The Department of Human Capital Development Graduate Student Handbook

2014-2015 Academic Year
(Updated: January 8, 2015)
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Introduction

About the Graduate Student Handbook
This handbook summarizes the policies and procedures for admission, enrollment, and graduation from the human capital development (HCD) degree programs offered by the Department of Human Capital Development at the University of Southern Mississippi. Please note that the Department may change policies and procedures as necessary to ensure that students succeed in the degree programs and after graduation. We hope this handbook helps you during your time with us at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Degree Programs

Doctor of Philosophy in Human Capital Development
The Human Capital Development doctoral program focuses on human capital development through the transfer of research to practice. Professionals develop critical research competencies to ask the right questions and help organization leaders make critical decisions about human capital investments. By applying research in the workplace, professionals improve their capacity for driving an organization's human capital strategy. The program draws on real-world experience and encourages professionals to engage in research meaningful to their organization.

Master of Science in Human Capital Development
The Master of Science in Human Capital Development emphasizes both a research and theory framework as well as the practical application of workplace learning and performance. The goal of the program is to prepare students to improve human performance, balance individual and organizational needs, build knowledge capital within the organization, and determine the return on investment of performance improvement programs. Students learn to think strategically to design and develop interventions that will positively affect workplace learning and performance.

Competitive Admission
Students admitted to the HCD programs must possess the highest standards of excellence academically, professionally, and personally. Students commit to engage in a collaborative relationship with faculty and their peers while completing the requirements for the degrees offered by the Department. To ensure the selection of students best suited for the USM programs, a faculty committee carefully reviews the statement of qualifications, GRE (Graduate Record Examination) or GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test) scores, academic transcripts, resume'/curriculum vitae, and reference letters of all applicants to the programs. The Department only admits students demonstrating the academic, professional, and personal qualifications needed to succeed in the rigorous programs offered.
Research Expectations

HCD degree programs are research intensive. In courses, students engage in research using the scholarly literature. At the same time, students address practitioner issues with their research. To complete a degree program successfully, students must complete a significant research project, integrating scholarly and practitioner literature. This research-to-practice model is consistent with the Academy of Human Resource Development’s objectives (http://www.ahrd.org).

Executive Format

The Department offers the programs from USM Gulf Park campus. Faculty and industry experts facilitate a think-tank learning environment where creativity flourishes and students engage with the best minds in human capital and workforce development.

Most courses consist of online sessions and one face-to-face, in-person session. The online sessions generally meet from 7 p.m. (central time zone) to 9:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. The online sessions meet in an online, dynamic, synchronous environment where participants can talk, text chat, meet in small groups, demonstrate applications on the computer, and deliver presentations. In-person sessions meet Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., one time for each course, at the Gulf Park campus. Attendance is required at all online sessions and in-person sessions.

Expenses

The expenses associated with this program include the following:

- An application fee.
- Tuition.
- An executive format fee. The executive format fee pays for textbooks, continental breakfasts and lunches during the in-person sessions, and other course-related supplies and materials.
- A graduation fee.
- Travel and lodging for in-person sessions.

See Financial Matters below for additional information about the expenses.

Admission

See http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/graduate-degree-programs-contacts-deadlines for admissions contacts and deadlines. See the desired degree program below for admission processes and requirements.
Doctor of Philosophy in Human Capital Development

Program Director: Dr. Cyndi Gaudet

Admission Process and Requirements

The process for admission to the doctoral program is as follows.

1. Complete the GRE or GMAT and request that the testing service send the results to USM.
3. Request that academic institutions attended send copies of official transcripts to the Graduate School.
4. Request that persons serving as professional references send copies of reference letters to the Graduate School.
5. Send copies of all other required material, listed below, to the Graduate School.

