

FORMATION OF THE PH.D. DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Revised July 2008

Dear Ph.D. Student:

Congratulations upon reaching the final stage of the requirements for the Ph.D. degree. The administration of the Warner School is committed to supporting your efforts to form your dissertation committee.

Below is a summary of the key procedures required for the formation of your committee. Brenda Grosswirth, Administrator in the Office of Student Services (Dewey Hall 2-161), will be glad to answer questions about these procedures. We encourage you to telephone her at 585-275-1009 with your questions; her e-mail address is bgrosswirth@warner.rochester.edu.

Although you will be working with Brenda, it is important to understand that the Office of the University Dean of Graduate Studies (585-275-9093) oversees and coordinates the work for the Ph.D. degree in all graduate schools of the University.

We have organized the key procedures in sequential order to make it easier for you to complete the required steps. Each of the major sets of instructions is printed separately for your convenience. They are as follows:

- General Comments (page 2)
- Composition of the Committee (page 3)
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- Approval of Dissertation Committee and Checklist (page 5)
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- FORM B (at end of document)
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GENERAL COMMENTS

The Ph.D. dissertation committee is governed by University regulations. The Ph.D. committee must be approved, first, by the Warner School's Associate Dean, and second, by the University Dean of Graduate Studies, who has final authority.

The Ph.D. dissertation committee **must be approved in the early stages of the proposal-writing process**, so that you have the benefit of a full committee in the development of your dissertation proposal.

After you have received notification of your committee's approval, please obtain a copy of "Oral Exam of the Ph.D. Dissertation Proposal (Ph.D. Qualifying Examination)" from the Warner reception window, from the Office of Student Services, or from the Warner website. This document will guide you in the next step of the dissertation process.

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

- **Sponsor of the dissertation:** The sponsor of the dissertation must be a Warner School faculty member who is tenured or tenure-track, and has a rank of at least assistant professor. The sponsor may be from your program area in the Warner School, but is not required to be.

Your academic advisor does not automatically become the sponsor of your dissertation. However, if your dissertation sponsor is not your academic advisor, the dissertation sponsor will be designated as your academic advisor for the remainder of your academic career at the Warner School.

- **Second member of the committee:** The second member of the dissertation committee must be a Warner School faculty member who is tenured or tenure-track, and has a rank of at least assistant professor. If the sponsor **is not** from your program area, this second member **is required** to be from your program area. However, if the sponsor **is** from your program area, this second member **is not** required to be from your program area.
- **Third member of the committee:** The third member of the dissertation committee must be a faculty member who is tenured or tenure-track, and has a rank of at least assistant professor. The third member must have a **primary** appointment outside the Warner School. He/she must provide an "outsider's perspective," which, in this case, is defined **not** as coming from a discipline different from that of the student or the first two committee members, but as coming from another Ph.D. program in the University.

University regulations allow this third committee member to be someone outside the University of Rochester. However, if this is the case, the proposed committee member must have an earned doctorate, teach full time at a Ph.D.-granting institution, have a rank of at least assistant professor, and be actively engaged in research. Approval of a committee member outside the University is dependent upon his/her background and the relevance of his/her expertise to your research. (A medical school faculty member does not normally qualify for a Ph.D. committee unless he/she is on a research track.) **(1) A current curriculum vitae is required for a proposed committee member who is not on the University of Rochester faculty. (2) The student must also submit a written explanation that details the reasons this proposed committee member is particularly suited to be on the student's committee.**

If you wish the third member of your dissertation committee to be from outside the University of Rochester, please be aware that the University Dean of Graduate Studies may ask for a fourth committee member.

CONTINUANCE OF A RELOCATED COMMITTEE MEMBER; REPLACEMENT/ADDITION OF COMMITTEE MEMBER

According to Ph.D. regulation, the Ph.D. dissertation committee must include a minimum of two tenured or tenure-track faculty members from the Warner School. If one of the two Warner School committee members leaves the University, he/she may serve in the capacity of a "Warner School committee member" for one calendar year only after leaving the University. After one year has elapsed, the relocated committee member may remain on the committee, however he/she will no longer serve in the capacity of a "Warner School committee member." Consequently, another tenured or tenure-track faculty member from the Warner School must be added to the committee, with the relocated committee member becoming the fourth member of the committee.

