

Policies and Procedures for Graduate Studies
School of Kinesiology
Louisiana State University
Revised Fall 2023

All policies and procedures in this document follow those specified by the Graduate School and the School of Kinesiology. All students and faculty should consult the General Catalog of the Graduate School Bulletin for further information about policies and procedures not described in this document.

MASTER OF SCIENCE (MS) DEGREES

SPECIALIZATION AREAS

[Exercise Physiology](#)

Applied/Clinical Exercise Physiology (Thesis and Non-Thesis)

Basic Exercise Physiology (Thesis)

[Motor Behavior](#) (Thesis and non-thesis)

[Behavioral, Psychological, and Pedagogical Sciences](#) (Thesis and Non-Thesis)

Recommended courses to be taken in each M.S. specialization are presented on the website. A minimum of 30 semester credit hours are required for thesis programs, 24 of which must be in course work and six in thesis research (KIN 8000). For non-thesis programs, the minimum requirement is 36 semester hours. At least one-half of all M.S. degree programs must be in courses at or above the 7000 level.

A maximum of 6 semester credit hours of independent study can be included in a non-thesis M.S. program.

Up to a total of 12 semester hours of transfer credit from other schools and/or credit taken at LSU as a non-matriculating student may be used in the M.S. degree program. Hours transferred may not exceed one-half of the total semester hours of graduate coursework (thesis hours excepted) required for the student's degree program. Approval for these hours must be obtained from the student's M.S. advisor, the school director/department chair, and the dean of the Graduate School. For more additional information see [Transfer of Credit](#) information posted on the Graduate Catalog.

TIME LIMIT FOR MASTER'S DEGREES

Programs for master's degrees must be completed within five years from entrance into a degree program. Credit for individual courses taken at LSU more than five years before the termination of a program may be revalidated by the student's graduate committee through an examination. This examination may be oral, written, or both oral and written, depending on the requirements of the department concerned. The documentation of such an examination must be signed by members of the committee and the department's graduate advisor and reported to The Graduate School on the "[Master's Course Revalidation form](#)" before the request for the student's final

examination will be approved. Students are responsible for verifying if their department has a revalidation policy. No more than 50 percent of the courses in a student's program may be revalidated and counted toward the degree requirements. For regulations regarding time limits and eligibility of transfer work, see "[Transfer of Credit](#)" under "[Graduate School Regulations](#)".

MS Advisory Committees

All students must have an advisor (i.e., a committee chair) to be enrolled in either a thesis or a non-thesis program in the School of Kinesiology.

Non-Thesis Programs

The advisory committee for students in non-thesis programs should consist of three members. These may be from the School of Kinesiology or other departments who enjoy graduate faculty status. The student's advisor must be from the School of Kinesiology and serve as committee chair. At least one of the committee members must be a full Member of the LSU graduate faculty (see the [LSU Graduate School](#) to find a faculty member's graduate status). Selection of committee members should be agreed upon by the student, his/her advisor, and the KIN Graduate Coordinator or School of Kinesiology Director in the form of paperwork to be completed when a student intends to take the [comprehensive exam/defense](#). This committee is responsible for conducting the M.S. comprehensive examination.

Changing Advisors and Committee Members

Changing an advisor may be desirable when such change will enhance the student's ability to achieve his or her academic and professional goals. Should a student decide that it is in his/her best interest to change to a new advisor, the student should first discuss this matter with his/her advisor, the Coordinator of the Specialization area, the KIN Graduate Coordinator, or the School of Kinesiology Director. No change can be made unless another faculty member has agreed to assume the responsibilities of being the student's advisor or major professor. It should be noted that such changes should come from the student's initiative and should not be the result of other faculty solicitation of the student. Should a student wish to change committee members, the student should seek the approval of his/her advisor. No changes can be made unless another faculty member has agreed to serve on the committee.

MS Final Examinations

Students in a thesis or non-thesis program must submit to the Graduate School a request for the appointment of the examination committee at least three weeks prior to the final examination. If the student is a [degree candidate](#) in the semester/term in which the final examination is to be taken, this request must be submitted to the Graduate School by the published current semester/term deadline. Normally, the final examination is taken in the graduation

semester/term. If a student wishes to take the final examination at an earlier date, the student's committee must furnish the Dean of the Graduate School with a sound academic reason for doing so. M.S. final examinations may not be scheduled between semesters/terms or when the university is not "open for business."

