voluntary entrance into the academic community, the student voluntarily assumes obligations and responsibilities reasonably imposed by the University. Beyond those responsibilities embodied in the law, students have the responsibility:

- to be good citizens of the LSU community, conducting themselves in a manner which helps create an environment conducive to the broad educational mission of LSU; to learn and comply with rules, policies, and requirements established by the University for the governance of students; and
- to respect the rights and freedoms of other members of the LSU community.

Students' responsibilities are detailed in the [Code of Student Conduct](#) (the Code) and every student should review this document carefully. The Code begins with a statement of Commitment to Community, which is the guiding principles for the LSU community. The continued success of LSU depends on the faithful commitment by each community member to these basic principles.

The Code also outlines students' rights under the University's judicial process. In addition to these rights, students retain all the basic rights and freedoms guaranteed to all citizens. Other particular rights and responsibilities of LSU students are included in various Policy Statements and Permanent Memoranda. In Section 5 of the Code, the University specifies student accountability for a violation of the Code applies to conduct that occurs on the Campus, at LSU-sponsored activities, and/or when the student is representing LSU. The University retains the discretion to extend its jurisdiction over student conduct as a violation of the Code when the student behavior threatens the learning environment and would be a violation of the Code had the behavior occurred on campus.

### **Textbooks**

Barnes & Noble at LSU is the official campus bookstore located at the corner of Highland and Raphael Semmes roads. It sells textbooks for each class offered, as well as auxiliary books for research. Several additional commercially-owned bookstores within the three- block area adjoining campus also carry books and school materials. Students should be prepared to purchase multiple textbooks for each class. The Barnes & Noble at LSU Store website can be found [here](#).



### **Workday Student**

Workday Student is the project name for LSU's new, modern student information system. You will register for courses in Workday. To access the system, click [here](#) or copy and paste the following link in the browser of your choice: <http://www.myworkday.com/lsu>

Step-by-step guides and videos may be found here. Look under the tabs labeled:

- Getting Started
- Academics Bookmark or "Add to Favorites" for Student Resources.

Please contact the Director of the PhD Program if you have questions about your schedule.

**APPENDIX: ASSESSMENT TOOLS**

School of Social Work

**Evaluation of the WRITTEN General Exam for the PhD in Social Work** (3-13-22)

The purpose of this assessment scale is to have a quantifiable system of evaluation and tracking of PhD students' performance on written general exams, directly linking this to the stated PhD in Social Work Program student learning objectives (SLO).

<b>Student Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Evaluator Name:</b>	<b>Evaluator Role (Check one):</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Committee Chair</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Committee Member</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Dean's Representative</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other (specify):</b> _____

Please evaluate the student's performance on items 1 to 8 in table using the following 3-point scale:

Unsatisfactory (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Excellent (3)
Inadequate articulation of knowledge of content & methods	Well-articulated knowledge of content & methods	Superior articulation of knowledge of content & methods

1. Synthesis of empirical & other relevant literature in GE substantive section (SLO 2)	U	S	E
2. Synthesis of empirical & other relevant literature in GE interventive section (SLO 2)	U	S	E
3. Description & application of relevant theory (SLO 2)	U	S	E
4. Demonstrated understanding of research methods (SLO 1, 2)	U	S	E
5. Explanation of data analytical methods (SLO 1, 2)	U	S	E
6. Application of data analytical methods (SLO 1, 2)	U	S	E
7. Articulated practice & policy implications for area of research interest (SLO 2, 3)	U	S	E
8. Demonstration of analytical & critical thinking across GE sections (SLO 1, 2, 3)	U	S	E

9. Should one or more sections of the General Exam be rewritten prior to the oral defense?

Yes	No
Not Passing	Passing

10. Please describe revisions required **prior to the oral defense**. Attach a separate page if necessary.

Please return all completed forms to [clemieu@lsu.edu](mailto:clemieu@lsu.edu) and [tmontel@lsu.edu](mailto:tmontel@lsu.edu)



School of Social Work

### Evaluation of the ORAL Defense of the General Exam for the PhD in Social Work (3-13-23)

The purpose of this assessment scale is to have a quantifiable system of evaluation and tracking of PhD students' performance on oral defenses of the general exam, directly linking this to the stated PhD in Social Work Program student learning objectives (SLO).