If the relocated committee member is the sponsor of the dissertation, Ph.D. regulation remains the same, i.e., the sponsor can remain as the sponsor of the dissertation after leaving the University through the time of the final dissertation defense. However, after one calendar year, a second Warner tenured or tenure-track faculty member must be added to the dissertation committee, with the relocated committee member becoming the fourth member of the committee and also continuing to serve as sponsor of the dissertation.

A faculty member who leaves the University and remains on your committee must agree both to continue working with you and to attend the final defense of the dissertation. Please be aware that either you or the committee member must fund related travel expenses. Neither the University nor the Warner School is responsible for paying the travel expenses of a relocated committee member.

If one of your committee members is replaced and/or if an additional member joins your committee, the new committee member must be approved. Please contact Brenda Grosswirth at 585-275-1009 regarding the approval procedures.

APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE AND CHECKLIST

To receive approval of your dissertation committee, you must complete FORM A, "Ph.D. Committee Proposal" (attached at end of document), and FORM B, "Ph.D. Dissertation Committee and Student Information" (attached at end of document), in conjunction with the checklist below.

- ❑ Type, word-process, or print legibly your full name in the space marked "student's name" at the top of FORM A.
- ❑ Use FORM A to obtain **signatures** of your proposed committee members.
- ❑ Use FORM A to indicate the **names, school/college, academic rank, and area of specialization** for each of your proposed committee members. This information must be typed, word-processed, or printed legibly.
- ❑ Indicate the **topic or title** of your dissertation proposal in the appropriate space on FORM A.
- ❑ On FORM A, leave empty the spaces for approvals by the Warner School's Associate Dean and the University Dean of Graduate Studies. Brenda Grosswirth, Administrator in the Office of Student Services, will submit the form to the Associate Dean and the University Dean for their consideration.
- ❑ Obtain an updated curriculum vitae for any proposed committee member who is not on the University of Rochester faculty.
- ❑ Use FORM B to indicate the **names, home addresses, home telephones, and E-mail addresses** of both you and your committee members. This information must be typed, word-processed, or printed legibly.
- ❑ Submit FORM A, FORM B, and an updated curriculum vitae (for any proposed committee member not on the University of Rochester faculty) to Brenda Grosswirth, Dewey Hall 2-161F.
- ❑ Obtain a copy of "Oral Exam of the Ph.D. Dissertation Proposal (Ph.D. Qualifying Examination)" from the Warner reception window, from the Office of Student Services, or from the Warner website. This document will guide you in the next step of the dissertation process.

After the committee has been approved by the Warner School's Associate Dean and the University Dean for Graduate Studies, you and your committee will be notified by letter.

If you have questions about the completion of FORMS A and B, or about the requirements for a proposed committee member not on the University of Rochester faculty, please contact Brenda Grosswirth (585-275-1009) or bgrosswirth@warner.rochester.edu.

STYLE OF THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL & DISSERTATION

You are responsible for adhering to the University's document on regulations regarding the preparation of the dissertation, **The Preparation of Doctoral Theses**. It contains details on the arrangement of the dissertation, the physical form of the dissertation, and other information that is vital to the preparation process. This document was prepared by the Office of the University Dean of Graduate Studies. It is available at www.rochester.edu/theses/.

The Office of the University Dean **carefully and thoroughly** checks the dissertation for all of the elements reviewed in the document *The Preparation of Doctoral Theses*. Therefore, if you have questions regarding information provided in the document, please telephone the Office of the University Dean at 585-275-9093.

Please consult with your dissertation sponsor on any additional style manual that may be used for your dissertation. The Office of the University Dean of Graduate Studies recommends the *Chicago Manual of Style*, however other style manuals certainly can be used, e.g., *APA*. **Please be aware that you are responsible for adherence to one style manual. Also, please understand that the style manual does not supersede The Preparation of Doctoral Theses (described above).**

Finally, there is no longer a maximum number of words for the Ph.D. dissertation abstract.

HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

You, as Investigator, are ultimately responsible for the safe and ethical conduct of your research. The University's Research Subjects Review Board (RSRB) is intended to assist you, as Investigator, in this responsibility. Investigators who are planning a study involving human subjects must prepare an application package that includes a protocol/study design, [Information Letters and/or Consent Forms](#), [Study Measures](#), and [Institutional Approval Letters](#), and then submit that application electronically via the RSRB website. [All documents must be uploaded and submitted electronically through the RSRB system](#). The University's RSRB must assess proposals involving human subjects, to ensure that adequate mechanisms are in place for the protection of the rights and welfare of human research subjects.