To be eligible to take the Final Exam, the student must be in good academic standing. Graduate students are considered to be in good academic standing, (making satisfactory academic progress), if they maintain a 3.00 cumulative grade point average on all graduate coursework taken within the university (all LSU campuses) and a 3.00 semester average on all coursework (undergraduate and graduate), and earn a grade of "S" in research. Students who are not in good academic standing may not take any graduate milestone exams. Students on "semester probation" are not considered to be in good standing although their GPA is a 3.00 or higher. Milestone exams are defined by the Graduate School as the Master's Thesis Defense and the Master's Non-Thesis Defense.

Thesis Programs

The preparation of a thesis serves as another option to obtaining the master's degree. The master's thesis should demonstrate capacity for research, originality of thought, and facility in organizing materials. The thesis must be acceptable in subject matter and exhibit creditable literary workmanship. At least six semester hours of thesis credit are required for the master's degree with the thesis option. For additional information concerning thesis preparation, [consult the electronic thesis and dissertation guidelines](#). Final acceptance of the master's thesis rests with a committee of three or more members of the graduate faculty nominated by the chair of the major department and appointed by the dean of The Graduate School. See the "[Graduate Faculty](#)" section of the Pinkie Gordon Lane Graduate School for definitions of full, associate, and affiliate members of the graduate faculty.

The major professor, who must be from the School of Kinesiology, is designated as chair or co-chair of this committee. Other committee members may be from the major department or from other pertinent departments. If there is an external minor, one committee member must represent the minor department. Both thesis and non-thesis committees must include at least one full member of the graduate faculty. Additions to or changes in the makeup of this committee must be approved in advance by the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School. The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School may serve as a member of any committee or may appoint additional members.

If not recruited or established upon arrival at LSU, students should ask a faculty member to be their thesis advisor. This selection should be done in consultation with the Coordinator of the Specialization area in which the student is studying or possibly the School Director. Faculty members may accept or decline the invitation to serve in this capacity. Selection of committee members should be agreed upon by the student, his/her advisor, and the KIN Graduate Coordinator or School of Kinesiology Director in the form of paperwork to be completed when

a student intends to take the [comprehensive exam](#). This committee is responsible for approving the thesis proposal and conducting the thesis defense (MS final examination).

Specific information about the thesis format required by the LSU Graduate School can be found in the document [Formatting Electronic Theses & Dissertations](#), which is available online in the Graduate School's website.

Students who complete a thesis must hold a proposal meeting and a final defense. These meetings are open meetings and faculty members and fellow students are encouraged to attend.

Thesis proposal. The thesis proposal is considered a contract between the student and his/her advisory committee. Thus, a written proposal must be developed and approved by the student's committee and kept on file for future reference. The major professor, in consultation with committee members, will establish the format and content requirements for the proposal. There should be a proposal oral defense meeting scheduled for the student and committee after the major professor determines that the written proposal is ready to submit to committee members. Committee members should receive the proposal no less than one week prior to the meeting. If the proposal is approved without revisions required, committee members should sign the M.S. Thesis Proposal Report Form at the meeting. The M.S. Thesis Proposal Report Form is an internal document to be held by the School. Committee members must sign this form when they approve the proposal. If further revision is necessary, the major professor will assume the responsibility of ensuring that the revised version is distributed among the committee members for their approval and signatures on the proposal approval form. A committee meeting does not need to be called to consider the revised proposal unless the committee agrees that one should be called. The major professor should keep a copy of the approved version of the proposal and the signed approval form. The original copy of the signed approval form should be filed in the student's folder in the School of Kinesiology communication coordinator's office. Copies of the approved proposal should be distributed to committee members who request a copy.

Thesis format. The format of the thesis will be determined by the student's advisory committee. Several formats are acceptable for the School of Kinesiology and the Graduate School. The most popular option for students in Kinesiology has been the journal manuscript format, in which the main body of the thesis is a manuscript or manuscripts prepared for submission to a journal.

Each committee member must receive an electronic copy of the thesis two weeks prior to the final examination in the format determined by the thesis committee. The final examination will be an oral examination with all the committee members present. The Graduate School and Graduate Council strongly encourage Defenses in which all participants are present in person. Remote participation should be used only when there are serious impediments to physical presence at the Defense and not be used simply for the convenience of a committee member.