<b>Student Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Evaluator Name:</b>	<b>Evaluator Role (Check one):</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Committee Chair</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Committee Member</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Dean's Representative</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other (specify):</b> _____

Please evaluate the student's performance on items 1 to 9 in the table using the following 3-point scale:

Unsatisfactory (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Excellent (3)
Inadequate articulation of knowledge of content & methods	Well-articulated knowledge of content & methods	Superior articulation of knowledge of content & methods

1. Knowledge of historical & contemporary social work (SLO 2, 4)	U	S	E
2. Definition of fundamental concepts (SLO 2)	U	S	E
3. Analytical synthesis of empirical and other relevant literature (SLO 2, 4)	U	S	E
4. Description & application of relevant theory (SLO 2)	U	S	E
5. Explanation of research methods (SLO 1)	U	S	E
6. Application of data analysis methods (SLO 1, 4)	U	S	E
7. Articulated practice & policy implications for area of research interest (SLO 2, 3, 4)	U	S	E
8. Oral communication skills (SLO 4)	U	S	E
9. Responses to questions from committee (SLO 4)	U	S	E

10. Please provide your assessment of the student's overall performance on the oral defense (circle one).

Not Passing	Passing	Passing with Esteem
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Additional comments:

Please return all completed forms to [cllemieu@lsu.edu](mailto:cllemieu@lsu.edu) and [tmontel@lsu.edu](mailto:tmontel@lsu.edu)



School of Social Work

### Evaluation of the WRITTEN Dissertation for the PhD in Social Work (3-13-23)

The purpose of this assessment scale is to have a quantifiable system of evaluation and tracking of PhD students' performance on written dissertations, directly linking this to the stated PhD in Social Work Program student learning objectives (SLO).

<b>Student Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Evaluator Name:</b>	<b>Evaluator Role (Check one):</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Chair <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Member <input type="checkbox"/> Dean's Representative <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____

Please evaluate the student's performance on items 1 to 12 in the table using the following 3-point scale:

Unsatisfactory (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Excellent (3)
Inadequate articulation of knowledge of content & methods	Well-articulated knowledge of content & methods	Superior articulation of knowledge of content & methods

1. Definition of problem/challenge and rationale for study (SLO 2, 3)	U	S	E
2. Synthesis of the empirical literature in student's substantive area (SLO 2)	U	S	E
3. Identification, definition, & application of relevant theory (SLO 2)	U	S	E
4. Clarity of research question(s), hypotheses, or both (SLO 1, 3)	U	S	E
5. Selection & justification of appropriate study design (SLO 1, 3)	U	S	E
6. Application of relevant data analytical methods (SLO 1, 2)	U	S	E
7. Accurate presentation of findings (SLO 1, 3)	U	S	E
8. Comprehensive discussion regarding limitations (SLO 2, 3)	U	S	E
9. Derived conclusions limited to findings (SLO 1, 2)	U	S	E
10. Articulation of implications for research, practice, & policy (SLO 2, 3)	U	S	E
11. Demonstrated analytical/critical thinking (SLO 1, 2, 3)	U	S	E

12. Written communication skills (SLO 2, 3)	U	S	E
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13. Please provide your assessment of the student's performance on the written dissertation (circle one).

Not Passing	Passing with Major Revisions & require review	Passing with Major Revisions & do not require review	Passing with Minor Revisions
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14. On a separate page, please summarize required revisions.

Please return all completed forms and attachments to [clemieu@lsu.edu](mailto:clemieu@lsu.edu) and [tmontel@lsu.edu](mailto:tmontel@lsu.edu)



School of Social Work

### Evaluation of the **ORAL** Defense of the Dissertation for the PhD in Social Work (8-7-23)

The purpose of this assessment scale is to have a quantifiable system of evaluation and tracking of PhD. students' performance on oral dissertation defenses, directly linking this to the stated PhD in Social Work Program student learning objectives (SLO).

