I. Purpose
This policy sets the minimal standards for all SHP Ph.D. students.

II. Accountability
Under the direction of the Dean, the Program Director, Dissertation Committee Chair and Office of Student and Alumni Affairs are responsible for this policy.

III. Policy

Admissions

1. Students complete application, submit fees and fulfill all other University & School admission requirements (TOEFL, etc).
2. At a minimum, students submit official transcript of their highest degree; some programs may require additional documentation of the applicant's prior academic records.
3. A minimum of 3 letters of recommendation/reference forms are required; those providing references must be informed as to whether or not the applicant has waived access to this information (FERPA).
4. Normally, a standardized assessment of academic aptitude or ability is required (e.g., GRE General, Miller Analogy Test, etc.).
5. If interviews are required, they are scheduled by the program; applicant interviews may be conducted by teleconferencing.
6. Applicants must normally have a GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4-point scale to be eligible for admission.

Curriculum Requirements

1. For programs with the Bachelor's degree as prerequisite, normally 75 semester hour credits will be required for the PhD.
2. For programs with the Master's degree as prerequisite, normally a minimum of 60 semester hour credits will be required for the PhD.

Residency

1. All programs must establish a suitable residency requirement.

Transfer Credit

1. The SHP Transfer and Application of Prior Credit policy applies. Each program's application of this policy will affect the minimum number of credits necessary to complete the program (see Curriculum Requirements above).

Advisement

1. When students matriculate, they will be assigned an academic advisor from their program who, ideally, would also serve as their Research Advisor. Normally, the research advisor becomes the dissertation chair, following passage of the candidacy exam.

Grading

1. The majority of courses in Ph.D. programs span one semester and students are issued a performance grade at the end of the semester.
2. For courses that span more than one semester (e.g., dissertation courses), a student may be issued an IP
grade at the end of the first enrollment semester. When a student is issued an IP, the IP policy delineated in
the SHP Grading Policy (Academic Policy 3.0), goes into effect.

Candidacy

1. Eligibility for the candidacy exam will be based on completion of a minimum number of credits, for which
there may be distribution requirements (e.g., research, specialization, etc).
2. The candidate's research advisor normally will have been identified prior to the candidacy exam.
3. Successful completion of the candidacy exam will be documented by the Program Director/Track
Coordinator to Office of Student and Alumni Affairs, signed by the research advisor and Program
Director/Track Coordinator. Documentation will change the grade to Pass, when the candidacy exam is
credit-bearing.
4. The candidacy examination passing criteria are set by each program.
5. Students may not enroll in dissertation courses until candidacy is successfully completed.

Enrollment During Candidacy/Dissertation Phase

1. All PhD candidates, who have not filed for a leave of absence or matriculation continued, must maintain
active enrollment in applicable coursework each fall and spring semester while in their dissertation phases.

Dissertation Committee

1. Selection of the candidate's dissertation committee must precede developing the proposal.
2. Dissertation committees shall consist of a Chair from SHP (normally the Research Advisor) and at least one
other full-time University faculty holding full-title rank. The committee consists of a minimum of three
members and normally no more than five members.
3. Committee membership must be approved by the dissertation chair and be documented via submission of a
form to Office of Student and Alumni Affairs, signed by all committee members. Non-University faculty
can serve on a dissertation committee; outside members must be approved by the committee chair and a
copy of their current CV must be filed with Office of Student and Alumni Affairs at the time of signature or
have adjunct status at the University.
4. Replacement of a committee member must be approved by the dissertation committee chairperson. If it is
the chairperson, the Program Director/Track Coordinator will identify the replacement chairperson.
5. The Office of Student and Alumni Affairs is notified when there is a change in committee membership.

Readers

1. Readers may be selected from within or outside of the University. The combined composition of the
committee and readers, if the program requires a reader for the proposal, must have the majority from the
University.
2. Readers are selected by the dissertation committee chair with approval from the Associate Dean for
Research, or designee. The dissertation chair is responsible for contacting the reader(s) and assuring that the
dissertation proposal or dissertation readers will not have read the dissertation proposal prior to being
selected as a reader.
3. The reader(s)' responsibilities are to read the proposal or dissertation, provide constructive feedback,
actively participate in the public and private session with the candidate and vote on the outcome of the
defense. Readers may contact the candidate or dissertation chair as needed throughout their time as
reader(s). However, the student may not contact the reader(s).