The format and content of this examination will be determined by the advisor and committee members. To pass this examination, the student must receive no more than one dissenting vote from the examining committee. All votes must be recorded on the examination report cards and [Thesis Defense Approval Report](#) forms provided by the Graduate School. Also, committee members approving the thesis, must sign the [thesis title page](#) provided to the Graduate School by the School of Kinesiology. The signed report cards should be completed and forwarded to the School of Kinesiology communications coordinator, who will forward them to the Graduate School.

Final versions of theses. Final versions of theses must be submitted to the Graduate School electronically as pdf documents. Because of this, students are encouraged to include in the thesis relevant still photos, video, movement analysis graphics, etc. that would enhance the thesis and would not be possible to include in a paper version.

Failure of the Master's Thesis Defense

Once a Defense is scheduled, a grade must be filed with the Graduate School in a timely manner. The only grades that can be reported are P ("Pass"), F ("Fail"), or R ("Retake"). It is highly recommended that the Defense results be filed within two weeks of the scheduled Defense date. Failure to turn in a grade defaults to an F.

A grade of P indicates that the student has successfully completed and defended the thesis or dissertation and no further work is required except minor revisions as directed by the committee. A grade of F indicates that the student has not successfully completed or defended the thesis or dissertation. An F results in the student being terminated from the program at the end of the semester or summer term in which the Defense is taken. The committee is required to provide the student feedback on why the Defense was failed.

A grade of R indicates that the student has not successfully completed or defended the thesis and that additional work, which may include a second oral Defense, is required and permitted. The committee will provide specific feedback on the remaining requirements. There is no minimum amount of time required for a retake. For a Defense retake, the only grades that can be reported are P or F.

It is the responsibility of the student to schedule the Final Defense with sufficient lead time to meet the Graduate School deadlines for graduation in a given semester. The Oral Defense and the thesis are considered an integrated requirement. It is not possible to pass one and fail the other. The committee should not sign the thesis Defense Approval Report until all requirements, including successful Oral Defense, are completed, nor should it sign the Oral Defense Report until the thesis has been successfully defended. The student has the right to petition for reconsideration.

Non-Thesis Program

Students in non-thesis programs of study must pass a written comprehensive final examination that will be given by the student's advisory committee. The student's advisory committee will determine the length and provide information about the expectations needed to pass. Committee members will be solicited by the committee chair (i.e., student's advisor) for questions and/or activities to complete the exam. These questions and/or assigned activities will be compiled by the committee chair. The examination is generally given on one day each semester or term to non-thesis students and the date and time is set by the Coordinator of the specialization.

MS students in the *Applied/Clinical Exercise Physiology* program may substitute for the comprehensive exam the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) Written Exercise Specialist Examination. Passing this exam will satisfy departmental requirements for the M.S. non-thesis comprehensive examination. Also, in cases where the student in the *Applied/Clinical Exercise Physiology* program includes on his or her committee one or more faculty members under whom the student has enrolled in classes that are largely clinical skills classes (e.g., KIN 7533), the committee may deem it appropriate to include a "practical" exam as one of the comprehensive exam sections. The content of a "practical" section of the exam should be consistent with the goals of the program and course content, and can be an effective tool for assessing the students' mastery of essential clinical skills and decision-making. This approach is uniformly taken in the comprehensive exam for the MS in clinical exercise physiology. In these cases students are required to administer a symptom-limited graded exercise tolerance test. During the test students are required to make decisions about testing based on the case history of the patient, the signs and symptoms presented during the exam, and the results of the test. In addition, the student is asked to make decisions about the treatment course of the patient, and demonstrate a thorough understanding of all elements of clinical wellness programs including patient education, risk factor modification, and exercise prescription.

Failure of the Master's Non-Thesis Defense

Once an exam is scheduled, a grade must be filed with the Graduate School in a timely manner. The only results that can be reported are P ("Pass"), F ("Fail"), or R ("Retake"). The grade must be filed in a timely manner of the scheduled exam date. Failure to turn in a grade defaults to an F. A grade of P indicates that the student has successfully passed the entire Defense and is not required to retake any or all of the Defense.