<b>Student Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Evaluator Name:</b>	<b>Evaluator Role (Check one):</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Committee Chair</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Committee Member</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Dean's Representative</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other (specify):</b> _____

Please evaluate student's performance on items 1 to 13 in the table using the following 3-point scale:

Unsatisfactory (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Excellent (3)
Inadequate articulation of knowledge of content & methods	Well-articulated knowledge of content & methods	Superior articulation of knowledge of content & methods

1. Clear definition of problem & relevance to social work (SLO 2, 4)	U	S	E
2. Analytical synthesis of empirical literature in substantive area (SLO 2, 4)	U	S	E
3. Identification, definition, & application of relevant theory (SLO 2)	U	S	E
4. Clear articulation of gaps in extant research (SLO 2, 4)	U	S	E
5. Clear articulation of research question(s), hypotheses, or both (SLO 1, 4)	U	S	E
6. Appropriateness of study design & methods to research question(s) (SLO 1)	U	S	E
7. Accurate presentation of findings (SLO 1, 4)	U	S	E
8. Derived conclusions limited to findings (SLO 1, 2, 4)	U	S	E
9. Clear articulation of implications for research, practice, & policy (SLO 2, 3, 4)	U	S	E
10. Originality and significance of research contribution (SLO 1, 2)	U	S	E

11. Visual components of oral presentation (SLO 3)	U	S	E
12. Oral communication skills (SLO 2, 4)	U	S	E
13. Responses to questions from committee (SLO 4)	U	S	E
14. Please provide <u>your</u> assessment of the student's overall performance on the oral defense (circle one).	Not Passing	Passing	Passing with Esteem

Additional comments:

Please return all completed forms to [clermieu@lsu.edu](mailto:clermieu@lsu.edu) and [tmontel@lsu.edu](mailto:tmontel@lsu.edu)

## DISSERTATION FORMATS

### Five-Chapter Doctoral Dissertation Option

The following is a suggested outline for the 5-chapter dissertation document:

#### Front Matter

Title/author/date  
 Acknowledgments  
 Abstract  
 Table of Contents  
 List of Tables  
 List of Figures  
 List of Appendices

#### Chapter 1

##### Introduction and Conceptual Framework

An introductory statement that outlines the purpose of the study  
 Statement of the problem(s) to be addressed  
 Significance/importance of the study  
 Brief note of literature relevant to major variables of the study  
 Primary research questions and/or hypotheses posed with rationale  
 Supplemental research questions and/or hypotheses (if any) posed with rationale  
 General conceptual or theoretical focus/framework of the study  
 Definitions of key terms/study variables (conceptual and operational definitions)  
 Assumptions/limitations of the study

#### Chapter 2

##### Literature Review

Literature review pertinent to scope of the study  
 Literature review pertinent to study variables

#### Chapter 3 Methodology

Basic research design  
Independent and dependent variables  
Study measures/instrumentation  
Sample and sampling procedure  
Data collection procedures  
Qualitative and/or quantitative data analysis methods used

#### **Chapter 4 Results**

Major results/findings for study hypotheses and/or research questions  
Major results/findings for supplemental hypotheses and/or research questions (if any)

#### **Chapter 5**

##### **Conclusion, Discussion, and Implications**

Major findings and conclusions  
Discussion  
Implications of the findings for:  
Theory  
Research  
Social work practice/social welfare policy  
Education

This outline can be modified as determined by the Major Professor/Chair, other DA committee members, and the student, especially for dissertations that are policy analyses and historical studies.

### **Three-Paper Doctoral Dissertation Option**

The following is a suggested outline for the three-paper dissertation proposal and the three-paper dissertation document:

#### **Three-Paper PhD Dissertation Proposal**

The dissertation proposal for the three-paper format will consist of the introductory chapter, detailed outlines for the three planned papers, and a complete methods section for at least one of the planned empirical papers. Authorship must be negotiated and agreed upon in writing as part of the dissertation proposal. Any subsequent changes in co-authorship must be approved by all members of the student's DA committee in writing.