Students applying to the doctoral program must submit the following information required by the Graduate School and Department. Students submit most of the information required electronically as they complete the application process. If needed, submit physical copies of materials to the Graduate School at:

The University of Southern Mississippi
Graduate School
118 College Drive #5024
Hattiesburg, MS 39406

Phone: 601.266.4369
Fax: 601.266.5138

Required by the Graduate School

1. Official transcripts.
2. Application fee.
4. Immunization verification and compliance.

Required by the Department

1. Three letters of recommendation; academic references are preferred.
2. Statement of Qualifications, Goals, and Career Objectives - This statement is an important part of the application portfolio. Applicants should use the title, “Statement of Qualifications, Goals, and Career Objectives,” with the applicant’s name and “HCD Ph.D.” in the upper right corner. The statement should address the following: reasons the applicant chose this graduate program, how the applicant plans to relate the specialty area to his or her education and experience, expected career benefits from this program, a possible of interest for research, and any other matters that the admission committee should take into consideration. The statement should be a minimum of five pages double-spaced.


Program Requirements
Students in the doctoral program must fulfill four primary requirements to earn the degree. These requirements are as follows.

1. Coursework
2. Comprehensive Examination
3. Dissertation Proposal
4. Dissertation Defense

Coursework
The completion of a Ph.D. in Human Capital Development requires 54 credit hours. This credit-hours requirement includes 12 hours of required courses, 27 hours of research-based courses, and 15 hours of electives. The following is a summary of the current coursework requirements. Consult the Graduate Bulletin [http://www.usm.edu/registrar/graduate-bulletins](http://www.usm.edu/registrar/graduate-bulletins) for the coursework requirements for the year entering the doctoral program.

Required Courses (12 hours)

- HCD 640: Workforce Development Models. 3 hrs.
- HCD 660: Foundations of Human Capital Development. 3 hrs.
- HCD 725: Advanced Workforce Analysis. 3 hrs.
- HCD 715: Change Leadership. 3 hrs.

Research (27 hours)

- HCD 635: Statistics in HCD. 3 hrs.
- HCD 745: Quantitative Research Methodologies. 3 hrs.
- HCD 750: Qualitative Research Methodologies. 3 hrs.
- HCD 755: Survey Design and Administration. 3 hrs.
- HCD 760: Analysis/Interpretation/Reporting Research Results. 3 hrs.
• HCD 898: Dissertation Research. 12 hrs.

Electives (15 hours)

• HCD 643: Design and Development of Performance Improvement. 3 hrs.
• HCD 665: Human Capital Development Project Management. 3 hrs.
• HCD 675: Research in Human Capital Development. 3 hrs.
• HCD 680: Human Capital Development Seminar. 3 hrs.
• HCD 692: Topics in Human Capital Development. 3 hrs.
• HCD 720: Competency Models. 3 hrs.

The Department lists courses planned for upcoming academic terms on the Department website (http://www.usm.edu/gulfcoast/department-human-capital-development).

Comprehensive Examination

Following successful completion of all coursework, the student completes a comprehensive examination that tests the student’s understanding of the course material and ability to apply the material in HCD settings.

The student must select a faculty member to serve as the dissertation chair and confirm the faculty member’s willingness to do so. The dissertation chair must be a level 3 faculty member as designated by the Graduate School (http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/graduate-faculty-listings). The student must select and confirm the willingness of other faculty members to serve on the dissertation committee. The dissertation committee consists of a minimum of four faculty members, including the dissertation chair. All members of the committee must be level 2 or higher.

Students complete the comprehensive examination in person on campus over two full, consecutive days.

If needed, a student may take the comprehensive examination twice; however, if the student is unable to complete the comprehensive examination successfully after two attempts, the Department dismisses the student from the program.

The Department conducts comprehensive examinations one time during the fall and spring semesters.

Dissertation Proposal Defense

Following successful completion of the comprehensive examination, the student develops a dissertation proposal that consists of the first three chapters of the planned dissertation. The dissertation proposal describes the research problem the student will investigate, the purpose of the research, the research objectives, a comprehensive literature review, and the design of a study to address the research objectives.
The student works with the dissertation chair to complete the written proposal. Once the chair approves the proposal for review by the dissertation committee, the student contacts the committee members to schedule a date for the proposal defense and provides a copy of the proposal. The student creates a formal presentation of the dissertation proposal. The student and the committee meet on campus to perform the proposal defense. The proposal defense is a closed meeting.

If needed, a student may present the proposal defense twice; however, if the student is unable to defend the proposal successfully after two attempts, the Department dismisses the student from the program.

The Department conducts proposal defenses during the fall and spring semesters.