A grade of F indicates that the student has failed the entire Defense and is not permitted to retake any or all of the Defense. An F results in the student being terminated from the program at the end of the regular semester in which the Defense is taken. The committee is required to provide the student feedback on why the Defense was failed. An R indicates that the student has failed part or all of the Defense and will be permitted to take part or all of the Defense one additional time. The committee will provide the student feedback on the specific weaknesses that should be corrected. The committee determines when the retake will be given, but it must be given no later than the end of the next regular semester. For the Defense retake, the only grades that can be reported are P or F.

If the student wishes to graduate the semester during which the Defense is taken, the student must make sure that the Defense result is filed before the Graduate School deadline for graduation that semester. The student has the right to petition for reconsideration.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD) DEGREE

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Exercise Physiology

Motor Behavior

Behavioral, Psychological, and Pedagogical Sciences

AREA OF CONCENTRATION

Sport Management

The actual number of courses and hours taken will be determined by the student's major professor and program of study committee.

PhD students can include a minor/cognate area in their programs of study from another department in the university, another specialization in the School of Kinesiology, or from another university (which requires administrative approval). A graduate faculty member from that discipline or specialization should be selected who will approve the courses taken to satisfy requirements for the minor/cognate area and/or who will serve as a committee member. If a minor is from a different department, the graduate faculty member from that department serves as the minor professor and must be designated as such on the doctoral degree audit and exam requests.

Time Limit

The program for the doctoral degree must be completed within seven years from the time a student is classified as a doctoral student. Extension of seven-year limit: This time limit may not be exceeded except by special permission of the advisory committee, department chair or delegate (such as the Director of Graduate Studies), college dean, and Dean of the Graduate School. A formal meeting of the advisory committee must be held to approve any time limit extension. The extension is for one year.

PhD ADVISORY COMMITTEES

To be enrolled in the PhD program in the School of Kinesiology, a student must have an advisor (i.e., a major professor who serves as the student's PhD committee chair). The student's major professor must be a graduate faculty member from his/her specialization in the School of Kinesiology. Faculty members may accept or decline the invitation to serve in this capacity.

The main advisory committee consists of a minimum of three graduate faculty members including the student's major professor, minor/cognate professor (if included in the program of study), and at least one graduate faculty member from either the School of Kinesiology or another department.

At least one-half of the graduate faculty on doctoral committees must be full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty at LSU A&M. A minimum of two of those faculty members must be from the student's major department and at least one of whom must be a full member of the LSU graduate faculty. The remaining members may be from the major department or may be from outside the department if pertinent to the student's area of concentration.

Any declared outside minors require representation, either from among the first three members of the committee or by additional appointments to the committee. The Vice Provost & Dean of the Graduate School may serve as an ex officio member. Members of the special advisory committee are nominated by the chair of the major department and appointed by the Vice Provost & Dean of the Graduate School, who may make any changes deemed desirable.

The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School appoints a member or members of the Graduate Faculty to serve on Doctoral General and Final Defense committees. These individuals represent the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School and the entire Graduate Faculty. They are full voting members of the committee with all the rights and responsibilities of the other committee members. In the case of Final Defenses, it is the responsibility of the committee chair to ensure that the Dean's Representative receives copies of dissertations as soon as possible, but no later than two weeks before the date of the Defense.

Changing Major Professors

Changing a major professor may be desirable when such a change will enhance the student's ability to achieve his or her academic and professional goals and for the purposes of retention. Should a student decide that it is in his/her best interest to change to a different major professor, the student should first discuss this matter with his/her major professor and the Coordinator of the student's specialization area. If necessary, the student may discuss the matter with the graduate program coordinator of the School of Kinesiology and/or the School of Kinesiology Director. The student cannot change major professors unless another graduate faculty member has agreed to assume the responsibilities of being the student's major professor. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate with his/her current major professor about the change and the proposed chair should ensure that occurs in a timely fashion. It should be noted that such changes should not be the result of other faculty solicitation of the student.

Two other circumstances may occur during the doctoral program of study that are relevant to a transition in major professors. One is when a faculty member who is currently serving as a major professor leaves LSU. That professor is responsible for helping the doctoral student involved to make arrangements for that student's progression. There are three options:

- A. The faculty member can negotiate, as a part of the hiring package, to take the student to the new institution.
- B. The faculty member can work with the student to identify an advisor who is willing to take on that student.