The process for obtaining approval for research involving human subjects and the procedure for submitting an on-line application can be found in the forms section at:

www.rochester.edu/warner/currentstudents

In addition, you and your dissertation sponsor must complete an "Evaluation for Scientific Merit for Dissertations Involving Human Subjects" (**FORM C, attached**), and then submit that form to [Alfred Vitale at the Warner Center for Professional Development and Education Reform](#) (Dewey Hall 1-219B). Procedural questions can be directed to [Alfred](#) at 585-275-8270.

Students often must make revisions to the dissertation proposal after passing the dissertation proposal examination, and therefore you are encouraged to discuss with your dissertation sponsor the exact time to undertake the RSRB process.

Attachments:	FORM A	(Ph.D. Dissertation Committee Proposal)
	FORM B	(Ph.D. Dissertation Committee and Student Information)
	FORM C	(Evaluation for Scientific Merit for Dissertations Including Human Subjects)

FORM A

PH.D. DISSERTATION COMMITTEE PROPOSAL

I agree to serve on the dissertation committee for _____,
a student in the Margaret Warner Graduate School of Education and Human
Development currently working to fulfill requirements for the PH.D. degree.

Signatures of Proposed Committee Members:

(1) _____ (3) _____
(signature of dissertation sponsor) (signature of "outside" member)

(2) _____ (4) _____
(signature of second committee member (if applicable)
from the Warner School)

Names of Proposed Committee Members (printed)	Academic Rank	Area of Specialization
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Date of Entry into Ph.D. program: _____

**Date of entry into Ed.D. program if student matriculated into the Ed.D.
program and then transferred into the Ph.D. program:** _____

Dissertation Proposal Topic/Title: _____

The Warner School's Office of Student Services will obtain the signatures required below.

Approved: Associate Dean, Warner School **Date** _____

Approved: University Dean of Graduate Studies **Date** _____

FORM B

PH.D. DISSERTATION COMMITTEE AND STUDENT INFORMATION

<u>Committee Members</u>	<u>Home Address</u>	<u>Home Telephone</u>	<u>E-mail Address</u>
_____ (Name)	_____ (Street) _____ (City, State, Zip Code)	_____ (Area & Number)	_____
_____ (Name)	_____ (Street) _____ (City, State, Zip Code)	_____ (Area & Number)	_____
_____ (Name)	_____ (Street) _____ (City, State, Zip Code)	_____ (Area & Number)	_____
_____ (Name – if applicable)	_____ (Street) _____ (City, State, Zip Code)	_____ (Area & Number)	_____
<u>Student</u>	<u>Home Address</u>	<u>Home Telephone</u>	<u>E-mail Address</u>
_____ (Name)	_____ (Street) _____ (City, State, Zip Code)	_____ (Area & Number)	_____

FORM C

**EVALUATION FOR SCIENTIFIC MERIT
FOR DISSERTATIONS INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS**

In accordance with Federal guidelines, the University has established a system of ethical review boards (RSRB) to review research projects involving human subjects, including dissertation studies. Prior to submitting a dissertation research protocol to RSRB for approval, the student's dissertation sponsor must first attest to the "scientific merit" of the proposed study.

To be completed by Doctoral Candidate:

Candidate Name: _____

Sponsor's Name: _____

Proposal Title: _____

EPRP#: _____ Expiration Date: _____

To be completed by Dissertation Sponsor:

Please use the following criteria as evidence of scientific merit:

- This research uses procedures consistent with sound research design.
- The investigator is qualified and has the time and resources to conduct the research.
- The research method is sufficiently sound to reasonably expect that the research question will be answered.
- The knowledge expected to result from this study is sufficiently important/needed.
- The data monitoring plan is appropriate to safeguard the rights and welfare of subjects.
- The use of healthy volunteers or vulnerable subjects, if any, is appropriate.
- Any Conflict of Interest issues have been addressed according to University Policy.

I attest that I have reviewed the proposal for scientific merit as described above and believe that this proposal meets the criteria.

Sponsor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

This form should be submitted to Alfred Vitale at the Warner Center for Professional Development and Education Reform, in Dewey 1-219B.