**Dissertation Final Defense**

Following successful completion of the proposal defense, the student develops a dissertation that fulfills the requirements agreed upon by the committee and the student during the proposal defense.

Generally, the first step in completing the dissertation after the proposal defense is to apply to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for permission to conduct research involving human subjects ([http://www.usm.edu/research/institutional-review-board](http://www.usm.edu/research/institutional-review-board)). In general, any research involving people requires IRB approval. The student works with the dissertation chair to complete and submit the IRB application.

The student works with the dissertation chair to complete the dissertation. Once the chair approves the dissertation for review by the dissertation committee, the student contacts the committee members to schedule a date for the dissertation defense and provides a copy of the dissertation. The student creates a formal presentation of the dissertation. The student and committee meet on campus to perform the dissertation defense.

If needed, a student may complete the dissertation defense twice; however, if the student is unable to defend the dissertation successfully after two attempts, the Department dismisses the student from the program.

The Department conducts dissertation defenses during the fall and spring semesters.

Following successful completion of the dissertation defense, the student makes all changes agreed upon by the committee and the student during the dissertation defense. The student then works with the graduate reader ([http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/graduate-reader](http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/graduate-reader)) to meet the requirements of the Graduate School.
Master of Science in Human Capital Development

Program Director: Dr. Heather Annulis

Admission Process and Requirements

The process for admission to the master’s program is as follows.

1. Complete the GRE or GMAT and request that the testing service send the results to USM.
3. Request that academic institutions attended send copies of official transcripts to the Graduate School.
4. Request that persons serving as professional references send copies of reference letters to the Graduate School.
5. Send copies of all other required material, listed below, to the Graduate School.

Students applying to the master’s program must submit the following information required by the Graduate School and Department. Students submit most of the information required electronically as they complete the application process. If needed, submit physical copies of materials to the Graduate School at:

The University of Southern Mississippi
Graduate School
118 College Drive #5024
Hattiesburg, MS 39406

Phone: 601.266.4369
Fax: 601.266.5138

Required by the Graduate School

1. Official transcripts.
2. Application fee.
4. Immunization verification and compliance.

Required by the Department

1. Three letters of recommendation; academic references are preferred.
2. Statement of Qualifications, Goals, and Career Objectives - This statement is an important part of the application portfolio. Applicants should use the title, “Statement of Qualifications, Goals, and Career Objectives,” with the applicant’s name and “MS HCD” in the upper right corner. The statement should address the following: reasons the student chose this graduate program, how the applicant plans to relate the specialty area to his or her education and experience, expected career benefits from this program, and any other matters that the admission committee should take into consideration. The statement should be 2 - 3 pages double-spaced.


Program Requirements
Students in the master’s program must fulfill three primary requirements to earn the degree. These requirements are as follows.

1. Coursework
2. Comprehensive Examination
3. Mastery Project

Coursework
The completion of a Master’s Degree in Human Capital Development requires 33 credit hours. This credit-hours requirement includes 27 hours of required courses and 6 hours of electives. The following is a summary of the current coursework requirements. Consult the Graduate Bulletin (http://www.usm.edu/registrar/graduate-bulletins) for the coursework requirements for the year entering the master’s program.

Required Courses (27 hours)

- HCD 640: Workforce Development Models. 3 hrs.
- HCD 643: Design and Development of Performance Improvement. 3 hrs.
- HCD 660: Foundations of Human Capital Development. 3 hrs.
- HCD 665: Human Capital Development Project Management. 3 hrs.
- HCD 675: Research in Human Capital Development. 3 hrs.
- HCD 691: Research. 1-6 hrs.
- HCD 699: Project. 1-3 hours. For a total of 3 hours.
- HCD 720: Competency Models. 3 hrs.
- HCD 725: Advanced Workforce Analysis. 3 hrs.

Electives (6 hours)

- HCD 690: Technology Based Learning Solutions. 3 hrs.
- HCD 695: Emerging Digital Technologies. 3 hrs.
The Department lists planned courses for upcoming academic terms on the department website (http://www.usm.edu/gulfcoast/department-human-capital-development).