C. If the student is nearing completion of the degree, the faculty member can maintain research affiliate status for a year, and continue to serve as the co-advisor. The faculty member must return to campus for general or final exams, as required by the graduate school. The School of Kinesiology will not pay the travel expenses. The LSU Graduate School requires that a permanent member of the graduate faculty serve as a co-chair with the faculty member who has left.

If none of these options can be negotiated, the student will leave the doctoral program. It is not the responsibility of the school to continue support when the advisor leaves, and students may not continue their doctoral work or graduate school study without an advisor.

The second circumstance is when the major professor determines that the student is not making satisfactory progress toward their degree. The advisor may decline to continue working with a student. It is the responsibility of the current advisor to notify the student in writing that s/he will no longer advise the student. The student cannot continue in the program without an advisor. S/he has one semester/term to identify another advisor. If a another graduate faculty member in the school does not agree to serve as the major professor, the assistantship (if the student has one) is terminated, the student cannot take classes, and is no longer in the program.

Changing Committee Members

Should a student wish to change committee members, the student should seek the approval of the student's major professor. As a courtesy to the faculty member being replaced on the committee, the student should discuss this change with that faculty member.

PhD PROGRAM OF STUDY

According to the Graduate School, a student is eligible to work toward a doctoral degree beginning with the semester in which he or she is formally admitted into a doctoral program. During the first or second semester in which a PhD student is enrolled, he/she should meet with his/her major professor and determine a future program of study for completing the PhD. The importance of this activity establishes a guide for students to follow for completing work needed to obtain the PhD.

The student should first prepare a working draft of the program of study with assistance from their advisor. As a courtesy to the student's committee members, course titles and numbers should be listed in addition to year taken. A minor or cognate area professor should be selected and requirements for the minor or cognate should be agreed upon and included in the program of study prior to the taking of the General Exam. Of note, the student, together with his/her major professor, should select the committee members who will review the proposed program of study.

Providing their advisor requires a meeting, the student should schedule a meeting of the program of study committee to discuss and approve a program of study. The student should provide copies of the drafted program of study to the committee members at least one week before the meeting. In the meeting with the committee, the student should first orally present his/her academic and professional background and goals, his/her research interests for the dissertation, and how the proposed program of study will help attain his/her academic and professional goals and carry out his/her dissertation research. The committee may approve, amend, or not approve the program of studies. If the proposed program is not approved, the major professor will assume responsibility for ensuring that the revised version is distributed among committee members for their approval. A committee meeting is not necessary for this revision unless the committee determines one should be called. The student's chair will then prepare a final program of study form to be held by their advisor. It is recommended that a copy of this form be filed in the in the student's folder in the School of Kinesiology Communication Coordinator's office. Additional copies should be held by the student.

The student's departmental-level academic course plan is subject to Graduate School policy and departmental requirements. Graduate coursework taken at another institution with grades of "A," "B," "P," and "S," or the equivalent may be included in the departmental-level academic course plan if accepted by the department and the student's advisory committee. However, at least one-half of the credit hours required for a graduate or a post-baccalaureate professional degree must be earned through instructional hours at LSU.

MILESTONE EXAMINATION

All PhD students must complete a milestone examination within two years (i.e., 24 months) of admission to the School of Kinesiology. This examination serves as the student's qualifying exam for continuing in the PhD program. The exam consists of carrying out a research project that must be approved by the student's advisory committee. The committee will determine the procedures for approving the project. Options for the milestone exam research project are:

- (1) an article published in an approved research journal.
- (2) a manuscript accepted for publication in an approved research journal.
- (3) a research manuscript successfully presented at an approved national or international conference that offers a peer-review submission process. In each case, the student must be the first author.
- (4) an external grant application approved by the student's committee where the student assumes the lead in the research process and submission.

The student's major professor and program of study committee will determine which research journals or conferences satisfy the milestone requirement. The research on which the manuscript/article is based may have been completed at another institution (e.g., Master's thesis research). A copy of the Milestone Examination report form is available on the school server. Committee members must sign this form when they agree that the student has satisfactorily completed the requirements for the exam. The signed form should be kept in the student's file

folder in the School of Kinesiology Communications Coordinator's office. The major professor and student should also keep a copy of the signed form.

