



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Department of Kinesiology and Health Education • Austin, Texas 78712 • (512) 471-1273

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HEALTH EDUCATION WITH SPECIALIZATION IN HEALTH PROMOTION

(revised February 2009)

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Health Education prepares students for academic and research careers in health promotion. The program takes a multi-disciplinary, biobehavioral, and developmental perspective in studying a range of health behaviors and health concerns. Program research focuses on a variety of risk and protective factors and their role in health and well-being across the life span, with emphasis on the prevention of illness and the promotion and maintenance of optimal health. Research includes multilevel and multicontextual approaches that focus on interactions among individual, family, group and community factors. Students completing the program have a strong foundation in theory and methodology in the study of behavioral determinants of health, program planning, and intervention development.

Admission Requirements

In addition to meeting the Graduate School requirements, the applicant must submit a letter of application to the health education faculty, which includes a statement of career goals and research interests. Three letters of recommendation from former professors are required, and when possible, a personal interview is recommended. Students applying to the Ph.D. program must have demonstrated capability of independent research by completing a thesis or publishing a research article(s). Students not meeting this requirement shall participate in a research project sponsored by a faculty member during the first year of study to demonstrate research ability.

Final acceptance and continuation in the program are contingent upon sponsorship by a member of the health education faculty who will serve as the student's advisor. The admission of a student into the program and the selection of an advisor are by mutual agreement.

The prerequisites for the doctoral program are the completion of a master's degree or the equivalent from an accredited college/university, and the completion of a minimum of three hours of course work from each of the following areas: psychology, human biological sciences, health education and/or health promotion, statistics, and research methods.

Courses completed at another college or university may be used to satisfy part or all of the prerequisites, provided such courses were completed prior to beginning graduate study at the University of Texas at Austin. Individuals admitted without these prerequisite courses must fulfill this requirement in their first year by taking the appropriate courses either in residence or by advanced standing examination at the University of Texas at Austin. It is the policy of the Graduate Studies Committee that all courses taken within this department to fulfill prerequisite requirements be taken on a letter grade basis.

Establishment of Program of Study

Students are expected to complete the core course requirements during the first year and a half of study. Upon admission, the health education faculty will review the student's prior course work and research experience and, in conjunction with the student, establish a program of study including course work within and outside of the department. Under the leadership of the student's advisor, the health education faculty will monitor the student's progress. By the end of the second year in the program, the Graduate Studies Committee will have approved the program of study.

Student Evaluation

Students must make satisfactory progress, an evaluation of which will be made annually with a special emphasis on incompletes in course work, GPA, and research involvement. Ph.D. students are required to enroll in a minimum of nine hours of course work each fall and spring semester.

1. Incompletes. Graduate students are expected to complete all courses within the semester they are registered. In unusual cases where this semester framework is not in the best interest of the student, the professor may report the symbol X (incomplete) in place of a grade. The student must then complete the course requirements and the instructor must report a final grade by the end of the grade-reporting period in the student's next semester of enrollment (not including summer). If this deadline is not met, the symbol X is converted to the symbol I (permanent incomplete). The symbol I cannot be converted to a grade. The GSC considers two or more grades of incomplete including permanent incompletes as unsatisfactory progress. (TAs, GRAs, etc., may acquire no more than two grades of X; or one grade of X and one I. A student may not have two or more grades of I.)
2. GPA. The student is expected to maintain the minimum GPA of 3.0 required by the Graduate School. This GPA pertains to course work within the major department, to course work outside of the department, and also to the overall combined GPA.

3. Research Involvement. It is the responsibility of the student to meet with the academic advisor to be certain that all research expectations are made clear. Students who are not actively involved in research will be considered as not making satisfactory progress.

Program Requirements

Students are required to demonstrate expertise in health education and health promotion. This expertise will be demonstrated by: (a) obtaining a grade of B or higher in all course work, (b) presenting research results at conferences, (c) publishing research in peer-reviewed journals, (d) completion of the doctoral comprehensive examination, and (e) completion of the dissertation. Ph.D. students are required to enroll in a minimum of nine hours of course work each long semester, which includes hours for directed research.

Course requirements are indicated subsequently. Note that upon approval of the health education faculty, courses from other institutions may satisfy some of the course requirements indicated below. Students who received their masters degree at UT must enroll in a minimum of 9 hours of additional course work once admitted to the PhD program and complete the 30 hour student research requirement.

* Required coursework – see page 6

* Sample Curriculum (first two years) – see page 7

Admission to Candidacy

Successful candidates are advanced to doctoral candidacy after completion of the following:

1. The student has passed the comprehensive examination. Prior to taking the comprehensive exam, the student is expected to have submitted research results for presentation either at a professional scientific meeting or a manuscript for publication. The submission must be based on student research conducted while the student was enrolled in the program at UT. The examination consists of both written and oral sections. The written section will include a general component on theory, research methods, and intervention mapping, as well as a specialized component emphasizing the student's area of concentration. The written section of the examination must be successfully completed prior to the oral section. The oral section is scheduled within two weeks after the written examination. The written and oral sections of the comprehensive examination, if not successfully completed, may be repeated only once.
2. Upon successful completion of the comprehensive examination, the student can be advanced to doctoral candidacy. The student and the supervising

professor should recommend to the graduate advisor the names of five faculty whom they would like to have appointed to the dissertation committee. The student should contact the graduate coordinator for assistance in completing the necessary paper work for advancement to candidacy. Only after the student has been advanced to candidacy and has the approval of the supervising professor, will the student be permitted to register for dissertation hours.