Comprehensive Examination
Following successful completion of all coursework, the student completes a comprehensive examination that tests the student’s understanding of the course material and ability to apply the material in HCD settings. The student completes the comprehensive examination in person on campus. The comprehensive examination takes one full day.

If needed, a student may take the comprehensive examination twice; however, if the student is unable to successful complete the comprehensive examination after two attempts, the Department dismisses the student from the program.

The Department conducts comprehensive examination one time during the fall, spring, and summer semesters.

Mastery Project
The mastery project includes analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation of a project to demonstrate mastery of the program curricula. The student works with an organization to solve a human capital development problem. The student utilizes project management tools and techniques learned in the program to organize and present the project. The project also includes investigation of current research and literature in human capital development and illustrates writing skills. The student presents the mastery project to a committee of HCD faculty. The student may earn a maximum of six credit hours toward a master’s degree in human capital development.

Learning Resources
The University of Southern Mississippi Library maintains critical resources available to all students in HCD programs. These resources are as follows.

- HCD Library Research Guide (http://libguides.lib.usm.edu/human_capital_development)
- Research Articles Databases (available to USM students)
- Dissertation Abstracts and Electronic Copies (available to USM students)

The Department provides the following resources.
• A headset for use during online courses
• Textbooks required for each course taken

Students in the doctoral program receive two, one-year licenses for IBM SPSS software during the quantitative research course sequence.

The University uses Blackboard as the standard learning management system for all online instruction. The Department uses Collaborate, part of Blackboard, for online sessions.

Financial Matters

Tuition and Fees

Application Fee

Most prospective graduate students must pay an application fee. See https://commerce.cashnet.com/cashnete/selfserve/BrowseCatalog.aspx for information about fees and making fee payments.

Tuition

All students pay graduate tuition to attend HCD courses. For current tuition rates, see http://www.usm.edu/business-services/general-tuition-fees.

Executive Format Fee

Students in HCD programs pay an executive format fee, currently $110 per credit hours. The executive format fee pays for textbooks, continental breakfasts and lunches during the in-person sessions, and other course-related supplies and materials.

Graduation Fees

Upon successful completion of all degree requirements, students must pay specific fees depending on the degree completed. For current graduation fees, see http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/application-degree.

Academic Common Market

The University of Southern Mississippi participates in the Academic Common Market, a program offered by the Southern Regional Education Board. If the student’s home state is one of 16 that participate in this program, the student MIGHT be eligible for discounted tuition rates (i.e. a waiver of out-of-state fees). Consult http://www.sreb.org/ for more information.

Mississippi Residency and Out-of-State Tuition Waivers

Residents of the state of Mississippi pay in-state tuition rates and non-residents pay out-of-state tuition rates. Under some circumstances, non-residents might receive out-of-state tuition
waivers. For example, active duty members of the military serving in Mississippi might qualify for in-state tuition rates. Consult the Registrar’s office for information about residency requirements and out-of-state tuition waivers (http://www.usm.edu/registrar/mississippi-residency).

Financial Assistance

For information on financial assistance, consult the Office of Financial Aid at http://www.usm.edu/financial-aid.

Class Registration

Plan of Study

MSHCD and HCD Ph.D. degree programs require the student to complete and submit a plan of study, available on the Graduate School website (http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school). The plan of study identifies the courses required for the degree.

Registration Process

To register for classes, the student must meet with the program director in person or via phone for advising. Following advising, the program director notifies the student services coordinator and the student services coordinator registers the student for the appropriate classes. The student services coordinator notifies the student via email confirming the student’s registration.

General Policies

Graduate School Deadlines

The student must meet Graduate School deadlines (http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/deadlines). Failing to meet a Graduate School deadline for ANY REASON could result in the student not being able to graduate when expected. Note that some deadlines occur a semester in advance of the planned graduation date; for example, the student must submit the application for a degree the semester before the student plans to graduate.

Communications

Email

The Department uses University assigned email addresses, the EagleApps addresses, to distribute all electronic communications to students. It is critical that students check the Eagles email on a regular basis, no less than one time per week, to ensure timely receipt of all correspondences.
U.S. Postal Mail

The Department sends all textbooks and other physical communications to the address on file in the Department. If a change of address occurs, notify the Department of the new address; do not just change the address in Southern’s Online Accessible Records (SOAR).