GUIDELINES FOR PH.D. GENERAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION PROCESS, SCHOOL OF KINESIOLOGY

Doctoral students are required to pass a rigorous qualifying examination or the General Defense within three calendar years (36 months)—or a period deemed equivalent for part-time students with classification as doctoral students. An exception may be made to this if a department notifies the Graduate School. The General Exam may not be scheduled between semesters and only when the university is officially “open for business.”

According to the Graduate School, the General Exam should be considered as a comprehensive assessment of the student's "expert competence over broad segments of the major field and a high degree of familiarity with the content of a current progress in one or more minor fields." Further, “the procedure should be sufficiently rigorous so as to provide reasonable confidence that the student who passes it may proceed successfully to a doctoral degree.” Students on probation are not allowed to take the General Exam and each student must be registered for a minimum of 1-3 credit hours during the semester they take the General Exam.

In the School of Kinesiology, the General Exam is conducted by the student's advisory committee, which is formally declared at the time of applying to the Graduate School to take the General Exam. In addition to the student's advisory committee, a Graduate Dean's representative will be appointed to serve as a committee member for the General Exam. This representative will continue to serve on the student's committee through the Final Dissertation Defense Examination. A “request for the [General Exam](#) must be submitted to The Graduate School by the student's department chair at least **three weeks** prior to the proposed examination date.” Any changes to the committee “must be approved in advance by the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School.”

The general examination consists of two parts: one written, the other requires an oral defense. The written portion consists of writing a research literature review paper but may also include other related sections of what comprise a dissertation. The oral portion is typically a defense of the review paper, although the oral examination need not be limited to topics related to the paper.

The Written General Examination: A Research Literature Review Paper

The purpose of the written portion of the general examination is to develop an original review of the research literature related to the student's potential dissertation topic. This paper or information within it should be either a potentially publishable standalone document, suitable for publication in a refereed journal that publishes such reviews, a chapter in an edited book, or serve as a chapter in the traditional dissertation format approach.

Procedures for preparing the review paper. For best results, students and their committees are recommended to develop a written proposal describing the intended purpose, scope and organization of the General Exam review paper for the advisory committee. This proposal should be no more than 10-typewritten pages, with the organization and content of the proposed review paper presented in annotated outline form.

This proposal should be distributed to the student's doctoral advisory committee no later than one week before a scheduled meeting of the student and the advisory committee. The purpose of this proposal meeting is to discuss the topic in terms of its acceptability and appropriateness for the General Exam requirement, its relevance to a potential dissertation topic, and the topic's potential for publication.

Oral Examination

The oral examination will involve the advisory committee plus the Dean's Representative, who will have a vote. There is no prescribed format or length of time required for this examination. To pass the general examination, the student must receive no more than one dissenting vote from the examination committee. All votes of the examining committee must be recorded and signed on the [examination report cards](#) provided by the Graduate School. These cards should be given to the School of Kinesiology Communications Coordinator who will forward them to the Graduate School.

Once a Defense is scheduled, a result must be filed with the Graduate School in a timely manner. The only results that can be reported are P ("Pass"), F ("Fail"), or R ("Retake"). It is highly recommended that the results be submitted to the Graduate School in a timely manner of the scheduled Defense date. Failure to turn in a grade defaults to an F. A grade of P indicates that the student has successfully passed the entire Defense and is not required to retake any or the entire Defense, except minor revisions required by the committee.

A grade of F indicates that the student has failed the entire Defense and is not permitted to retake any or all of the Defense. An F results in the student being terminated from the program at the end of the semester or summer term in which the Defense is taken. The committee is required to provide the student feedback on why the Defense was failed. An R indicates that the student has failed part or all of the Defense and will be permitted to take part or all of the Defense one additional time. The committee will provide the student feedback on the specific weaknesses that should be corrected. The committee determines when the retake will be given, but it must be completed no later than the end of the next regular semester. For the Defense retake, the only grades that can be reported are P or F. If the student wishes to graduate the semester during which the Defense is taken, the student must make sure that the Defense report is filed before the Graduate School deadline for graduation that semester.

Given the nature of the oral portion of the general examination, a doctoral student has the prerogative to limit attendance to the committee members for a general exam if he or she wishes to do so. If, however, the doctoral candidate elects to combine the General Exam with the presentation of the dissertation proposal, she or he forfeits the right to limit attendance to the committee, as it is the departmental policy that all proposal meetings must be open meetings.

Continuous Registration Requirement

Doctoral candidates must maintain continuous registration for a minimum of three semester hours of credit each regular semester (excluding summers) from the completion of the general examination to the end of the semester in which the dissertation has been approved by the Graduate School.

Dissertation

According to the LSU Graduate School, a Dissertation must make a “contribution to knowledge” in a major field of study and “demonstrate a mastery of research techniques, ability to do original and independent research, and skill in formulating conclusions that in some way enlarge upon or modify accepted ideas.” The form of the dissertation must be in accordance with the [instructions in the electronic thesis and dissertation guidelines](#).

Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal is considered a contract between the student and his/her advisory committee. Thus, a written proposal must be developed and approved by the student's committee and approved report card kept on file for future reference. The major professor, in consultation with committee members, will establish the format and content requirements for the proposal. There should be an oral presentation of the proposal scheduled for the student and committee after the major professor determines that the written proposal is ready to submit to committee members. Committee members should receive the proposal no less than one week prior to the meeting. The Dean's representative can be invited to participate in the proposal process, although this participation is not required. Dissertation proposal meetings are open meetings for all members of Kinesiology and all faculty members and fellow students are strongly encouraged to attend.

If the proposal is approved without revisions required, committee members should sign the PhD Dissertation Proposal Report Form at the meeting. The Dissertation Proposal Report Form should be requested from the Communications Coordinator of the School of Kinesiology. Committee members must sign this form when they approve the proposal. If further revision is necessary, the major professor will assume the responsibility of ensuring that the revised version is distributed among the committee members for their approval and signatures on the proposal approval form. A committee meeting does not need to be called to consider the revised proposal unless the committee agrees that one should be called.

The **major professor** should keep a copy of the approved version of the proposal and the signed approval form. The original copy of the signed approval form should be filed with the School of Kinesiology Communications Coordinator. Copies of the approved proposal materials should be distributed to committee members who request a copy.

Dissertation Format

Specific information about the Dissertation format required by the LSU Graduate School can be found in the document [*Formatting Electronic Theses & Dissertations*](#).

Final versions of Dissertations must be submitted to the Graduate School electronically as pdf documents. Because of this, students are encouraged to include in the Dissertation relevant still photos, video, movement analysis graphics, etc. that would enhance the dissertation and would not be possible to include in a paper version.

The format of the Dissertation content is determined by the student's dissertation committee. Several formats are acceptable for the School of Kinesiology and the Graduate School. The most popular option for many students in Kinesiology has been the journal manuscript format, in which the main body of the dissertation is a manuscript or manuscripts prepared for submission to a journal. If this format is used, the Appendix of the dissertation increases in importance. Appendix materials include detailed descriptions about equipment, instrumentation, computer programs, questionnaires, etc. used in the research, as well as more detailed information about results, such as individual results and statistical analyses not included in the main body of the dissertation. Also, if in press or published journal articles are to be included in the Dissertation, these may be included.

PhD Final Examination (Dissertation Defense)

The final examination may not be scheduled between semesters or when the university is not officially "open for business." A request for the final examination must be submitted to the Graduate School on the appropriate Graduate School form at least three weeks prior to the proposed examination date, which must be on or before the published deadline for the current semester deadline (**see Graduate School Academic Calendar for each individual semester deadline**). The examination committee, including the Dean's Representative, must have copies of the dissertation at least two weeks prior to the date of the final examination.

The student must be registered for dissertation research hours (a minimum of three hours during the fall and spring semester or one hour during summer). The student must also be in good academic standing. Graduate students are considered to be in good academic standing, (making satisfactory academic progress), if they maintain a 3.00 LSU cumulative grade point average on all graduate coursework taken within the university (all LSU campuses) and a 3.00 semester average on all coursework (undergraduate and graduate), and earn a grade of "S" in research.

Permission to hold the Final Defense will be granted by the Vice Provost & Dean of the Graduate School only after all the foregoing conditions are satisfied and three (3) calendar months have elapsed since the student passed the General Defense.

The final examination will be an oral examination primarily concerned with the dissertation, although the committee may opt to extend the subject matter. There is no prescribed format or length of time required for this examination. The major professor and committee members will be responsible for establishing the format and content of this examination. Dissertation defenses are open meetings for all members of LSU, Kinesiology, and all faculty members and fellow students are strongly encouraged to attend. The Graduate School and Graduate Council strongly encourage Defenses in which all participants are present in person. Remote participation should be used only when there are serious impediments to physical presence at the Defense and not be used simply for the convenience of a committee member.

To pass the final examination, the student must receive no more than one dissenting vote from the examining committee. All votes must be recorded on the [examination report cards](#) provided by the Graduate School. Committee members who approve the dissertation should also sign the [dissertation approval page](#). The signed examination report cards and dissertation title pages should be completed and presented to the School of Kinesiology Communications Coordinator, who will forward them to the Graduate School. Students are not permitted to handle the report cards; that is the responsibility of the student's chair.

If the student fails (i.e., "U") the final examination, the advisory committee will attach a memorandum describing the report card "specifying if the student will be allowed to retake the exam and any time constraints." Further, the advisory committee will determine the appropriate steps to be followed by the student with regard to continuing in the PhD program. A written report of these steps should be completed with copies given to the committee members, the student, and filed in the student's folder in the School of Kinesiology Communications Coordinator's office. An overall grade of "U" indicates that the student has not successfully completed or defended the dissertation. An "U" results in the student being terminated from the program at the end of the semester in which the Defense is taken. Again, the committee is required to provide the student feedback on why the Defense was failed.

The oral Defense and the dissertation are considered an integrative requirement. It is not possible to pass one and fail the other. The committee should not sign the dissertation Defense results until all requirements, including successful oral Defense, are completed, nor should it sign the oral Defense report until the dissertation has been successfully defended.

The student has the right to petition the Dean of the Graduate School for reconsideration.

PhD Minors in Kinesiology

PhD students from other departments who choose Kinesiology as a minor should be expected to take at least 12 semester hours of graduate credits to satisfy their requirements for a minor. The actual number of semester hours as well as the courses (which can include independent study) required for the minor will be determined by the student's minor professor.

Student Appeal Process for Examinations

Should a student fail any of the MS or PhD examinations described in this Manual and feel that an inappropriate decision was made, he/she may appeal the decision. This appeal should be made in writing to the KIN Graduate Coordinator who will then appoint an ad hoc appeals committee to review this appeal. This ad hoc committee will include the KIN Graduate Coordinator, the Director of the School of Kinesiology, and one KIN faculty member who is a full member of the graduate faculty but is not a member of the student's examining committee. The ad hoc committee will review the written appeal and then ask the student, the student's advisor, and any committee member(s) directly involved in the appeal situation, to meet individually with the ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee will then provide a decision concerning the appeal and present this decision to the student and the advisory committee.

Procedures for Taking KIN 4900, 7505, and 8900 for Graduate Credit

KIN 4900 (Independent research), KIN 7505 (Problems in Kinesiology) and KIN 8900 (Independent research) are designed to provide students an opportunity to do independent research with individual faculty members. These courses are not designed as alternatives to required courses in a student's program but should be considered as courses in their own right that can be included in a student's program of study. The number of semester credit hours for KIN 4900 and 8900 is variable for any one semester, while KIN 7505 is for three semester credit hours. For KIN 4900 and 8900, the number of credit hours should be based on equivalent hours of work expected for a regular classroom course of similar credit. For example, a course for three semester credit hours requires 135 hrs. of classroom and outside the classroom work during the semester. Similarly, students enrolled in KIN 4900 or 8900 should expect to engage in at least 135 hours of work during the semester.

Because both 4900 and 7505 require that a grade of A, B, C, D, or F be given, it is important that bases for evaluation of student work be developed. Students in KIN 8900 receive a Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U). It is important for students wishing to sign up for hours in these courses first to discuss this with the faculty member with whom they wish to work. Then, the faculty member and student should complete the Student-Professor agreement form for these courses. This form provides a contract-type agreement between the student and faculty member. The student must register for the section of the course that is designated as the faculty member's section. Students are not entitled to take KIN 4900, 7505, or 8900 without a faculty member agreeing to be their supervisor.