

Department of Child, Youth and Family Studies

Procedural Guide for Ph.D. Students

Specializing in Global Family Health and Wellbeing

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Overview and Welcome	5-6
Program Mission	5
Career Opportunities	5
Professional Developmental Experiences	5
Student Outcomes.....	5-6
Program Faculty	6
CYAF Mission	6
II. Program Timeline/Progress/Coursework	7-11
Tracks 1 and 2:	7
Coursework: Optional & Required.....	9
Three and Five Year Sample Coursework.....	10
Coursework Transferability.....	11
III. Advising and Committee Selection.....	12-13
Appointment of Faculty Advisor(s)	12
Forming the Supervisory Committee	12
Changes to Supervisory Committee	13
Working with your Supervisory Committee	13
IV. Degree Milestones	14-17
Master's Degree Milestones	14
Thesis Components.....	15-16
Doctoral Degree Milestones.....	16-17
Program of Studies	16
Comprehensive Exam.....	16
Application for Candidacy	17
Academic Residency	17
Final Oral Exam	17
V. Doctoral Portfolio	18-24
Critical Competencies	18
Positionality.....	18
Questions to Consider when Preparing Positionality Statements.....	18-19
Teaching or Outreach Positionality	18
Research Positionality	19
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Positionality	19
Intentional Learning Experiences.....	19-21
1. Teaching	20
2. GFHWB Subject Area Content Expertise	20-21
3. Global Citizenry	21
4. Scholarly Dissemination.....	22-22
5. Professional Citizenship	22
6. Leadership	22

Formatting the Portfolio	23
Cover Letter.....	23
Positionality Statements	23
Intentional Learning Experiences	23
Additional Items	23
Portfolio Defense.....	24
VI. Dissertation Procedures.	25-26
Dissertation Proposal.....	25
Dissertation Readers.....	25-26
Final Oral Exam.	26
Results.	26
VII. Annual Review of Doctoral Students	27
Evaluation Process	27
VIII. Graduate Assistantships	28-29
Purpose of the Assistantship.....	28
Benefits.....	28
GA Responsibilities.....	29
Guidelines for Determining GA Assignments	29
Graduate Assistant Evaluation	29
IX. Additional Resources & Information.....	30-36
Conducting Human Subjects Research.....	30
Change in Specialization in CYAF Doctoral Program.....	31
Probation & Termination.....	32
Leave of Absence	32-33
Graduate Studies Policies	32
Requirements.....	32
Implications of Taking a Leave	33
Procedures.....	33-34
Professional Development Opportunities.....	34-36
Conferences & Travel Funding	34
Preparing Future Faculty Program (PFF)	34
Graduate Studies Professional Development Workshops	35
Institute for International Teaching Assistants (ITA)	35
Teaching Development Program (TDP)	35
Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, & Learning (CIRTL)	35
UNL Research Fair	35
ORED Grant Writing Workshop	35
Additional Resources to Support Student Success	35-36

List of Tables

Table 1.1: GFHWB Program Faculty	6
Table 1.2: Track 1—Entering with a bachelor’s degree (Comprehensive Program)	7
Table 1.3: Track 2—Entering with a master’s degree	7
Table 1.4: Track 1 Students: Progress / Time in Program	8
Table 1.5: Track 2 Students: Progress / Time in Program	8

Table 1.6: Required & Optional Coursework	9
Table 1.7: Five-Year Sample Coursework.....	10
Table 1.8: Three-Year Sample Coursework.....	10
Table 1.9: Track 1 Suggested Two-Year Milestones.....	14
Table 1.10: Thesis Components.....	15-16
Table 1.11: Doctoral Degree Milestones.	16-17

I. Overview and Welcome

Welcome to the Global Family Health and Wellbeing (GFHWB) specialized doctoral program in the Department of Child, Youth and Family Studies (CYAF) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL)!

Program Mission. The GFHWB doctoral program specialization in Education and Human Sciences prepares doctoral level professionals to:

- 1) Improve outcomes for families around the world through scholarship, research, and outreach.
- 2) Advance international perspectives of family, couple and individual health and well-being (including physical, emotional, psychological and relational health).
- 3) Identify ways to foster resilience in disadvantaged and/or vulnerable communities.

TAG LINE:
Global Scope, Local Impact

Career Opportunities. Graduates of the program will:

- Work in research, instructional, administrative, and supervisory positions in universities, private and public research firms, NGOs, and other entities whose missions include advancing domestic as well as international and holistic perspectives of family wellness.
- Start and administer international programs.
- Possess skills to address modern threats to child and family wellbeing around the world through evidence-based research and practice.
- Be leaders in how to conduct research in an international context.
- Creating connections among academic, government, and non-government entities to advance scholarship and practice within cultural contexts around the world, recognizing that multidisciplinary collaborations produce the greatest impact.
- Increase understanding of how global issues impact on family health.
- Train the next generation of family scientists for global citizenry with positive impact on family wellbeing around the world.

Professional Development Experiences. The GFHWB program is built on a collection of doctoral experiences that underscore the importance of global citizenry. Students study at a world-class land-grant university and receive on-going professional development experiences including:

- Opportunities to tailor their program of study to meet their unique career goals
- Learning, practicing and applying robust research skills
- Studying with internationally recognized faculty, who conduct international research
- Engaging with organizations that serve vulnerable/underserved populations
- Collegiate level teaching opportunities for both face-to-face and online instruction
- Working with extension and outreach
- Opportunities for international engagement and experience

Student Outcomes. By the end of the program, every student will have:

- An immersion experience (either within the U.S. or in another country) in an area that expands cultural understanding and competency
- Independent teaching at the collegiate level

- Refereed publications and opportunities to work on grant submissions
- State, national, and/or international professional presentations
- A guided program of study tailored to student career goals
- Development and defense of a Doctoral Portfolio.

Table 1.1: GFHWB Program Faculty

Rochelle L. Dalla	Gilbert Parra	Julie Tippens
Maria Rosario de Guzman	Patty Kuo	Katelyn Coburn
Carrie Hanson-Bradley	Cody Hollist	Yan Ruth Xia
Blakelee Kemp	W. Alex Mason	Thulitha Wickrama

CYAF

CYAF Mission: *Child, Youth and Family Studies is committed to enhancing the wellbeing of children, youth, adults and families in the state, nation and world by improving the environments in which they live and learn.*

The CYAF Identity is demonstrated and applied as follows:

- **Applied and Translational** experiences create real-world impacts
- Complex problems necessitate **interdisciplinary** collaboration
- **Respect and human dignity** is present in every interaction
- **Local to global engagement** extends perspectives and impact
- **Diversity, equity and inclusivity** create an environment where all can experience safety, belonging, and mutual respect



II. Program Timeline/Progress/Coursework

The GFHWB doctoral specialization consists of two tracks:

Track 1: Comprehensive program for those entering with a bachelor's degree; and

Track 2: Ph.D. program for students entering with a master's degree.