Academic Integrity Policy

When a faculty member discovers a violation of the academic integrity policy, the faculty member may assign the student an “F” on the work involved or in the course. If faculty member believes that further disciplinary action is appropriate, the faculty member shall report the student to the dean of students.

In addition to being a violation of academic honesty, cheating violates the Code of Student Conduct, as published in the Student Handbook and may be grounds for probation, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Students on disciplinary suspension may not enroll in any courses offered by The University of Southern Mississippi. (USM Graduate Bulletin 2013-2014)

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is scholarly theft through the unacknowledged use of others’ work. More specifically, any written or oral presentation in which the writer or speaker does not distinguish clearly between original and borrowed material constitutes plagiarism.

Because students, as scholars, must make frequent use of the concepts and facts developed by other scholars, plagiarism is not the mere use of another’s facts and ideas. However, it is plagiarism when students present the work of other scholars as if it were their own work.

Plagiarism is committed in a number of ways, including the following.

- Reproducing another author’s writing as if it were one’s own.
- Paraphrasing another author’s work without citing the original source.
- Borrowing from another author’s ideas, even when rewording those ideas, without giving credit.
- Copying another author’s organization without giving credit.

Plagiarism is a serious offense. An act of plagiarism may lead to a failing grade on the paper and in the course, as well as sanctions imposed by the student judicial system. (USM Graduate Bulletin 2013-2014)
Ethical Conduct of Research Standards

When engaged in research, students must abide by standards of ethics. Specifically, all students must abide by the standards of Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR).

Conducting scholarly, research and creative activities with integrity is about meeting high ethical, professional, legal, and institutional standards. Regardless of the specific academic pursuit, responsible scholars are honest, open, and respectful of others and academic values in general. (*USM Responsible Conduct of Research Q & A, [http://www.usm.edu/research/responsible-conduct-research-q](http://www.usm.edu/research/responsible-conduct-research-q)*)

To ensure compliance with the RCR standards, the University requires that all graduate students complete the Research and Scholarly Integrity Assurance Program training offered by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). See [https://www.citiprogram.org/](https://www.citiprogram.org/) for details about the CITI training program.

Satisfactory Performance Requirements

Students must meet the following performance requirements to maintain enrollment in HCD degree programs:

1. Receive no more than two letter grades of C (and)
2. Maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0.

Attendance Requirements

Attendance is required at all online sessions and the in-person session.

Continuous Enrollment Requirement

Students must maintain continuous enrollment in order to maintain status in the program.

Degree Completion Time Limits

Students must complete the doctoral program within eight years. Students must complete the Master’s degree within five years.

Grading Policies

Each faculty member determines his or her own grading policies, which may differ from one course to the next. Consult the faculty member’s syllabus for course grading policies.
Style Guide

When preparing written reports, students must use the American Psychological Association (APA) 6 style guide. In addition, students must cite all references in the text of reports and include a reference list using the APA 6 standard.

Reasonable Accommodations for Disabilities

If a student has a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) for information on appropriate policies and procedures.

Disabilities covered by ADA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, or chronic health disorders. Students can contact ODA if they are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies.

Address:

The University of Southern Mississippi
Office for Disability Accommodations
118 College Drive # 8586
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Voice Telephone: 601.266.5024 or 228.214.3232
Fax: 601.266.6035

Individuals with hearing impairments can contact ODA using the Mississippi Relay Service at 1.800.582.2233 (TTY) or email Suzy Hebert at Suzanne.Hebert@usm.edu.

Lagniappe

Department Fulltime Faculty and Staff

Cyndi Gaudet, Ph.D., Professor and Chair, cyndi.gaudet@usm.edu, 228.214.3517

Heather Annulis, Ph.D., Professor, heather.annulis@usm.edu, 228.214.3517

Dale L. Lunsford, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, dale.lunsford@usm.edu, 228.214.3517

H. Quincy Brown, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, hamett.brown@usm.edu, 228.214.3517

Frances Lucas, Ph.D., Professor of Practice, frances.lucas@usm.edu, 228.214.3517

Suzy Robinson, Administrative and Logistics Coordinator, s.robinson@usm.edu, 228.214.3517
Course Descriptions

**HCD 635.** Statistics in Human Capital Development. 3 hours. Study of the statistics used in research data analysis in Human Capital Development. Students will learn to make, execute, interpret, and defend experimental design decisions in preparation for dissertation research.