Dissertation Proposal and Dissertation Format

1. All dissertation proposals, dissertation drafts and approved dissertations shall be formatted in accordance
with the requirements specified by the program.
2. The dissertation draft and all accompanying materials (appendices, photos, etc) must be created in a
standard, cross-platform computer-readable and editable format.

Dissertation Proposal Hearing and Data Collection

1. Students cannot schedule or present their official dissertation proposal until after they have passed the
candidacy examination. The draft dissertation proposal must be submitted to the dissertation committee
chair and Research Dean's Office at least four weeks in advance of the hearing.
2. The proposal hearing may be open to the public but must be open to the SHP community of faculty and
students. The SHP community of faculty and students will be notified of the hearing at least 4 weeks prior to the hearing. The dissertation committee chair will arrange notification and meeting logistics.

3. After the proposal, presentation, and discussion, generally 1 ½ hours, the committee and any assigned readers will meet privately with the candidate for further feedback. The committee and any readers will then meet privately to set guidelines for completion of the proposal.

4. The revised proposal will be sent to the committee for review and approval. The committee chair will decide if additional meetings are necessary.

5. Successful completion of the proposal hearing/defense will be documented by submission of a form to the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs, signed by all committee members. The chair of the dissertation committee is responsible for the completion of the form. Submission of the approved form will change the grade to a Pass (if applicable for the program), otherwise the chair of the dissertation committee will submit the grade according to SHRP grading procedures.

6. Normally, a candidate is allowed only two proposal hearings/defenses. Therefore, if the candidate is not successful, he/she may attempt the proposal hearing/defense one additional time after making the revisions required by the committee. If candidates significantly change their question or methods, the dissertation committee chair will request a second defense for the new proposal.

7. Candidates cannot initiate data collection until they have received: (a) appropriate review board approvals (human subjects or animal studies), (b) any other applicable approvals to conduct their research such as institutional approval to conduct research and approval to use the resources of an institution, (c) the approval by the dissertation committee.

Dissertation Defense

1. All dissertation defenses normally will be scheduled at least 4 weeks in advance of the defense date, or as stated in the program/track guidelines, by the chair of the dissertation committee. Copies of the dissertation must be submitted prior to scheduling the defense. A copy will be available in the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs for SHP faculty review. In order to graduate, the defense must be held at least one month prior to the anticipated graduation date.

2. Two readers will be assigned by the dissertation committee chair with approval from the Associate Dean for Research, or designee. Generally, these individuals will not have been readers of the proposal.

3. All dissertation defenses will be open to the public. Notification and circulation of the dissertation defense will be coordinated with the Dean's office and the committee. The SHP academic community will be notified of the defense 4 weeks in advance of the defense, or as stated in the program/track guidelines, as well as others deemed appropriate to be invited by the dissertation committee or candidate. After the public presentation, the committee and readers will meet privately both with and then without the candidate. After successful defense, candidates will make revisions required by the committee, if any, and then submit for final editing according to the agreed upon style guide to the Research Dean's Office. This process will be completed in less than 10 days. Editorial changes resulting from this review will be made by the candidate.

4. Successful completion of the dissertation defense will be documented via submission of a copy of the signed dissertation cover sheet to the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs. The candidate is responsible for completion of the form with the original going to the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs with a copy to the Dissertation chairperson.

5. Unsuccessful candidates will meet with their dissertation committee to determine next steps. They will be allowed one more defense.

Post Dissertation Requirements

1. After the dissertation committee signs the dissertation signature page and an original of the signature page is provided to the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs, the post dissertation process begins. This means that the committee will sign two originals: one for the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs and one for the bound copy.

2. After all approvals, candidates must submit the dissertation and the abstract to the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs in the format required by the program and as an unbound document with a check for binding of at least four copies. The bound copies will be distributed to the candidate, Library, department and committee chair by Office of Student and Alumni Affairs. As a courtesy, candidates normally provide committee members copies of their final document.

3. An electronic copy of the data file and data dictionary in the format required by the program must be submitted to the dissertation committee chairperson as well as the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs.

4. The "Continuing Review - Submission of Closure of Study" form and its closure approval from the IRB must be obtained and given to Office of Student and Alumni Affairs.

5. Candidates must submit all copies and clearance as well as be cleared of all graduation requirements by the Registrar's Office, before receiving their diploma. Student's wishing to walk in the annual May
commencement ceremony, must have successfully defended at least one month before the May graduation date and be cleared to graduate. Graduates who do not complete all requirements in time for the May ceremony are eligible to attend the next commencement.

IV. Exhibits

NOTE: All Forms referenced in this policy can be found at https://shp.rutgers.edu/registrar/.