Table 1.2: Track 1--Comprehensive Ph.D. / Students Entering with Bachelor's Degree

B.A / B.S.	Once admitted to the Track 1 Comprehensive program, you will need to apply to a CYAF M.S program (per Graduate Studies) (i.e., be dually admitted to a CYAF MS and Ph.D. program).
M.S.	- Comprehensive students <i>must complete a thesis (Option A)</i> - Student must earn minimum of 30 credit hours, consisting of 20-24 hours of regular course work plus a thesis equivalent to 6 to 10 credit hours. At least one-half of the credit hours, including the thesis, must be in the major. - Steps for obtaining an M.S.: - M.S. committee consists of maximum of 5 and minimum of 3 faculty members, all must be graduate faculty or associate faculty; department affiliation of the committee members does not have to be CYAF and outside department members welcome with approval of the advisor/Chair. The Chair or Co-chair <i>must be a member of the GFHWB faculty.</i> - Student works with committee to determine coursework and develop <u>Memorandum of Courses</u> (MOC). - Submit MOC prior to completing 1/2 of required coursework; Refer to page 8 for sample coursework. - Complete written exam (thesis) and final oral exam (thesis defense). - The <u>Final Examination Report for Master's Degree</u> form must be filed with the Office of Graduate Studies. Refer to Master's Degree Milestones for deadline dates.
Ph.D.	The minimum amount of graduate credit is 90 semester hours, including a dissertation. Not fewer than 45 semester hours must be completed at UNL after the filing of the program of studies

Table 1.3: Track 2—Students Entering with Master's Degree

M.S.	- The master's degree may be completed at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln or another regionally accredited university or equivalent. - M.S. credits earned may count for up to 30 credits toward the Ph.D. program of studies. - Must have attained a <i>B or better</i> for any graduate level course work to be transferred; nor shall any graduate credits be transferred unless the graduate committee evaluates the quality and suitability; - No graduate credits will be accepted as transfer credit toward a doctoral program if the course work has been applied toward a previously completed doctoral degree; - Professional courses cannot count toward a graduate degree. - Electives and other courses must meet one or more of the GFHWB core competencies (refer to page 9).
Ph.D.	- The minimum amount of graduate credit is 90 semester hours, including a dissertation. - At least 45 semester hours must be completed at the University of Nebraska <i>after filing the program of studies.</i> Refer to pages 10-11 for detailed steps on completing the GFHWB doctoral program.

Table 1.4: Track 1 Comprehensive (Entering without M.S.): Progress towards degree

	Time in Program													
<i>Year</i>	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
<i>Semester</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
File Memorandum of Courses (MOC) (required before ½ of MS credits are taken)														
MS Thesis or MS Project Work (including proposal, research, and defense)														
Form supervisory committee (file form same semester as program of studies [POS] & before 45 credit hours are taken)														
File POS (required before 45 credits taken)														
Complete Core Coursework														
Pass Comprehensive Exam (core coursework must be completed before comps)														
Dissertation work (proposal, research, and defense)														

Table 1.5: Track 2 (Entering with M.S.): Progress Towards Degree

	Time in Program													
<i>Year</i>	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
<i>Semester</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Form Supervisory Committee (file form same semester as program of studies [POS] & before 45 credit hours are taken)														
File POS (required before 45 credits taken, includes transfers)														
Complete Coursework														
Comprehensive Exam (core coursework must be completed before comps)														
Dissertation (proposal, research, and defense)														

Optional & Required Coursework

Table 1.6: Required & Optional Coursework			
Coursework		Typically offered (sem)	Credits (minimum)
I. Coursework related to Specialization. Courses listed in this section are suggestions only. Courses taken outside of CYAF may be taken with approval from the Supervisory Committee.			36
CYAF 813	Global Case Studies in Refugee Health & Wellbeing	Every Spg.	3
CYAF 815	Family & Violence in the Global Context	Fall/Spg.	3
CYAF 833	Nonprofits in a Global Society	Every Spg.	3
CYAF 849	Resilience in Families (GP-IDEA / FAM Program)	Fall/Spg.	3
CYAF 882	Global Family Health and Wellbeing	Fall/Spg.	3
CYAF 895	Special Topics in Family & Cultural Diversity	Varies	3
CYAF 882A	Study Abroad in CYAF	Varies	3
II. Departmental Coursework Required of All Doctoral Students			10
CYAF 901	Professional Development Seminar (2 credits each semester for first year in program)	Fall/Spg.	4
CYAF 920	Teaching Practicum	Odd Spgs	3
CYAF 972	Theories of Human Development and Family	Even Spgs	3
III. Research Methodology*			15
CYAF 865	Research Design and Methods	Every Fall	3
EDPS 941	Intermediate Statistics: Experimental Methods	Every Fall	3
EDPS 942	Intermediate Statistics: Correlational Methods	Every Spg.	3
CYAF 982	International Research Methods for Advanced Global Scholars	Odd Falls	3
XXXX	TWO additional courses selected by student and advisor(s)		6
IV. Doctoral Dissertation			12 - 18
V. Additional Credits Approved by Supervisory Committee Examples include: **Doctoral Seminar (CYAF 995), independent study, etc... as approved by Supervisory Committee			15
TOTAL CREDITS			90

* A 15-cr. hour [Mixed Method Certificate](#) may be obtained via the QQPM program, but *requires* EDPS course selection.

** **Doctoral Seminar (CYAF 995):** Students may take up to 9 credit hours of doctoral seminar (enrolling for 1 – 6 credits within any single semester).

Table 1.7: Track 1 (with B.S.): Five-Year Sample Coursework

	Fall	Spring
Year 1	• CYAF 901: Pro seminar • CYAF 865: Research Methods • Two Specialization Course	• CYAF 901: Pro seminar • CYAF 972: Theories (offered every other spring) • Statistics/Methods • One specialization courses
Year 2	• EDPS 941: Fundamentals of Research Design and Analysis 1 • Two specialization courses • CYAF 899 Thesis (variable credits)	• EDPS 942: Fundamentals of Research Design and Analysis 2 • Specialization course • CYAF 899 Thesis (variable credits)
Year 3	• CYAF 920: Teaching Practicum • CYAF 982: International Research Methods • Statistics/Methods • Additional Credits (variable credits)	• Specialization course • Additional Credits (variable credits) • CYAF 999 Dissertation (variable credits)
Year 4	• Two Specialization Courses • Additional Credits (variable credits) • CYAF 999 Dissertation (variable credits)	• Specialization Course • Additional Credits (variable credits) • CYAF 999 Dissertation (variable credits)
Year 5	• Content Course • Additional Credits (variable credits) • CYAF 999 Dissertation (variable credits)	• Additional Credits (variable credits) • CYAF 999 Dissertation (variable credits)

Table 1.8: Track 2 (with M.S.): Three-Year Sample Coursework

	Fall	Spring
Year 1	• CYAF 901: Pro seminar • EDPS 941: Fundamentals of Research Design and Analysis 1 • CYAF 865: Research Methods • Specialization Course or Additional Credits	• CYAF 901: Pro seminar • CYAF 972: Theories (offered every other spring) • EDPS 942: Fundamentals of Research Design and Analysis 2 • Specialization Course or Additional Credits
Year 2	• CYAF 982: International Research Methods • Specialization Course or Additional Credits • CYAF 999 Dissertation (variable credits)	• Statistics/Methods • Specialization Course or Additional Credits • CYAF 999 Dissertation (variable credits)
Year 3	• CYAF 920: Teaching Practicum • Statistics/Methods • Additional Credits (e.g., CYAF 995) • CYAF 999 Dissertation (variable credits)	• Content Course • Additional Credits (e.g., CYAF 995) • CYAF 999 Dissertation (variable credits)
Years 3+	CYAF 999 as needed to reach graduation →	

*Track 2 students may transfer in 30 credit hours from M.S. coursework (e.g., research methods, coursework related to specialization) as determined by Supervisory Committee (refer to pg.12).

Coursework Transferability

The Supervisory Committee ***must approve*** all transfer coursework; guidance on types of courses that are likely to be approved are below; sample courses within each content area are illustrative only.

Global Issues	• Immigration, Migration, and Refugees • Cultural Diversity • Social Justice
Family Functioning	• Family Violence • Internal Family Dynamics • Foundations of Family and Interpersonal Theory
Human Development	• Brain and Behavior • Evolutionary Principles in Human Development • Sociocultural Foundations of Development
Health and Wellbeing	• Social and Structural Determinants of Health • Health and Human Rights • Family and Community Health
Stress and Adaptation	• Fragile Families and Behavioral Intervention • Family Adaptation & Resilience • Biosocial Factors in Stress, Development & Health
Research Design	• Research Ethics • Qualitative/Quantitative Methods • Mixed Methods / Multi-Methods
Statistics	• Applied Statistics • Structural Equation Modeling • Multiple Regression
Program Evaluation	• Working with Multi-Sector Partners • Program Evaluation and Ethical Reporting

III. Advising and Committee Selection

Appointment of Faculty Advisor(s)

At the time of program admission you are assigned an advisor or co-advisors who will advise you regarding your first semester's course of study. These initial assignments are generally made based on the match between incoming students' professional and research interests and those of their faculty mentor(s). It sometimes happens that doctoral students later wish to change their major professor, or major professors may want to discontinue their role with a student. In this situation, the student and advisor are encouraged to meet and attempt to arrive at a mutually acceptable arrangement. The student and/or faculty member can also approach the Graduate Chair or Department Chair to facilitate resolution if necessary. When changing advisors, you must notify the Graduate Chair by email so that the department records can be updated. Additionally, if you have already submitted your [Appointment of Supervisory Committee Form](#) to Graduate Studies, a change of advisor requires that you notify Graduate Studies and revise your form. A critical fact that students must keep in mind is that no student can progress in their program without a major professor. Hence, discontinuation from one major professor must be accompanied by realignment with another for you to continue in the program. A temporary advisor can be assigned if necessary.

Forming the Supervisory Committee

A Supervisory Committee is established before a doctoral student has accumulated 45 credit hours, including any transfer hours but excluding research or language tools, to assure that students are under careful advisement and mentoring throughout their careers. The Supervisory Committee is appointed by the Dean for Graduate Studies based on a recommendation of the departmental Graduate Committee in the student's major, prior to the approval of the program of study. **A member of the GFHWB faculty must serve as Chair or co-Chair of the Supervisory Committee.**

- The Supervisory Committee members are generally chosen jointly by the student and major professor based on their expertise in terms of the student's research and their ability to provide help and guidance in the student's achievement of research and career goals.
- Supervisory Committee consists of at least four faculty members; at least one member external to CYAF must be included. All committee members must be either Graduate Faculty or Graduate Faculty Associates approved to perform specified Graduate Faculty duties. The committee must include at least one Graduate Faculty member external to the academic department or program in which the degree is to be granted but within the University of Nebraska system. If the student is pursuing a minor, the Graduate Faculty member from the minor department may serve as the outside representative.
- Submit completed [Appointment of Supervisory Committee](#) form, signed by the Graduate Committee Chair, should be filed with Graduate Studies. The form specifies individuals in the following roles:
 - **Chair or Co-chair:** The Chair or Co-chair of a doctoral student's committee serves as the advisor and mentor of the student. The Chair or Co-chair may not serve as the Outside Representative or a designated reader.
 - **Member:** All members of the committee vote to allow the student into candidacy, request an extension and determine the outcome of the student's dissertation defense. Members may serve as the reader or outside representative.
 - **Reader:** Two members of the committee are designated as readers. They and the Chair read the draft(s) of the dissertation to determine whether the student is ready to defend. They sign the Application for Final Oral if the student is approved to move forward with the defense. Special members may serve as readers.

- **Outside Representative:** One member must be external to the student's major program but within the University of Nebraska system. If the student is seeking a minor, the faculty member representing the student's minor may serve as the Outside Representative. He or she may serve as a reader on the student's committee.
- **Special Member:** A faculty member from another institution outside the University of Nebraska system may serve as a fifth committee member on the student's committee. Special members may serve as readers and have voting rights for the student's committee. Only one special member may serve per committee. A special member may not serve as outside representative.

Changes to the Supervisory Committee

Changes may be made to a Supervisory Committee any time prior to the submission of the Application for Final Oral Exam using a [Change of Supervisory Committee](#). If the Supervisory Committee chair leaves the employ of the University, or retires or is otherwise unable to serve on the Committee, Graduate Studies must be notified immediately and a change in the Committee made as follows:

- If the student has **achieved Candidacy**, the former chair who has left may continue to serve as co-chair of the Supervisory Committee, with approval of the departmental Graduate Committee and the Dean for Graduate Studies. A second co-chair must be appointed who is a resident Graduate Faculty member.
- If the student has **not achieved Candidacy**, a new chair of the Supervisory Committee who is a resident Graduate Faculty member must be appointed immediately, with the agreement of the departmental/school Graduate Program Committee and the Dean for Graduate Studies.
- If a member other than the chair leaves the employ of the University or retires, a replacement should be appointed who is a resident graduate faculty member. When continuing expertise is needed and the faculty member is willing to continue serving, he/she may continue as a member of the Supervisory Committee, with the approval of the Supervisory Committee Chair and the concurrence of the Dean for Graduate Studies.
- Graduate faculty with emeritus status may co-chair the supervisory committees of doctoral students with a resident graduate faculty member and may continue to serve as members of committees, with approval of the graduate committee chair

Working with a Supervisory Committee

Although exceptions exist, please be advised that *most* CYAF faculty have 9-month contracts. Technically, this means they are not formally "working" during the summer months. Please be respectful of your committee members' time and, unless approved by all committee members, do not schedule committee meetings, defenses, dissertation draft reviews, etc. during the summer months.

IV. Degree Milestones

M.S. Degree Milestones

Comprehensive students *must* complete a M.S. thesis (Option A on the Memorandum of Courses / MOC). Guidelines for successfully defending the M.S. thesis are included here.

The [Office of Graduate Studies Master's Degree Milestones](#) should be consulted *early and often* for clear guidance on procedures and paperwork necessary for successfully meeting the M.S. degree requirements. **Coursework:** students must enroll in 6 credit hours of thesis (CYAF 899). These credits can be taken all at once or divided across multiple sessions (spring, summer, fall).

ANNOUNCING THE DEFENSE:

It is the student's responsibility to begin the process for making their Thesis and/or Dissertation defense public. Please submit the [Dissertation and Thesis Defense notification form](#) at least 3 weeks prior to the defense date. The notification will go out to the CEHS website, social media and in hometown news releases

Table 1.9: Track 1 (entering with BS) Suggested Two-Year M.S. Milestones

	Semester One	Semester Two	Summer
1 st Year	Meet with advisor to confer regarding the composition of his/her thesis committee.	• Conduct preliminary research to formulate a topic; • Form advisory committee; • Consult with advisor on topic; continue to narrow focus based on course work, independent reading, and other professional experiences.	• Begin writing proposal; • Complete CITI training as needed (refer to p. 24).
2 nd Year	• Complete proposal (Chps.1 – 3, see pp. 13-14); • Schedule Proposal Meeting with Supervisory Committee; • Proposal should be given to committee members 2 weeks before the meeting; • Revise proposal as suggested; • Obtain IRB approval as needed.	• Collect (or work with existing data set) and analyze data; • Complete chapters 4 and 5 of thesis; • Schedule thesis defense. ○ Copies should be given to committee members two weeks before the defense date. ○ The student may pass without revisions; pass with revisions, or fail. ○ Refer to Office of Graduate Studies Master's Degree Milestones for <i>deadlines</i> on submitting final forms necessary for graduation.	

Table 1.10: Thesis Components

Chapter	Guidelines*
1. Introduction	• The first part of the Introduction should clearly state the purpose of the study; • Statement of the Hypothesis or Research Question: A clear statement(s) that identifies the precise research question should be included; • Significance: Identify significance of study as well as its <i>uniqueness</i>. In other words, how will your study contribute to the current state of knowledge and what gaps will it fill? The following sections <i>may</i> be included (consult with advisor): • Definitions: Provide simple list of definitions of terms that directly pertain to this study and of which might be unclear to the reader. • Delimitations, Limitations, and Assumptions (typical in quantitative studies)
2. Literature Review (LR)	• Divide LR into headings and smaller sub-headings. For each, provide a thorough examination of the current literature (as well as seminal studies) that influences or is representative of research on that topic and subtopic. The LR should collectively support the process and purpose of the study, with contradictory literature addressed. • The theoretical framework for the investigation must be included.
3. Methods	• Clearly present each aspect of the process by which the research will be completed. Suggestion: Pretend you are explaining the methods to an audience that is completely unfamiliar with your work but hopes to replicate it exactly as you did. • Sub-sections typically include: ○ Participants: This section should identify requirements for inclusion, estimated sample size, and composition of sample. ○ Procedures: Should describe process for participant recruitment and data collection process. ○ Instrumentation: Describe the tool(s) used for collection of data collection as well as their psychometric properties. For interviews (or focus groups): include the research questions and sub-questions to be asked. ○ Plan of Analysis: How will the data be analyzed? Suggestion: For each research question (or hypothesis) outline the analyses that will be used to address it. • Positionality: Include a section on researcher biases (or positionality); and, for sensitive topics or studies including vulnerable populations, include a section on ethical responsibility and protection of participants.
4. Results	• Order of Presentation: Describe results in the order that corresponds to how the hypotheses or research questions were presented. So, for instance: ✓ Hypothesis 1 (restated): Followed by Results OR ✓ Research Question 1 (restated): Followed by Results ○ Provide only the results here; avoid discussion or interpretation of results.
5. Discussion	• Provide inferences and implications that the results of the study provide you and the reader or others who may have interest in the results. This is a time to expound on your results and offer insight into what your study does or does not contribute to the body of information on your topic. ○ Here, the results of your study must <i>integrated with</i> the broader literature. To what extent does this study support or contradict the work of others?

- Future directions for research, service, practice or policy: What recommendations do you have to use this investigation as a springboard for continued scholarly advancement or service or policy?
- **Limitations:** Provide a sub-section that outlines study limitations. These could refer to sample (size, representativeness, recruitment procedures, etc...), methods (instruments used, procedures, unanticipated problems, etc...), and/or analyses.
- **Conclusions:** Include a final section that offers specific conclusions resulting from your study. Offer specific insight to what your findings reveal. This section should synthesize your findings with a “big picture” statement or two.

References	Appear at the end of the Thesis.
Appendices	These may include, for instance, IRB approval, instrumentation/interview questions, recruitment materials, etc... and should appear after the reference section.

***APA:** The entire thesis, include all tables, references, heading/sub-heading levels, in-text citations, use of quotes, etc... should follow the APA (American Psychological Association) manual for style. **Purchase a copy of this if you do not already own one.**

Instructions for compiling the thesis [front matter](#), [body](#), and [back matter](#) as well as [sample pages](#) are provided.

Doctoral Degree Milestones

Table 1.11: Doctoral Degree Milestones (See: Doctoral Degree Steps to Completion)	
Program of Studies	● The doctorate degree requires a minimum of 90 total credit hours, including a minimum of 12 hours (maximum 55) of dissertation. At the time of the filing of the Program of Studies, a minimum of 45 should remain. ● For full policy see Program of Studies in the Graduate Catalog. ● Students should meet with their advisor early to discuss course layout and credits brought in, as well as timeline for the Program of Studies meeting. ● Submit completed Program of Studies Form to the Doctoral Programs Coordinator within the same term (semester or summer) as approval of the Supervisory Committee. ● The time limit on granting the doctoral degree is eight years from the time of filing the student's Program of Studies in Graduate Studies. ● The Supervisory Committee will determine what course work taken prior to filing of a Program of Studies, including hours earned toward the master's degree(s), will be accepted as part of the program's hours. ● Changes can be made to the Program of Studies via a written memo/email from the student's advisor to the Doctoral Programs Coordinator in the Graduate College, outlining the additions, deletions, or substitutions.

Comprehensive Exam	The GFHWB comprehensive exam consists of a Doctoral Portfolio (see pages 18-22). Students are expected to create their Portfolio <i>throughout</i> the program. You are advised to document all professional development activities as you participate in them!
Application for Candidacy	- After the Doctoral Portfolio has been approved, and at least 7 months before final oral exam, submit the Application for Admission to Candidacy Form to the Doctoral Programs Coordinator. - Once candidacy is established, registration is required each fall and spring until the student graduates. Failure to do so will result in termination of candidacy.
Academic Residency	- Academic residency requires the doctoral student to enroll in a specified number of hours related to the degree within a specific timeframe. This ensures that each doctoral program is reasonably compact, continuous, and cohesive, and that a substantial portion is done under close supervision by the University. For a student beginning a doctoral program: - With a bachelor's degree: 27 hours of graduate work in a consecutive 18-month period; 15 of which must be taken after receiving a master's. - With a master's degree: 27 hours of graduate work in consecutive 18-month period. - As University staff or a person employed full-time in their major field: The requirement is 24 credit hours of graduate work within a consecutive two-year period, and 12 of these 24 hours must be taken after receiving a master's along the way or completing 30 hours. - Satisfy the academic residency requirement before you schedule your final oral exam. The Doctoral Programs Coordinator will note this on your Program of Studies.
Final Oral Exam	ANNOUNCING THE DEFENSE: The defense must be announced. It is the student's responsibility to begin the process for making their Thesis and/or Dissertation defense public. Please submit the Dissertation and Thesis Defense notification form at least 3 weeks prior to the defense date. The notification will go out to the CEHS website, social media and in hometown news releases

Satisfactory completion of the Doctoral Portfolio is required for candidacy and replaces the traditional comprehensive examination. The Portfolio incorporates: 1) demonstration of attainment of critical competencies via successful engagement with six areas of intentional learning; and 2) articulation of professional identity via statements of research, teaching, and service positionality.

Critical Competencies

Graduates of the GFHWB will demonstrate *four critical competencies*:

1. Global family health and well-being disciplinary knowledge including depth and breadth of literature, including synthesis of the literature, gaps, and strengths and weaknesses;
2. Disciplinary research knowledge;
3. Ability to conduct semi-autonomous research; and
4. Ability to engage in semi-autonomous teaching, in either formal or informal settings.

Development of these competencies is emphasized throughout the GFHWB program. However, a unique feature of the GFHWB specialization is the expectation that students will engage in *specific and intentional learning experiences* (see **pages 19-22** for details) designed to *promote* attainment of the four critical competencies.

Positionality describes an individual's world-view including, assumptions about human nature and agency and refers to how one's identity influences, and potentially biases, understanding of and outlook on the world. Self-reflection is a necessary prerequisite to be able to clearly identify, construct, critique and articulate one's positionality.

Questions to Consider when Preparing Positionality Statements

I. Teaching and/or Outreach Positionality:

- What are your primary learning objectives for your student learners?
 - How do you assess those objectives?
- What type of learning environment do you aspire to?
 - What actions/activities help you achieve that type of environment?
- What are your values as an instructor (philosophy of teaching)?
 - How do you convey those values to your students?
 - How, if at all, have those values changed through time? What processes or experiences shaped your teaching values?
- What are your responsibilities to your students?
- To what extent do you engage in self-reflection as an instructor?
 - What activities help you engage in self-reflection?
 - Describe changes made as a result of critical self-reflection.
- *How have intentional learning experiences impacted your teaching values, student learner expectations, and self-reflection activities? Please describe.*

II. Research Positionality:

- Describe your research interests—what do you investigate and why?
- What theories guide your research?
 - How are those theories applied in your research?
 - How do these theories reflect and convey your world view?
- What methodologies do you gravitate toward and why?
 - What do these methodologies convey about your values of epistemology, and/or your worldview and the value of your scholarship?
- What are your *responsibilities*, as an empirical scholar, to the profession, to your participants, to the academic or research community?
- What are your research biases? What are your research assumptions?
 - How do you maintain research rigor while simultaneously acknowledging those biases and assumptions?
 - In what ways do those biases and assumptions impact your research?
- Describe specific *intentional learning experiences* and their impact on your theoretical lens, methodological approach, values, and biases and assumptions.

III. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Positionality:

- What does DEI mean to you?
- How do issues of DEI impact your approach to research, teaching, and/or outreach?
- How do your various identities (intersectionality) influence your views on DEI?
- How do you take action to promote DEI in your research, teaching, and/or outreach?

Intentional Learning Experiences

The Doctoral Portfolio is a scholarly **product** that demonstrates successful (and on-going) engagement with intentional learning experiences that promote critical competencies.

Intentional learning experiences are divided into the following six areas

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Teaching (formal and/or informal) | • Scholarly dissemination |
| • Subject area content expertise | • Professional citizenship |
| • Global engagement and citizenry | • Leadership |

Rather than a collection of activities, each student must articulate his/her unique professional identity, *achieved via engagement with the six areas of intentional learning experiences*, through *positionality statements* in relation to teaching (formal or informal), research and service to the profession. Positionality statements should reflect how specific learning experiences impacted one's professional growth and development.

1. Teaching. Demonstration of professional level performance in teaching to be accomplished through **one of the following** (1a, 1b, or 1c):

1a. Full responsibility for at least one course at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Required documentation shall include:

- Course syllabus
- Student evaluations
- Evaluation of faculty supervisor that includes a live observation of teaching

1b. Extension/Outreach options will illustrate the student's expertise in a specific content area relevant to his/her program, as well as translational skills in applying that knowledge. The extension/outreach option should also reflect knowledge about the United States land-grant and extension system. Specific projects and documentation will be determined by the committee and can include the following:

- Development of scholarly output that translates empirical research for direct dissemination to lay audiences. Models of these types of projects include NebGuides and policy briefs;
- Development of an evaluation plan for an existing program;
- Development of an evaluation report for an existing program (e.g., with permission from Extension faculty/staff who have program evaluation data);
- Development of a curriculum or set of activities around a particular content area.

1c. For those on a clinical track, clinical supervision of a mental health professional trainee lasting at least 6 months. Required documentation shall include:

- Statement of philosophy and approach to supervision
- Case example that illustrates your approach to supervision
- Evaluation of your supervision by your supervisor
- Evaluation of your supervision by your supervisee(s)

2. Global Family Health and Well-Being Subject Area Content Expertise. Demonstration of both depth and breadth of expertise in a select content area evidenced through **one of the following**:

2a. Extensive review of scholarly literature including seminal pieces, development through time, and current state of the field. The literature review is intended to form the basis of your dissertation—in that, through this process of reviewing the scope of literature in your research area of interest, you will likely uncover gaps in the literature, new ideas to explore, or ways that your independent research (for the Ph.D.) can contribute meaningfully to the extant literature. Steps for completion:

- An outline of the proposed literature review and process for completion (e.g., sources consulted, type of literature reviewed) must be approved by the supervisory committee;
- Before beginning your LR, it is *strongly* recommended that you:
 - Consult with the Research Librarian; and
 - Consult additional resources as needed: [How to Write a Literature Review](#); [Concordia Library Writing a LR](#); [UNF Conducting a Literature Review](#); and [Conducting a Literature Review](#);
- After consultation with supervisory committee, completion of the literature review should be *independent* (with minimal input from anyone, including advisor);
- The final review included in the Portfolio must be: written in APA formatting style, of 30 pages maximum, double-spaced, with 12-point font and standard margins.

2b. In rare circumstances, unique opportunities may arise that could serve as alternatives to the literature review requirement by serving the same purpose (i.e., demonstration of depth and breadth of expertise in select content area).

- A written proposal to replace the literature review component of the Portfolio, with an alternative of equal rigor, must be in writing and accompanied by a proposal for an alternative, specifying the content of the alternative and process for completion.
- The proposal must be approved by the entire supervisory committee before writing begins.

3. Global Citizenry. Demonstration of global citizenry through international engagement in **one or more of the following** (3a-3d):

3a. Participate in short- or long-term study abroad experience approved by Supervisory Committee.

3b. Attendance/Presentation at a professional conference related to family studies, MFT, global mental health or other area related to global family health in a country other than the United States and Canada.

3c. Presentation at a **national** conference with International Reach OR presentation at **national** conference with a focus on culture or global citizenry.

3d. Other international experience approved by the Supervisory Committee.

4. Scholarly Dissemination. Demonstration of competency in disseminating information relevant to Global Family Health through **one of the following**:

4a. Two **submitted** presentations at meetings of professional/academic organizations (one submission should be to a national/international meetings). Poster presentation submissions are acceptable. The student should demonstrate that their contribution to these products is significant and that they took a leadership role in their development and/or in the work that lead to their development.

Documentation shall include:

- A copy of proof of submission or acceptance letter (if accepted).
- Copies of participant evaluations (if available).

4b. Minimum of one **submitted** article in a peer-reviewed journal in which the student is author or co-author. As described in the APA Manual (pp.350-351) Authorship is determined based on the following:

“Authorship encompasses, therefore, not only those who do the actual writing but also those who have made substantial scientific contributions to a study. Substantial professional contributions may include formulating the problem or hypothesis, structuring the experimental design, organizing and conducting the statistical analysis, interpreting the results, or writing a major portion of the paper.” (Refer to: https://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/docs/pdf/cepi/Coauthorship_Guidelines.pdf)

Required documentation shall include:

- A list of all peer reviewed manuscript submissions with citations written in APA format and indication of publication status of each (i.e., published/submitted/in process);
- A statement of the significance of each article to your professional training;
- A description of your contribution to each publication;
- The most recent version of the manuscript (in the case of a manuscript, not yet accepted, with positive reviews, it should be in a state of readiness for resubmission)
- All correspondence with the journal, including editorial feedback; and
- Evidence that the journal is peer reviewed (if not apparent)

5. Professional Citizenship. Demonstration of professional citizenship through **both of the following:**

5a. Maintain simultaneous membership in *two professional organizations* (e.g., AAFCS, AAMFT, APA, CFHA, CFHC, IFTA, ISSBD, SRA, SRCD, STFM, NCFR) for at least one year prior to submission of Portfolio. Students should discuss potential organizations with their supervisory committee to determine best fit. Required documentation shall include:

- List of memberships in professional organizations, including initiation dates
- Proof of membership

5b. Satisfactory participation in CYAF 901: Professional Doctoral Seminar.

6. Leadership. Participation in leadership and/or professional activities. Document **at least two of the following:**

- reviewing proposals for presentations or publications
- service on departmental, university or professional organization committees
- membership on professional or service organization boards
- volunteer work at state, multistate, or national conferences
- election to office in state, multistate or national organizations
- appointment or election for committee involvement in state, multistate or national organizations
- moderation of a session at a professional meeting
- significant involvement in the departmental or college graduate student organization
- additional activities, approved by supervisory committee, may be included.

The Supervisory Committee may *require* the student to *engage in specific learning experiences* based on perceived knowledge/skill gaps.

Formatting the Portfolio

Cover Letter. The portfolio must be introduced with a cover letter (maximum 1 page) outlining:

- Introduces the file;
- Provides an overview of your major accomplishments and critical professional growth experiences; and
- Summarizes career goals.

Positionality Statements. The portfolio must include each of three positionality statements.

- Each statement must be limited to 3 – 5 pages, double-spaced, standard 12-point font, 1-inch margins.
- These should appear at the beginning of the portfolio, immediately after the Cover Letter.
- Positionality Statements should make reference to the remainder of the portfolio (specific Intentional Learning Experiences).

Intentional Learning Experiences. The portfolio **must include documentation** for all six types of intentional learning experiences.

- No specified section length.
- However, depending upon each student's unique career goals, the Supervisory Committee would expect those sections *most relevant* to the student's unique career trajectory (e.g., teaching, research) to demonstrate the student's involvement in learning experiences geared toward those specific career goals.
- The student determines whether materials/resources should be embedded within the learning experiences segments of the Portfolio or included as part of an appendix.

Additional Items. Depending on each student's unique doctoral experiences, the following items may be considered for inclusion as part of the Portfolio:

- Letters of support from students in courses taught;
- Letters of support from those (e.g., undergraduate or M.S. level students) who were supervised as part of a research team;
- Letters of support from community members, extension specialists, or agencies/organizations in which the student completed informal teaching and/or training or research;
- Annual evaluation letters;
- Letters of support from faculty in which you have worked as a Research or Teaching Assistant;
- Other (speak with Supervisory Chair about items not included here).

Portfolio Defense

Defense Process

- The defense should be scheduled for a 2-hour block of time;
- All Supervisory Committee members should receive an electronic copy of the Portfolio at least two weeks prior to the defense;
- The student will provide a brief (10-15 minute) overview at the beginning of the defense;
- The remainder of the defense consists of questions from Committee members and discussion between the Committee and the student;
- Note that the portfolio should be comprised of *independent* work; while the advisor is expected to assist with coordination, s/he will not assist with the portfolio (development, editing, feedback, etc.).

Defense Outcomes

- Based on the oral defense, the Supervisory Committee determines exam results:
 - PASS: The student successfully demonstrates mastery of the *four critical competencies* via engagement in required *intentional learning experiences* and articulation of *teaching, research, and service positionality*.
 - RE-WRITE: The student has successfully demonstrated mastery of some but not all *critical competencies*. The student may be asked to re-write any section of the Doctoral Portfolio or Positionality Statements.
 - The student and Supervisory Committee determine an appropriate deadline for which the re-write is due;
 - All members must agree unanimously to PASS the student following a re-write.
 - FAIL: The student has failed to demonstrate mastery of any of the *four critical competencies*. If a student [fails the comprehensive exam](#):
 - A letter is submitted by the chair of the Supervisory Committee to the Dean for Graduate Studies stating the conditions under which the student may attempt another examination.
 - Only one attempt may be made per academic term. Only two attempts overall are permitted, unless additional attempts are approved by the Supervisory Committee.
 - **The Supervisory Committee Chair(s) and two additional committee readers must approve the defense outcome (Pass, Re-Write, or Fail).**

A Ph.D. dissertation represents the beginning of an individual's scholarly work, not its culmination. As such, dissertation research should provide students with hands-on, directed experience in the primary research/evaluation methods of their discipline and should prepare students for the type of research/scholarship that will be expected of them after receiving the Ph.D. degree. More specifically, the Ph.D. dissertation should:

- (a) reveal a student's ability to analyze, interpret, and synthesize information;
- (b) demonstrate the student's knowledge of the literature relating to the project and acknowledge prior scholarship underlying the dissertation;
- (c) describe the methods and procedures used;
- (d) present results in a sequential and logical manner;
- (e) discuss fully and coherently the meaning of the results; and
- (f) demonstrate the student's ability to convey information clearly through writing. The work must contain sufficient detail to permit replication of the study by an independent investigator.

Dissertation Proposal

Students will draft the Introduction/Literature Review and Methods chapters to describe their research questions, rationale for those questions and procedures and proposed analysis for the dissertation study. All Committee members will read the proposal and meet together to share their approval or suggest improvements for the study. The student must receive approval from the Committee before proceeding to secure IRB approval or collecting data.

The **dissertation** is of no fixed length. The **dissertation abstract** may not exceed 350 words in length. See [Preparing a Dissertation](#) for formatting required by Graduate Studies.

Dissertation Readers

At least 3-4 weeks prior to the planned dissertation defense, the student must send a copy of the dissertation to the two designated "Readers" of the dissertation for review. This will be a complete dissertation document with Abstract, Table of Contents, and chapters for an Introduction, Literature Review, Methods, Results and Discussion, References, and Tables and Figures as necessary. If the Readers believe the dissertation is ready for defense, they are to sign the [application for final oral exam](#) and submit it to the Graduate Coordinator at least two weeks prior to the scheduled oral defense date.

A meeting will then be held (a minimum of 10 working days after each Supervisory Committee member receives a copy of the proposal), attended by all members of the Supervisory Committee. At this meeting, the student will defend the proposal as a contribution to the body of knowledge in the field.

Approval of the proposal by the Supervisory Committee will be done by a motion and vote of each Committee member. Upon a passing vote. Supervisory Committee members indicate approval by signing the cover page. If the Committee requests changes in any aspect of the proposal, the student will revise the proposal and resubmit to the Committee members, who then indicate their approval by signing the cover page. Evaluation of the Supervisory Committee members may include: approval, approval of concept/refinement of content or methodology, or unacceptable.

A signed proposal constitutes a contract between the student and the Supervisory Committee. Should the student wish to change the dissertation substantially, written agreement must be obtained from the Supervisory Committee.

Final Oral Examination

The final examination for the doctoral degree is oral and open to the University community and the public. The Supervisory Committee determines the defense's character and length. The examination may be devoted to the special field of the dissertation or to the Candidate's general knowledge, or it may be designed to test judgment and critical powers.

- The Oral Exam **must be announced**. To do so, provide the CYAF Communications Associate with the scheduled defense date, a head shot, and the dissertation abstract.
- All persons may be present during the dissertation presentation and general questioning. However, this is followed by a closed questioning portion of the examination for which all persons except the Candidate, Supervisory Committee, and invited faculty must be excused.
- The final oral examination over the dissertation may be waived only with the consent of the Dean for Graduate Studies.

Results

1. If the committee agrees unanimously that the student has passed: A [Report of Completion](#) is signed by all committee members present for the defense.
2. If only one member dissents: The dissenting member files a letter of explanation in Graduate Studies, but the student is approved for the degree and a Report of Completion is signed accordingly.
3. If more than one member dissents: The student fails to pass the final oral exam. The committee files a report on the failure in Graduate Studies, indicating what the student must do before attempting another examination. A student may attempt a final oral exam only once per term.

The Supervisory Committee reports the results of the final oral examination to Graduate Studies.

VII.

Annual Review of Doctoral Students

CYAF conducts an annual review of doctoral students.

Evaluation Process

1. The CYAF Graduate Chair will send out the instructions to students on April 15 of each year.
2. Students are asked to submit to their OneDrive folder the following documents by April 30 of each year:
 - a. CV
 - b. List of accomplishments over past year, progress toward graduation goals, and
 - c. Description of any concerns/problems/challenges to meeting graduation goals.
3. GA Supervisor evaluations will be added to the OneDrive folder.
4. Primary advisors will write the annual evaluation letter (addressed to the student) for each of their doctoral advisees documenting the student's:
 - a. Annual progress made toward graduation goals and accomplishments; as well as
 - b. Any personal and/or professional concerns that are challenging progress toward program completion.
5. Annual letters should be submitted to the Administrative Associate by May 15 of each year. The Administrative Associate will then send the letter to the advisor and the student to sign (via DocuSign) acknowledging the letter. The signed letter will be added to the student's OneDrive file.

VIII. Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are offered by the Department as funds are available. Although [graduate assistantship applications](#) are accepted at any time, applications are reviewed each February for the following academic year. Students holding assistantships must reapply.

Assistantships are competitively awarded and typically require **13 to 20 hours of service per week**. Graduate assistants are required to register during the fall and spring semesters if employed during that time, but not in the summer.

Purpose of the Assistantship

1. To provide an opportunity for mentoring between faculty and student.
2. To provide opportunities for the development of scholarship in the areas of teaching and research.
3. To assist the student in the creation of a foundation for career development.

Benefits

- Tuition remission of up to 12 hours per semester of appointment is provided as a benefit of eligible assistantship employment. Some GAs provide summer tuition remission.
- Basic individual student health insurance.
- **If a student resigns or the assistantship is terminated during the semester before 4 full months of service have been completed, all tuition benefits will be lost. The student is then responsible for paying the total tuition cost and health insurance premium.**

To be eligible for benefits, an assistantship must meet all of the following criteria:

1. The appointment is continuous for 4 full months within the semester.
2. The stipend meets the minimum requirement set by the Office of Graduate Studies.
3. The assistantship or combination of assistantships in one or more departments totals at least 13.33 hours and no more than 20 hours per week.

Overall GA Responsibilities

- Complete a plan of work with the supervising faculty person each semester.
- Complete assignments within the plan of work.
- Participate in an evaluation session with the faculty supervisor.

Teaching Assistant (TA) Responsibilities:

Work with supervising faculty to accomplish the tasks set out by the TA assignment.

- Give adequate attention to the teaching role by conscientious efforts in planning, preparing, and implementing TA assignments.
- Take advantage of orientation and training opportunities offered as professional development; use the library and other services provided by Graduate Studies on teaching and learning.
- Engage in reflective evaluation of teaching activities.

 Refer to the [graduate teaching assistant handbook](#) for complete details!

Research Assistant (RA) Responsibilities:

- Learn the research methods and ethical dimensions of the discipline.
- Maintain integrity in collecting, analyzing, and presenting research data.
- Preserve the data collected during experiments or noted during research to avoid future confusion or disputes about access or ownership.
- Recognize that the faculty advisor is responsible for monitoring the accuracy, validity, and integrity of the student's research. Careful, well-conceived research reflects favorably on the student, the faculty advisor, and the University of Nebraska.
- Maintain the confidentiality of the faculty advisor's professional activities and research prior to presentation or publication, in accordance with existing practices and policies of the discipline.

Guidelines for Determining GA Assignments:

1. Graduate assistant hours are determined on the basis of approved projects and not on the basis of faculty appointment (research vs. teaching).
2. All nontenured faculty will be given an additional number of hours of graduate assistant time when funding is available.
4. The faculty supervisor and the graduate student will determine a work program that mutually assists the faculty member's needs and that facilitates the learning of the graduate student.
5. The graduate assistantship should be a professional development experience for the student.

Graduate Assistant Evaluation

Annually, GA supervisors evaluate the quality of the GA's work through a qualitative survey. The faculty member and GA are encouraged to discuss the evaluation together. GA supervisor evaluations are provided to mentors/advisors as additional information to use when completing the student's annual evaluation.

The survey asks about professionalism (attendance, punctuality, teamwork, adherence to roles/procedures); productivity (completes assignments, responsive to deadlines, accuracy of work, thoroughness of work), communication (e.g., written, oral, responses to emails), and growth mindset (e.g., appreciates constructive feedback, accepts responsibility, shows enthusiasm). Supervisors also are asked to note any concerns they have about the student's performance relative to the assigned GA responsibilities as well as the student's mental health.

Consistently poor performance on GA evaluations could result in loss of future GA assignments.

XI. Additional Information and Resources

Conducting Human Subjects Research

Before beginning data collection you must have your research protocol approved (or exempted) by the UNL IRB.

Failure to follow this requirement will result in disciplinary action by both the IRB and CYAF.

Required Training in the Protection of Human Subjects

All personnel involved in the conduct of exempt and non-exempt human participant research must receive training in the protection of human participants as required by federal law [see: [Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects \('Common Rule'\)](#)]. Training in the protection of human participants begins with completion of a web-based training program, the [Collaborative IRB Training Initiative \(CITI\)](#). All doctoral students in CYAF will complete their CITI training in the first semester of their enrollment in CYAF 901: Professional Development Seminar.

Social Science and Behavioral Research (SSBR)

In CYAF, most of the research you will be involved in is social and behavioral research. UNL's IRB specifies the following:

“Social science and behavioral research includes all research performed with intent to develop generalizable knowledge (i.e., test a hypothesis and draw conclusions) about behaviors, attitudes and interactions among and between individuals, groups, and cultures. Generally, this category of research has no intent of producing a diagnostic, preventive, or therapeutic benefit to the participant who is not seeking nor expecting a health benefit from the research. There may, or may not, be any prospect of direct participant benefit associated with this category of research.”

Research involving human participants considered SSBR include, but are not limited to:

• Qualitative Research	• Survey research	• Observational research
• Ethnographic research	• Education research	• Criminal Justice research
• Oral History research	• Program evaluation	• Mixed-Methods research

Change of Specialization in CYAF Doctoral Program

Although infrequent, students may determine that the specialization program in which they have been admitted is not the best fit for their professional growth. Change in specialization is possible, however, students cannot progress in any doctoral program without a faculty mentor. In seeking to identify a new faculty advisor students are encouraged to carefully consider the following:

- The number of students the faculty member is already working with.
- Connection between the faculty member's research program and student research interests.
- The faculty member's working relationship with other advisees and the demands on their time that may make them less available to mentor you.
- The types of opportunities you will have:
 - What kinds of research experiences will you get?
 - Will there be publication opportunities? Grant writing opportunities?
 - What kinds of opportunities will you get to apply your knowledge in the service of others or in a policy context?

For students wishing to change specialization programs within CYAF, the following process must be followed:

1. Students must meet with their advisor in their current program to discuss a desire to switch programs.
2. Student must meet with advisor they desire to work with if the transfer is approved.
3. Student must submit a formal letter to the graduate education Chair indicating the reason for transfer and, in the letter, identify a new advisor in the specialization are they intend to switch to.
4. The student's letter and original graduate application file is reviewed by program faculty in the area in which the student wishes to transfer (CD/ECE or GFHWB);
5. If approved (and if the identified chairperson agrees to serve as the new advisor), [a formal transfer form](#) is signed by student, grad faculty chairperson, new committee chair/advisor and former advisor.
6. The form remains in student's file.

*Students may not transfer in the first semester of the program or after having submitted a Plan of Studies form to the Office of Graduate Studies.

A student wishing to change specializations should first consult with area faculty before submitting a formal request. Faculty in the new program area will review all transfer application materials. The student will be formally notified of the decision. Approval for transfer requests is at the sole discretion of area program faculty and the department chair.

Please note that continuing financial support is not guaranteed to students transferring specializations.

Probation & Termination

High quality graduate education depends upon the professional and ethical conduct of the participants. Faculty members and graduate students have complementary responsibilities in the maintenance of academic standards and the creation of high quality graduate programs. Excellence in graduate education is achieved when both faculty and students are highly motivated, possess the academic and professional backgrounds necessary to perform at the highest level, and are sincere in their desire to see each other succeed.

Students who do not adhere to university expectations of professionalism or maintain satisfactory progress may be subject probation, be terminated from a degree program, or be denied permission to continue graduate studies at the University.

Upon termination from a graduate degree program and/or dismissal from the Graduate College, students may apply for admission to another degree or admission as a non-degree-seeking student only with the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies. No student on probation may receive a Graduate degree.

For all graduate students at UNL, probation or termination recommendations may be made under the following conditions:

- violations of the [Student Code of Conduct](#);
- failure to satisfy [Scholastic Grade Requirements](#);
- failure to pass the comprehensive examination or final degree examinations; or
- failure to master the methodology and content of one's field in a manner that is sufficient to complete a successful dissertation.

✚ Termination may occur if a student fails to satisfy conditions required for removal of probationary status.

Leave of Absence

Doctoral students in candidacy are required to maintain active status through continuous registration from the time they advance to candidacy until they graduate. In the event that a student is unable to continue active participation, the student must complete an Academic Leave of Absence in order to temporarily suspend his/her graduate studies.

However, before taking a leave, you should explore alternatives, discuss the impact on their plan of study with the graduate chair and their faculty advisor, and develop a strategy for completing the degree program.

Graduate Studies Policies

[An Academic Leave of Absence](#) is granted to students for illness or injury, to provide care or assistance for family and dependents, to meet military service obligations, or for other personal reasons. A leave can be used to suspend study for one semester up to a full academic year during which the student is not expected to make progress toward their degree.

- The one-year time limit can be extended for military service or in other cases subject to approval by Graduate Studies. A leave may be granted for current and/or future semesters only, not for prior semesters.

Students granted a leave are not required to register for any credit hours for the period covered by the leave. With no enrollment, no tuition and fee costs are accrued during the leave. The time limit for reaching candidacy or for completing the Ph.D. is extended only by the number of semesters the student is on leave. For Ph.D. students in candidacy, an approved leave satisfies the continuous enrollment requirement. Students returning from an approved leave do not need to be readmitted.

Requirements

To be eligible for academic leave, you must:

- Be a doctoral student in good standing (3.0 or above), with at least one semester of prior graduate enrollment at UNL.
- Be admitted into candidacy by Graduate Studies.
- Get approval from your graduate program.
- Have no course enrollments for the duration of the leave. If you are already enrolled during the leave, you must officially withdraw from courses.
- If you are an international student, you must get approval from the International Student and Scholars Office (ISSO). SEVIS updates may be needed and immigration regulations may restrict eligibility; ISSO can help to identify other possible courses of action.

Implications of Taking a Leave

While on academic leave, students **are unable to make academic progress**, as they are unable to:

- 1) Take qualifying examinations for advancement to candidacy or final examinations for the degree (although language competency examinations are allowed);
- 2) File a thesis or dissertation;
- 3) Make extensive use of faculty/staff time or resources (except for planning a return from leave);
- 4) Receive academic credit for work done during the leave at another institution (unless approved in advance by the faculty advisor and Graduate Studies); or
- 5) Register for classes and therefore are unable to receive the benefits, services, and eligibility associated with registered-student status. This includes receiving fellowships, a graduate assistantship and associated benefits (e.g., tuition remission, student health insurance and services at the University Health Center, @unl.edu email address), and access to the UNL Campus Recreation Centers or other campus facilities (e.g., research laboratories, equipment, and other controlled-access campus facilities).

If you have federal financial aid or loans it is your responsibility to consult the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid and/or your loan agency before applying for a leave, to determine how a leave could affect aid, eligibility to defer loan repayment, and loan status.

Procedures

Students should consult their faculty advisor and the department's graduate chair to determine whether a leave is an appropriate course of action. If you decide to take a leave, you must:

- Submit a completed Academic Leave of Absence form to Graduate Studies with the required signatures.
- If approved by Graduate Studies, an email notification with a copy of the signed form is sent to the student, graduate chair, and faculty advisor.

- To extend an approved leave, you must notify the graduate program chair and your advisor at least four weeks prior to the end of the semester in which the leave terminates.
 - An extension requires approval of the department and ISSO if you are an international student
- Students must notify Graduate Studies of their intent to return, in writing, at least four weeks prior to the end of the leave.

Professional Development Opportunities

Conferences & Travel Funding

An important part of your development as a scholar is learning to share your work in professional contexts with your disciplinary peers. You are strongly encouraged to talk with your advisor about their professional organization memberships and the conferences that they attend.

As a doctoral student, you should be disseminating your work (via posters or oral presentations) at local, state, national or international professional meetings during your doctoral studies. This helps build your CV, provides a pathway to manuscript publication, develops your breadth and depth of content expertise, and facilitates professional connections.

Several resources are available to help students defray the costs associated with attending and presenting their work at professional conferences. These include the following:

- **CYAF Travel Grants.** Students may receive up to \$300 per fiscal year to present work at a scholarly meeting. To request funding, please send an email to CYAF Office Coordinator.
- **CEHS Student Professional Development Grants.** The goal is to promote professional growth and the grants are available to graduate or undergraduate CEHS student. See: [CEHS Student Professional Development Grant Program](#)
- **Larrick Graduate Student Travel Grants.** Eligibility requires that the student's advisor or co-advisor have an IANR research appointment. For additional information see: <https://ard.unl.edu/larrickwhitmore-graduate-student-travel-grants>.
- **Office of Graduate Studies.** Students may request up to \$1500 per academic year. Refer to: <https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/funding/travel-awards>.

Preparing Future Faculty Program (PPF)

The Preparing Future Faculty program at UNL is a professional development opportunity for advanced doctoral students whose career goals include pursuing a faculty position. As part of the program, students learn about faculty roles and responsibilities (research/scholarship, teaching, service) and gain direct knowledge of the diversity of higher education institutions (large public research, liberal arts, comprehensive, private religious, etc.) through a structured mentoring experience with partner institution mentors.

If you are interested in the PPF program, please review additional details the PPF website (<https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/professional-development/preparing-future-faculty>) and discuss with your faculty mentor. Students wishing to be recommended for the program should then contact the CYAF Graduate Chair.

Graduate Studies Professional Development Workshops

The Office of Graduate Studies offers workshops throughout the year to support graduate and professional development. See: <https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/professional-development/ta-workshops>.

Institute for International Teaching Assistants (ITA)

International students who were required to submit evidence of their English proficiency to Graduate Studies as part of their admission to graduate studies **must** complete the [Institute for International Teaching Assistants \(ITA\)](#) before they can receive a Teaching Assistantship.

- Institute applications are completed and submitted online by a department representative. Applications are not accepted from students.
- A waiver may be granted if the student received a 28 or higher on the speaking section of the TOEFL IBT (or 8.5 on the IELTS)/

Teaching Development Program (TDP)

Offered by UNL Graduate Studies, the [Teaching Development Program \(TDP\)](#) helps graduate students teach better and prepares them for the job search process by helping them focus on and document their teaching development efforts. Advanced graduates make a request for a TDP consultant to collect data and observe your teaching, provide data review and analysis, as well as an evaluation and documentation (often needed on the academic job market).

Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CIRTL)

CIRTL is a network of research universities across the U.S. and Canada. The CIRTL mission is to enhance excellence in undergraduate education through the development of a national faculty committed to implementing and advancing effective teaching practices for diverse learners as part of successful and varied professional careers. CIRTL training is available to graduate students and faculty. See [CIRTL Certification Requirements](#).

UNL Research Fair

The UNL Research Fair is a campus wide celebration of research and creative activity. The Research Fair is held each semester, with faculty and postdoc events in the fall, and graduate and undergraduate activities in the spring. Please see the Office of Sponsored Program page for more details: <https://research.unl.edu/researchfair/>.

ORED Grant Writing Workshop

UNL's Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) offers a grant writing seminar every spring for UNL faculty. However, graduate students may attend the seminar if room is available. For more information, see: <https://research.unl.edu/grant-writing-seminar/>.

Additional Resources to Support Student Success

General Questions:

[CYAF Departmental Website](#)
[UNL Office of Graduate Studies](#)
[UNL Registrar](#)

Writing, Statistical Support, and Design:

[Writing Center](#)

[NEAR Center](#)

[Pixel Lab](#)

[University Libraries](#)

Technology Support:

[Information Technology/CEHS](#)

Physical and Mental Well-Being:

[Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)

[Campus Recreation and Outdoor Education](#)

[University Health Center](#)

[Husker Pantry](#)

Living in Lincoln, NE:

<https://www.lincoln.ne.gov>