**HCD 640.** Workforce Development Models. 3 hours. Application of different instructional models to design workforce training of facts, concepts, procedures, and processes.

**HCD 643.** Design and Development of Performance Improvement. 3 hours. Mastery or core competencies to develop and deliver training and engage learners.

**HCD 660.** Foundations of Human Capital Development. 3 hours. Examine theories, models, interventions, and professional practice issues for improving workforce productivity.

**HCD 665.** Human Capital Development Project Management. 3 hours. Advanced application of performance improvement interventions that impact today's workforce.

**HCD 675.** Research in Human Capital Development. 3 hours. Analysis and evaluation of current research in the field of Human Capital Development.

**HCD 680.** Human Capital Development Seminar. 1-6 hours. Applications, practices, and solutions for human capital development. May be repeated for a total of 6 hours.

**HCD 690.** Technology Based Learning Solutions. 3 hours. Design and development of technology enabled workplace solutions.

**HCD 691.** Research. 1-6 hours. Investigation of current research and literature in Human Capital Development; development of writing skills, a thesis/prospectus must be orally defended. A maximum of 3 hours can be applied toward a degree in Human Capital Development.

**HCD 692.** Topics in Human Capital Development. 1-6 hours. Investigation of specific topics related to Human Capital Development. May be repeated for a total of 6 hours.

**HCD 695.** Emerging Digital Technologies for Human Capital Development. 3 hours. Examines emerging technologies for human capital development.

**HCD 697.** Independent Study and Research. 1-12 hours. Arranged. Not to be counted as credit toward degree. Students actively working on a thesis or project, consulting with major professor, or using university resources and who are not in residence and are not enrolled in at least 3 hours of thesis or project credit must enroll in this course for at least 3 hours each semester.

**HCD 699.** Project. 1-3 hours for a total of 3 hours. Credit deferred until project is complete.
HCD 715. Change Leadership. 3 hours. Investigation of change theories and models to maximize change implementation initiatives in an organization context.

HCD 720. Competency Models. 3 hours. Research and development required for the design and implementation of competency models in the workplace.

HCD 725. Advanced Workforce Analysis. 3 hours. Advanced research methods and tools for evaluation of public and private sector workplace learning and performance programs.

HCD 745. Quantitative Research Methodologies. 3 hours. Statistical Methods for designing developing, and conducting quantitative research in human capital development. Examines descriptive and inferential statistical analysis techniques.

HCD 750. Qualitative Research Methodologies. 3 hours. Methods for designing, developing, and conducting qualitative research in human capital development.

HCD 755. Survey Design. 3 hours. Survey design and administration methods for social science, human capital development and organizational research.

HCD 760. Analysis, Interpretation, and Reporting of Research Results. 3 hours. Statistical techniques used for research data analysis in human capital development. Course examines interpretation and reporting research results.

HCD 780. Seminar. 1-6 hours. Study and presentation of human capital development applications, practices and solutions.

HCD 792. Special Problems. 1-6 hours. Study of Specific topics/problems (theory, practice research) related to human capital development.

HCD 797. Independent Study and Research. 1-6 hours. Students actively working on research, consulting with major professor, or using university resources, not in residence, and not enrolled in at least 3 hours. dissertation credit, must enroll in this course for at least 3 hours each semester.

HCD 891. Research in Human Capital Development. 1-6 hours. Investigation of current research and literature in human capital development. A maximum of 3 hours can be applied toward doctoral degree in HCD.

HCD 898. Dissertation. 12 hours.
Web Resources

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<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
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Checklists

The following checklists outline the processes for common activities graduate students engage in while at USM. These checklists serve as tools to guide you. The checklists do not serve as a replacement for regular contact with the student’s program director, dissertation chair, or other Department personnel.
Admission

- Complete the GRE or GMAT and have results sent to USM.
- Complete the USM admission application.
- Request official transcripts from all previous colleges and universities.
- Request professional references from three knowledgeable people.
- Submit proof of immunizations.
- Submit a statement of qualifications, goals, and career objectives.
- Submit a resume/curriculum vitae.
- Pay the application fee.

Notes
Course Registration

☐ Review all Graduate School and University deadlines.

☐ Schedule a time to meet with your advisor.

☐ Review the courses offered for the coming academic term.

☐ Select the courses you would like to take.

☐ Meet with your advisor to finalize your schedule.

☐ Verify course selections when you receive a registration-confirmation email message from the student services coordinator.

☐ Pay all fees by the University deadlines.

Notes
Comprehensive Examination (Doctoral Students)

- Complete all required and elective coursework.
- Select a dissertation chair and verify the selected faculty member is willing to chair your dissertation.
- Contact all prospective dissertation committee members to verify each person is willing to serve on your dissertation committee.
- Notify the Department’s Administrative and Logistics Coordinator of your dissertation chair and committee.
- Complete the comprehensive examination on campus during the scheduled examination period (two consecutive days, offered once in the fall and spring).
- Review the results of the comprehensive examination with your dissertation chair. (The Department releases examination results within thirty days of the examination.)

Notes
Comprehensive Examination (Master’s Students)

- Complete all required and elective coursework.
- Notify the Department’s Administrative and Logistics Coordinator of your plan to take the comprehensive examination.
- Complete the comprehensive examination on campus during the scheduled examination period (one day, offered once in the fall, spring, and summer).
- Review the results of the comprehensive examination with your program director.

Notes
Dissertation Proposal Defense (Doctoral Students)

☐ Review all Graduate School and University deadlines.

☐ Working with your dissertation chair, create your dissertation proposal.

☐ Contact all dissertation committee members to identify a dissertation proposal defense day and time at least two weeks in the future.

☐ Distribute the dissertation proposal to your dissertation committee members at least two weeks in advance of the defense date.

☐ Meet with each dissertation committee member to discuss your dissertation proposal.

☐ Prepare your dissertation proposal presentation.

☐ Complete the dissertation proposal defense.

☐ Review the results of the dissertation proposal defense with your dissertation chair.

☐ Submit the Dissertation Prospectus Approval form to the graduate degree auditor in the Graduate School by the appropriate deadline.

Notes
Research and Scholarly Integrity Assurance Program Training

- Complete the IAP training on the CITI website (https://www.citiprogram.org/).
- Create an account using “University of Southern Mississippi” as the affiliated organization.
- Complete the Common Course for USM Graduate Students.
- Complete the Human Subjects Research Course.
- Obtain completion certificates for the courses completed. Retain copies of these certificates for any IRB submissions required.
Institutional Review Board Approval Application


☐ Obtain electronic copies of any required consent form(s) from the IRB website.

☐ Complete the HSRA form.

☐ Complete any consent forms required.

☐ Prepare research material, including surveys, tests, focus group questions, etc.

☐ Send a signed copy of the HSRA with any required attachments, including copies of the IAP completion certificates to the dissertation chair.

☐ Wait for the IRB to approve the application. Do NOT conduct any research until the IRB approves the application.

Notes
Dissertation Final Defense (Doctoral Students)

☐ Review all Graduate School and University deadlines.

☐ Working with your dissertation chair, update the first three chapters of your dissertation based on the feedback at the proposal defense.

☐ Complete and submit an Institutional Review Board application if required.

☐ Conduct your study.

☐ Working with your dissertation chair, complete your dissertation.

☐ Submit the title page to the graduate reader by the appropriate deadline.

☐ Using the Student Manual for Preparing Dissertations and Nursing Capstone Projects format your dissertation as required.

☐ Contact all dissertation committee members to schedule a dissertation defense day and time at least two weeks in the future.

☐ Distribute the dissertation to your dissertation committee members at least two weeks in advance of the defense date.

☐ Meet with each dissertation committee member to discuss your dissertation proposal.

☐ Prepare your dissertation defense presentation.

☐ Send a copy of your dissertation defense presentation to each dissertation committee member.

☐ Complete the dissertation defense.

☐ Review the results of the dissertation defense with your dissertation chair.