#### **Three-Paper PhD Dissertation Format**

PhD students may opt to write their dissertations in a format consisting of three publishable papers plus abstract, introductory chapter, and concluding chapter. The articles should form a cohesive body of work that supports a theme or themes that are expressed clearly in the introduction to the dissertation. The structure and content of the introduction and concluding chapter will be essentially the same as in the traditional 5-chapter dissertation format. The concluding chapter will also specifically present and discuss linkages (i.e., similarities and differences, themes or patterns) between the separate manuscripts that are included in the dissertation, striving as much as possible to present the document as representative of a coherent body of work.

The three middle chapters representing the three publishable papers will include one systematic review of existing research on the substantive topic or an article based on a theoretical or policy approach to the substantive topic. The other two articles should be empirical research based on data analyzed by the student as part of the dissertation process.

### **Authorship**

Students must be sole or first author on all articles. As first authors, students are responsible for development and articulation of a concept or idea for research, development of a proposal to pursue this idea, development of a research design, conducting research and analysis, writing major portions of a manuscript, designing an intervention or assessment (if relevant), and interpreting results. One article may be co-authored with the Major Professor/Chair and/or DA committee members. The two remaining articles must be sole-authored by the student. Any authorship in addition to the student is determined in consultation between the DA committee and the student and may be based on the nature of the data collected (e.g., in collaboration with a community organization where authorship should be shared with a community partner or with a faculty member who collected the data being used). However, in all cases, the student must be responsible for writing at least 80% of any co-authored manuscript and must be the sole author of the methods and results sections and any tables summarizing data presented in those sections. Authorship must be negotiated prior to development of a manuscript and agreed upon in writing by all contributors as part of the completed dissertation proposal. Any subsequent changes in co-authorship must be approved by all members of the student's dissertation committee in writing.

To avoid conflicts of interest, any co-authors who are members of the student's DA committee must recuse themselves from judging articles carrying their name. In these cases, additional faculty members chosen by the PhD Program Director will determine the suitability of the article(s) in question.

### **Journal Submission**

Journals must be approved by all members of the dissertation committee. The committee will help select peer-reviewed journals that will both challenge the student and offer a reasonable chance of publication success. Only scholarly articles submitted to and/or published in peer-reviewed journals can be approved.

Articles must be ready for submission prior to the dissertation defense and should be submitted as soon as possible following the oral defense, once any changes suggested by the DA committee at the defense are made. No articles written, accepted for publication, or published prior to the dissertation proposal should be included. All three should be written after the proposal defense. One article may be submitted following the completion of the successful proposal defense and prior to the oral dissertation defense. *It is important to note that acceptance of a manuscript for publication by a journal does not constitute acceptance or approval of the manuscript as part of the dissertation by the student's Major Professor/Chair and DA committee members. It is the responsibility of the DA committee to determine if a manuscript fully meets degree requirements for the dissertation.*



RUBRICS FOR EVALUATING THE QUALITY OF RESEARCH STUDIES

ARTICLES LOG  
(COPY AS NEEDED)

Reference Citation: Author(s) and Year	Research Design	Sampling Strategy	Measures & Instrumentation (List)	Significant Outcomes: Statistical and Clinical	Limitations Of Study
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					

## CRITIQUE OF RESEARCH REPORT WORKSHEET (COPY AS NEEDED)

Select an article in your topical area of interest that is an original report of empirical research. Read and then evaluate your article by circling the number that best corresponds to your rating for each of the criteria listed. Record the total score in the place indicate on this page (Range = 0-84).