Dissertation

Under the supervision of the supervising professor and the dissertation committee, the student will prepare a written dissertation proposal and make an oral presentation of it to the dissertation committee and other interested persons. Interested students and faculty are encouraged to attend the proposal presentation. The proposal will include an appropriate literature survey, extensive methodology, and pilot data. The proposal should be presented toward the end of the student's third year of doctoral study. The student is expected to have submitted at least one manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal for publication prior to their dissertation proposal.

The dissertation is required of all candidates and must be an original contribution to scholarship based on independent research in the major area. Examples include the development and testing of theory through intervention research, model specification, or epidemiologic investigation. Writing of the dissertation will be supervised by the dissertation committee, which is appointed by the Graduate Dean and will include the supervising professor and at least two other members from the health education faculty. At least one member must be from outside the Graduate Studies Committee.

Once the dissertation committee is appointed, it is required to meet at least once a year to review the student's progress. It is the responsibility of the supervising professor to ensure that these requirements are fulfilled.

Final Oral Examination

The candidate must present a formal seminar on the dissertation research as a part of the final oral examination. All interested faculty members and graduate students will be encouraged to attend the formal seminar and to ask questions about the candidate's research. Evaluation of the candidate's performance will be decided by members of the dissertation committee. It is the responsibility of the student and supervising professor to schedule the formal seminar through the office of the graduate advisor.

Time Limits

All course work to be included in the program of study must at the time of admission to candidacy have been taken within the previous six years. Once advanced to candidacy, the doctoral program must be reviewed by the Graduate Studies Committee if the degree has not been completed within three years from the date of admission to candidacy. At this time, the Graduate Studies Committee may recommend additional course work, further examinations, or termination of candidacy. The program of study is also subject to review by the Graduate Dean.

Proposed Program Schedule

1. Students will be admitted to the program to begin during the Fall semester.
2. Prerequisites, if any, should be completed in the first year of study.
3. Following three semesters, the program of study should be established and approved by the HED faculty. Before the end of the second year, the program of study should be presented to the Graduate Studies Committee for approval.
4. By the end of the second year of post-master's study, organized course work in the program of study should be near completion, and the comprehensive examination should be taken.
5. The student is expected to take at least 2 statistics classes and 2 HED electives in the first two years to be eligible for comprehensive exams.
6. The student is expected to complete at least 3 semesters of directed research and have submitted data either for presentation at a professional scientific meeting or publication as a manuscript to be eligible for comprehensive exams.
7. Following successful completion of the comprehensive examination, the student may be advanced to candidacy.
8. The student is expected to have submitted at least one manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal for publication prior to their dissertation proposal.
9. Approximately six months following the successful completion of the comprehensive examination, the dissertation proposal should have been defined and presented to the Graduate Studies Committee.

Health Promotion Specialization (36 hours coursework, 69 hours total)

1. **Core Courses** (15 hours)

HED Required Courses

HED 395 Intervention Mapping: Health Promotion Program Development+

HED 395 Theories of Health Behavior*

HED 395 Foundations of Epidemiology*

HED Specialization Electives – select two courses from the following:

- HED 395 Adult Development, Aging and Health
- HED 395 Mind/Body Health
- HED 395 Child and Adolescent Health Psychology
- KIN 395 Exercise and Mental Health
- HED 395 Risk and Resilience in Children and Adolescents
- HED 395 Human Sexuality

* These courses should be taken during the first year in the program.

+ This course should be taken during in the first semester of the 2nd year of the program.

2. **Statistics and Research Methods** (12 hours)

Students are required to take a minimum of 12 hours of graduate statistics and research methods with at least 3 hours in qualitative methods. Courses in experimental design, multivariate statistics, and qualitative research relevant to the student's area of concentration may be included. Suggested courses are listed at the end of this document.

3. **Outside Supporting Work** (6 hours)

6 hours of organized courses outside of HED are required; 3 hours must be outside of the Department.

4. **Student Research** (30 hours)

Depending upon the student's interests and background, the program of study must include research experience with a minimum of 8 hours of directed research, 4 hours of the departmental seminar, and a minimum of 18 hours of dissertation (HED 999rw). Students must present empirical research at a local, state, or national conference prior to taking the comprehensive examination. Students must submit an empirical/data-based manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal prior to proposal of the dissertation.

Sample PhD Curriculum for First 2 Years – Health Promotion Specialization

Year 1

Fall:

- 1) HED 395: Theories of Health Behavior
- 2) HED Elective or Statistics
- 3) **EITHER** HED 370K: Introduction to Health Promotion (ONLY for students who do not have an advisor-approved HED prerequisite)

Spring:

- 1) HED 395: Epidemiology
- 2) HED Elective or Statistics
- 3) HED 196: Graduate Seminar
- 4) HED 297: Directed Research

OR HED Elective or Statistics

Year 2

Fall:

- 1) HED 395: Health Promotion and Program Planning: Intervention Mapping
- 2) HED Elective or Statistics
- 3) HED 196: Graduate Seminar
- 4) HED 297: Directed Research

Spring:

- 1) HED Elective or Statistics
- 2) Elective or Statistics
- 3) HED 196: Graduate Seminar
- 4) HED 297: Directed Research

Suggested Courses to Meet Statistics and Research Methods Requirements for Specialization in Health Promotion

- EDP 380E Fundamental Statistics
- EDP 482K Experimental Design and Statistical Inference
- EDP 382K Correlation and Regression Methods
- EDP 382K Survey of Multivariate Methods
- EDP 380P Evaluation Models and Techniques
- EDP 380P Test and Scale Construction
- EDP 382K Analysis of Qualitative Data
- EDP 382K Factor Analysis
- EDP 384 Qualitative Research Methods
- PSY 384 Structural Equation Modeling
- N 397M Qualitative Research in Nursing