☐ Make any changes agreed to during the dissertation defense.
Dissertation Final Defense (Doctoral Students)

☐ Submit your dissertation to the graduate reader for review.

☐ Submit the Results Of The Oral Defense form to the Graduate School by the appropriate deadline.

☐ Complete ALL changes to meet university requirements as designated by the graduate reader.

Notes
Mastery Project (Master’s Students)

- Review all Graduate School and University deadlines.

- Working with your chair, complete your mastery project.

- Schedule your mastery project defense.

- Complete the mastery project defense.

- Review the results of the mastery project defense with your chair.

- Make any changes agreed to during the mastery project defense.

Notes
Graduation (Doctoral Students)

- Review all Graduate School and University deadlines.
- Complete all required coursework.
- Successfully complete the comprehensive examination.
- Successfully complete the dissertation proposal defense.
- Submit the Application for Degree form to the Graduate School by the appropriate deadline.
- Submit the updated Plan of Study to the Graduate School by the appropriate deadline.
- Submit the updated Exit Survey to the Graduate School by the appropriate deadline.
- Submit the Dissertation Prospectus Approval form to the graduate degree auditor in the Graduate School by the appropriate deadline.
- Successfully complete the dissertation final defense.
- Submit the Results Of The Oral Defense form to the Graduate School by the appropriate deadline.
- Submit your dissertation to the graduate reader for review.
- Complete ALL changes to meet university requirements as designated by the graduate reader.
- Submit the final copies of the dissertation to the graduate reader by the appropriate deadline.
- Pay all graduation fees.

Notes
Graduation (Master’s Students)

☐ Review all Graduate School and University deadlines.

☐ Complete all required coursework.

☐ Successfully complete the comprehensive examination.

☐ Successfully complete the mastery project defense.

☐ Submit the Application for Degree form to the Graduate School by the appropriate deadline.

☐ Submit the updated Plan of Study to the Graduate School by the appropriate deadline.

☐ Submit the updated Exit Survey to the Graduate School by the appropriate deadline.

☐ Pay all graduation fees.

Notes
Definitions

**Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative**: Provides USM faculty, staff, and students with training on responsible conduct of research and appropriate actions when performing research involving human subjects.

**Comprehensive Examination**: An examination that tests the student’s understanding of material covered in the courses taken as part of the degree program.

**Department Administrative and Logistics Coordinator**: The Department representative who coordinates all department activities and distributes textbooks, materials, and information to faculty and students.

**Dissertation Chair**: The primary faculty member the student works with to complete the student’s dissertation.

**Dissertation Committee**: Faculty members who review the student’s comprehensive examination and dissertation to determine if the student has successfully fulfilled the Department’s requirements for these items.

**Dissertation Final Defense**: A formal presentation of the results of a doctoral research project and the contents of the dissertation, accompanied by discussion of all aspects of the research project.

**Dissertation Proposal Defense**: A formal presentation of the planned activities, along with extensive support from the relevant literature, of a doctoral research project and the contents of the proposal, accompanied by discussion of all aspects of the planned research project.

**Dissertation**: A formal document that presents the results of a significant, doctoral-level research project. The dissertation relies on evidence to accomplish specific research objectives.

**Executive Format Course**: A course that consists of weekly meetings (online sessions) and a multi-day, face-to-face meeting (in-person session) to present and discuss material.

**Graduate Reader**: The representative of the Graduate School responsible for reviewing dissertations to ensure that they comply with the University’s requirements.

**In-person Session**: A multi-day, face-to-face meeting to present and discuss material

**Institutional Review Board**: A committee that is responsible for reviewing all research involving human subjects to ensure adequate protection of the human subjects.
Mastery Project: A thesis that presents the results of a research project and plan of action to address a human capital development problem in an organization.

Online Session: A class session in an online, dynamic, synchronous environment where participants can talk, text chat, meet in small groups, demonstrate applications on the computer, and deliver presentations.

Program Advisor: The faculty member the student works with to plan coursework prior to completing the comprehensive examination.

Research and Scholarly Integrity Assurance Program Training: A responsible conduct of research training program required by the University for all graduate students.

Responsible Conduct of Research: Standards that govern appropriate behavior when performing research.

Student Services Coordinator: A University representative who assists students with course selections and registration.