Provide full citation of article in APA Format:

---

### Rating Scale

0 = No information, unable to evaluate

1 = Poor, serious flaws

2 = Fair, some flaws

3 = Good, few minor flaws

4 = Excellent, model of good practice

Record Total Score Here: \_\_\_\_/84

Criteria	Unable to Evaluate	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1.Problem is clearly stated.	0	1	2	3	4
2.Hypotheses, research questions, or both are clearly stated.	0	1	2	3	4
3.Relevant literature is sufficiently reviewed and properly cited.	0	1	2	3	4
4.Relationship of the current study to previous research is made clear.	0	1	2	3	4
5.Important terms are sufficiently operationalized.	0	1	2	3	4
6.Research design is fully described.	0	1	2	3	4
7.Research design is appropriate to the solution of the problem.	0	1	2	3	4
8.Population and sample are described.	0	1	2	3	4
9.Method of sampling is appropriate.	0	1	2	3	4
10.Data-gathering methods and procedures are described in sufficient detail to allow replication.	0	1	2	3	4
11.Data-gathering methods and procedures are utilized correctly.	0	1	2	3	4
12.Validity and reliability of the data-collection instruments are sufficiently explained.	0	1	2	3	4
13.Results of a power analysis are reported.	0	1	2	3	4
14.Appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics are computed to analyze the data.	0	1	2	3	4
15.Results of the data analyses are presented clearly in tables and text.	0	1	2	3	4
16.Study conclusions are clearly stated.	0	1	2	3	4
17.Study conclusions are substantiated by the evidence presented.	0	1	2	3	4

18. Generalizations are confined to the population from which the sample was drawn.	0	1	2	3	4
19. Limitations of the study are fully described	0	1	2	3	4
20. Report is clearly written and logically organized.	0	1	2	3	4
21. Tone of the report displays an unbiased, impartial scientific	0	1	2	3	4

### DISSERTATION SELF-STUDY QUESTIONS

**Upon completion of the dissertation document, doctoral candidates are encouraged to review the document in light of the following questions:**

Does the dissertation research focus on a social welfare, social work, social service, human development or family science issue of substantive importance?

Does the document include components or chapters that are consistent with the format suggested in the PhD Program Student Handbook?

Does the conceptual framework clearly identify the gap(s) in the knowledge base that the dissertation research addresses?

Does the conceptual framework explicate how the study design tests the research hypotheses and answers the research questions?

Does the conceptual framework explicate the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that underpin substantive and interventive (where applicable) foci of research?

Is the literature review exhaustive? Does it include current research reports and articles, as well as the “classic” studies and conceptual contributions that predate 1985?

Does the literature review provide for a logical and complete justification for every aspect of your research design, including research purpose, research questions, sampling procedures, measurement, and data analyses?

Is every aspect of the research design linked in a logical and straightforward manner, thus allowing for readers to evaluate the quality of the knowledge produced by the study?

Are the results linked to your research hypotheses and questions? Are results presented in both the text and tables in an organized, conventional, and straightforward manner?

Does the discussion section report your research findings in an unbiased and scientific manner?

Does the discussion section address how major findings link to theoretical underpinnings, as well as previous research cited in your literature review?

Does the discussion section present conclusions that do not overreach the data and the design?

Does the discussion section explicate the “next step” or research priorities that will further the knowledge base in your area of interest?

Does the discussion section address implications for social work research, practice, policy, and education?

Are the limitations and strengths of your study clearly stated as such?

How would you feel about your peers in this and other doctoral program reading this document?

How would you feel about the document being used as a barometer of your professional development, thus far as a scholar?

ANNUAL PHD STUDENT ACTIVITY REPORT

Due: Third Friday in May (rev. 8-11-24)

Please complete all sections of the **Annual PhD Student Activity Report**, obtain signatures, and email to the PhD Director, [Dr. Catherine Lemieux](#), by the third Friday in May for the preceding academic semester. Please attach an updated CV and use **N/A** for items for which you presently have no information to report.

