Department of Kinesiology
Doctoral Dissertation Policy

Doctoral Dissertation Format and Content

• The dissertation proposal meeting will be scheduled by the student at any time of the academic year in conjunction with his/her dissertation chair and committee and following the college of education policies provided in the university’s graduate catalog.
• Students can opt to write a “traditional” five-chapter dissertation consisting of an introductory chapter, a literature review chapter, a methods chapter, a results chapter, and a conclusions chapter. In this case, the formal proposal will consist of the first three chapters with the methods section being written in the future tense.
• Alternatively, students can opt to write an “article-style” dissertation consisting of three chapters, each of which describes a separate study to be conducted by the student and written in a format acceptable to a reputable journal in the student’s subdiscipline of kinesiology. Within this format, one chapter can also be a review article, again written in a style acceptable to a reputable journal in the student’s discipline. In this case, the proposal will consist of all sections of each study article prior to the reporting of results and any discussion of or conclusions about the results (e.g., introduction, literature review, theoretical framework, purpose statement, and methods) with the methods written in the future tense. If the student opts to write one article as a literature review, he/she must provide the final version that article at the proposal defense.

Dissertation Proposal Defense

• The student will provide a copy of his/her final dissertation proposal to his/her dissertation chair and committee prior to the proposal defense in conjunction with the college of education policies provided in the university’s graduate catalog.
• The student will then make a formal presentation of the proposed dissertation research.
• Faculty will then question the student and provide feedback about the presentation and/or written document and content related to the proposed research.
• Once the dissertation chair and committee have completed their questioning of the student, the student and all other parties, with the exception of the chair and the committee, will retire from the room in which the proposal defense is being held. Faculty will then deliberate as to the standard of the proposal defense and score it using the rubric below.

Department of Kinesiology
Rubric for Scoring the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Defense

The student’s proposal defense is scored 1 or 2 by the chair and members of the committee. Students must score a 2 in order to pass the proposal defense. Preferably, this score is arrived at through discussion and consensus. If this is not possible, each faculty member will score the proposal defense independently and the mean score will determine the outcome.

Level 1

The level 1 proposal defense is poor and below the standard expected of a doctoral student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

• Provides a poorly written document
• Provides a disorganized and/or illogical presentation
• Exhibits a poor or rudimentary understanding of the topic to be researched
• Exhibits a poor or rudimentary understanding of the literature related to the topic to be researched
• Has a poor or rudimentary understanding of the research methods to be employed
• Provides overly simple, weak, or inaccurate answers to questions posed by faculty during the defense

**Level 2**

The level 2 proposal defense is satisfactory to excellent and is of a standard that is acceptable or more than acceptable for a doctoral student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

• Provides a logical, well organized, and thought provoking document
• Provides an organized, logical, and dynamic presentation
• Exhibits a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the topic to be researched
• Exhibits a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the literature related to the topic to be researched
• Has a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the research methods to be employed
• Provides satisfactory to excellent answers to questions posed by faculty during the defense

**Dissertation Defense**

• The dissertation defense will be scheduled by the student at any time of the academic year in conjunction with his/her dissertation chair and committee and following the college of education policies provided in the university’s graduate catalog.
• The student will provide a copy of his/her final dissertation to his/her dissertation chair and committee prior to the defense in conjunction with the college of education policies provided in the university’s graduate catalog.
• The chair of the student’s dissertation committee will announce the date, time, and place of the dissertation defense to members of the department and college of education at least one week in advance of the defense.
• The defense will begin with a formal presentation of the dissertation research made by the student.
• Faculty will then question the student about the presentation and/or written document and content related to the dissertation research.
• Other interested parties attending the dissertation defense will also be given an opportunity to question the student about the thesis research.
• Once the dissertation chair and committee have completed their questioning of the student, the student and all other parties, with the exception of the chair and the committee, will retire from the room in which the defense is being held. Faculty will then deliberate as to the standard of the dissertation defense and score it using the rubric below.
• Students failing the dissertation defense will be required to defend their dissertation a second time. They will be permitted only one further attempt to defend their dissertation and may be required to take additional coursework.

**Department of Kinesiology**

**Rubric for Scoring the Doctoral Dissertation Defense**

The student’s defense is scored 1 or 2 by the chair and members of the committee. Students must score a 2 in order to pass the proposal defense. Preferably, this score is arrived at through discussion and consensus. If this is not possible, each faculty member will score the proposal defense independently and the mean score will determine the outcome.

**Level 1**

The level 1 dissertation defense is poor and below the standard expected of a doctoral student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

• Provides a poorly written document
• Provides a disorganized and/or illogical presentation
• Exhibits a poor or rudimentary understanding of the topic researched
• Exhibits a poor or rudimentary understanding of the literature related to the topic researched
• Has a poor or rudimentary understanding of the research methods employed
• Provides overly simple, weak, or inaccurate answers to questions posed by faculty during the defense

**Level 2**

The level 2 dissertation defense is satisfactory to excellent and is of a standard that is acceptable or more than acceptable for a doctoral student in the Department of Kinesiology. For example the student:

• Provides a logical, well organized, and thought provoking document
• Provides an organized, logical, and dynamic presentation
• Exhibits a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the topic researched
• Exhibits a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the literature related to the topic researched
• Has a satisfactory to excellent understanding of the research methods employed
• Provides satisfactory to excellent answers to questions posed by faculty during the defense