

A DESCRIPTION OF THE UPCD RESEARCH REQUIREMENT FOR SHS GRADUATE STUDENTS

Revised Policy Adopted by the SHS Faculty May 14, 2010

All students in the UPCD graduate program must demonstrate knowledge of the principles and practices of research within the discipline. This is accomplished by the student completing a research project. There are two options for completing the research experience: (1) thesis, or (2) non-thesis.

The *thesis option* is intended to be a more rigorous, original, and theoretically grounded undertaking (see attached thesis guidelines). Students who follow this option must adhere to the policies and guidelines of their respective Graduate School. A thesis follows the form and rigors of empirical research. It is expected that the literature review for a thesis is comprehensive and extensive, and leads to a number of research questions or hypotheses that can be tested empirically. Students must obtain approval from their research committee chair before selecting this option. Only those students with strong writing and critical thinking skills will be considered for the thesis option. The research committee chair may ask the student for a writing sample and may consult with other faculty members before approving this option.

The non-thesis option is intended to be a less formal undertaking (see attached non-thesis guidelines). Students who choose this option are not bound by the thesis processing and formatting requirements of their respective Graduate School. There are two non-thesis options: (1) Non-thesis option-case presentation or (2) Non-thesis option-research experience. Students should make a decision on the thesis or type of non-thesis option by the beginning of spring semester during their first year of graduate school.

Non-thesis option-case presentation involves the preparation and presentation of two clinical cases from the student's clinical, practicum, or internship experiences. During the final oral examination, the student presents the cases and field questions from the committee on the cases, as well questions assessing the student's knowledge of the nine content areas addressed in the KASA.

Non-thesis option-research experience requires the approval of the faculty member (committee chair) who will direct the student's research. The research experience option can take any format that is acceptable to the student's research committee chair, which may include, but is not limited to, empirical studies, case studies (including intensive case examinations [ICE] of previous patient records), surveys, or discussion/position papers. The product of the non-thesis option is a manuscript-length document written in a format acceptable for publication in a refereed professional journal or a poster addressing a specific research question. As such, the literature review and other sections are written in a shorter and more concise manner as compared to a traditional thesis. During the final oral examination, the student presents the paper or poster and field questions from the committee on the paper or poster, as well questions assessing the student's knowledge of the nine content areas addressed in the KASA.

Students, who are approved for the thesis option or choose non-thesis option-research experience, may develop a research question that relates to current faculty research projects or seek assistance from a faculty member in developing his or her own research question or topic.

In either case, the student should approach a faculty member who has expertise in the chosen area of research to serve as that student's research committee chair. Early in the discussions, the faculty member advises the student as to which option (i.e., thesis or non-thesis) may be more appropriate for the research question or topic chosen. Other members of the research committee are chosen by the student in consultation with the faculty research chair. The student then writes a short prospectus describing the research project and formally presents this prospectus to the research committee. Once the student has been granted clearance from the committee and received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of his or her home institution (if necessary), s/he may begin the research project. The student completes the research project and writes the research document under the guidance of the research committee chair. When, in the opinion of the research committee chair the student's research project is in final draft form, the manuscript is distributed to the other committee members and a final oral defense is scheduled. Upon (a) passing the final oral defense, (b) completing the final edits of the research document, and (c) depositing the correct number of copies of the document with the appropriate parties, the research requirement is satisfied.

Students, who choose the non-thesis option-case presentation, are assigned a committee chair and two additional faculty members during the second semester of graduate school. S/he prepares two case studies of patients s/he has seen in clinic, practicum, or internship. The student should select patients of varied ages who present with different disorders (e.g. pediatric autism, adult swallowing, adolescent TBI). At minimum, one case should be related to the student's primary area of interest and the population s/he hopes to work with after graduate school. When, in the opinion of the committee chair the student's case presentations are in final draft form, a final oral defense is scheduled. Upon passing the final oral defense the research requirement is satisfied.