I. Student Information

Name:	Year Admitted to PhD Program:
Highlight One:    Full-Time    Part-Time	Years [    ] Months [    ] in PhD Program
Anticipated Graduation Month/Year:	
Advisor:	
Major Professor/Chair:	

**II. Course Audit**

<b>Core Courses: 21 total credits [15 for students admitted before 2023]</b>		<b>Instructor Surname</b>	<b>Semester and Year</b>	<b>Final Grade</b>
SW 7200	Social Research Methods I			
SW 7201	Social Research Methods II			
SW 7202	Issues & Research Problems in Social Policy			
SW 7204	Issues and Research Problems in Social Work Intervention			
SW 7206	Research Practicum			
SW 7207	Integrative Seminar			
SW 7208	Theories in Social Work			
<b>Interdisciplinary Research Methods and Statistics: MINIMUM of 12 credits</b>		<b>Instructor Surname</b>	<b>Semester and Year</b>	<b>Final Grade</b>
Stats 1 ELRC 7006; SOCL 7201	Taken outside of department:			
Stats 2 ELRC 7016 SOCL 7203	Taken outside of department:			
ELRC 7243, MC 7014, SOCL 7213	Taken outside of department: Qualitative Research Methodologies (Required as of Fall 2025)			
Advanced Research Methods	Taken outside of department:			
<b>Interdisciplinary Elective Courses: MINIMUM of 6 credits [9-12 for students admitted before 2023]</b>		<b>Instructor Surname</b>	<b>Semester and Year</b>	<b>Final Grade</b>
	<b>Elective:</b>			
	<b>Elective:</b>			
	<b>Elective:</b>			
	<b>Elective:</b>			
<b>Dissertation: MINIMUM of 15 credits post General Examination [9-15 anytime during matriculation through PhD program before 2023]</b>		<b>Major Professor Surname</b>	<b>Semester and Year</b>	<b>Final Grade</b>
SW 9000	Dissertation Record # of credit hours: [    ]			

**III. Program Milestones**

A. Have you completed the oral defense of your General Exam?

Please Highlight: Yes No

If **yes**, then provide month/day/year of your General Exam:If **no**, then provide the anticipated month/year of the oral defense of your General Exam:

B. Have you completed the oral defense of your Dissertation Proposal?

Please Highlight: Yes No

If **yes**, then provide month/day/year of the oral defense of your Dissertation Proposal:If **no**, then provide the anticipated month/year of the oral defense of your Dissertation Proposal:

C. Anticipated or Scheduled Date of Dissertation Defense (month/day/year):

**IV. Doctoral Advisory Committee: General Exam & Dissertation**

Major Professor/Chair (must be from LSU SSW):

Committee Member #2 (must be from LSU SSW, state if co-chair):

Committee Member #3 (include Institution):

Committee Member #4 (include Institution):

LSU Graduate School Dean's Representative:

**V. Publications and Presentations:** Please use current APA formatA. Articles in **peer-reviewed** journals that are in print, in press, or accepted for publication.B. **Peer-reviewed** conference presentations that are completed or accepted.C. Other **non-refereed** publications that are in print, in press, or accepted for publication.**VI. Professional Presentations & Workshops**

List all professional presentations and workshops, either completed or accepted.

**VII. Funded Research and Funding Proposals Submitted**

Please list any research grants obtained and/or funding proposals submitted since entering the program Include dates, amounts, and funding sources regardless of whether the proposal was funded.

**VIII. Courses Instructed**

List all undergraduate and graduate courses taught since entering the program. Please include modality (e.g., in-person, synchronous, asynchronous, hybrid), semester, and number of enrolled students.

Course Number & Name	Modality	Semester/Year	# of Students

**IX. Honors, Awards, Other Recognition**

Please list any honors, awards, and other forms of recognition you have received since entering the PhD Program (e.g., assistantships, fellowships, student travel awards, student paper award, licensure, etc.)

Recipients of either the [\*Huel D. Perkins Doctoral Diversity Fellowship\*](#) or the [\*Southern Regional Education Board Fellowship\*](#) are required to teach for one semester during the grant period as a contingency of continued funding. Please email [Ms. Denise Chiasson](#) if you have **not** fulfilled this requirement.

#### **X. Major Research Interests and Areas**

Please list your major research areas of interest:

#### **XI. Goals**

Please list 3 SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, reasonable, time-bound) goals that will lead to successful completion of the doctoral degree. Include anticipated completion dates for each SMART goal.

1.

2.

3.

#### **XII. Signatures**

Student signature/Date:

Advisor (PhD Program Director) or Major Professor/Chair signature/Date:

PhD Program Director signature/Date: