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http://www.gs.emory.edu/

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Revised 8/2016
Part 1: Academic Affairs

1.1 Program Overview
(A) Goal of Epidemiology PhD Program
The goal of the doctoral program in Epidemiology at Emory University is to train students in the methods of epidemiology and the application of these concepts to a broad scope of conceptual issues and health problems. Students have a wide range of unique opportunities for research and education through the Department of Epidemiology and the numerous health agencies affiliated with the Department. The goal of the program is to produce epidemiologists capable of being lead researchers (principal investigators), teachers of epidemiology and public health officials. Our graduates are in positions in academia, government and private industry.

The doctoral program in Epidemiology is one of six Public Health Sciences doctoral programs administered through the Laney Graduate School (LGS) and follows the rules and procedures set forth by the LGS. For a complete guide of the LGS policies and procedures please see the LGS Handbook (http://www.gs.emory.edu/resources/handbook.php).

(B) Admissions
In any year there are between 40 and 50 students at various points in their progress towards the PhD degree. The Department receives over 120 applications a year for eight to ten spaces. Admitted students most often have an advanced degree in epidemiology or a related field, a clear statement of purpose conveying an understanding of the field of epidemiology and explaining their desire to pursue the degree, defined research interests, outstanding recommendations from faculty and supervisors, some professional/research experience, and excellent GRE scores.

(C) Research Opportunities
The Department of Epidemiology has approximately 35 primarily appointed faculty, more than 60 jointly appointed faculty, and more than 100 adjunct faculty. These faculty members are actively engaged in research in methodology; cancer epidemiology; cardio-metabolic epidemiology; infectious disease epidemiology; reproductive, pediatric and perinatal epidemiology; genetics and molecular epidemiology; social epidemiology and environmental epidemiology.

Research opportunities are available not only in the Department but also in many affiliated agencies and institutions. The Department has jointly appointed faculty from administrative units throughout the University including the School of Medicine, the Winship Cancer Institute and the Carter Center. Adjunct faculty includes researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Cancer Society, and the Georgia Division of Public Health. Seminars presented by faculty, students and internationally known investigators offer exposure to on-going research in the field and allow students to discuss research in progress.
(D) Advising

Students are assigned a faculty advisor upon entrance to the program based on the interest areas of both the student and faculty. The faculty advisor serves as a resource for progress through the program, including course selection and dissertation topic. Often the faculty advisor becomes the dissertation committee chairperson, however, the student is free to change advisors and/or change areas of interest. To change advisors, students should obtain agreement from the new advisor and notify the prior advisor, the DGS (Dr. Howards), and the ADAP (Jena Black). When a student develops a dissertation committee, the Chair of the Committee (if different from the assigned advisor) becomes the student’s advisor for the duration of the PhD program.

In addition to the faculty advisor, both the DGS and ADAP assist students with general course and program advisement, including communication of related policies specific to LGS.

1.2 Degree Competencies

The following table outlines the basic competencies that the PhD students should master upon completing their doctoral program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LITERATURE REVIEW AND INTERPRETATION</th>
<th>1. Critically evaluate scientific literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Synthesize scientific literature findings across studies, balancing limitations and contributions of each study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Render an informed judgment on the state of knowledge in an area of public health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Articulate research questions that advance scientific knowledge about the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESIGN AND CONDUCT EPIDEMIOLOGIC RESEARCH STUDIES</td>
<td>5. Conduct an advanced, original research project in the student's discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Participate in data collection through one or more of the following: developing a questionnaire, piloting a study instrument, recruiting study participants, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANAGE &amp; ANALYZE DATA</td>
<td>7. Apply quantitative and reasoning skills, as well as content-area knowledge to analyze data from epidemiological studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>8. Present epidemiologic findings clearly, in writing and orally, to students, professionals and the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRANT WRITING</td>
<td>9. Develop a proposal for extramural research funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHING</td>
<td>10. Teach epidemiologic concepts to students and peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETHICS</td>
<td>11. Complete training on the basic principles of ethics in Human subjects research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Recognize potential ethical issues in epidemiologic studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. Prepare an application to an Institutional Review Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTIVITY</td>
<td>14. Utilize information technology tools which are critical to scientific productivity including scientific literature databases and search engines, reference management software and statistical analysis software</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3 Program Requirements
To successfully complete the doctoral program in epidemiology, students must complete the following:

1. Curriculum
2. LGS/Teaching Assistant Training and Teaching Opportunity Program (TATTO)
3. LGS/Jones Program in Ethics
4. Primary Data Collection
5. Research Assistantships (RA)
6. English as a Second Language (ESL) Program (*International Students Only*)
7. Attendance and presentations at the annual Student Research and Progress Symposium
8. Written Qualifying Examination
9. Oral Qualifying Exam that includes a presentation of the proposed dissertation topic
10. Dissertation
   (a) Written dissertation document
   (b) Final oral defense of the dissertation
11. Departmental Citizenship
12. Annual Submission of Individual Development Plan and Research and Progress Report
1.3.1 Curriculum
To satisfy curriculum requirements, students must complete the LGS credit hour requirements and the Department of Epidemiology coursework requirements.

The LGS credit hour requirements vary depending on the student’s education prior to enrollment in the program. Students enter the program in either full or advanced standing and this standing determines the student’s required coursework (see below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational background (Matriculation prior to September 2013)</th>
<th>Standing</th>
<th>Credit hour requirements*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students entering with a Bachelor’s or an advanced degree not related to epidemiology | Full | • 48 hours of coursework**  
  • 24 hours of research |
| Students entering with a Master’s degree in Epidemiology or a closely related field | Advanced | • 24 hours of coursework***  
  • 24 hours of research |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational background (matriculation September 2013 and later)</th>
<th>Standing</th>
<th>Credit hour requirements*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students entering with a Bachelor’s or an advanced degree not related to epidemiology | Full | • 36 hours of coursework**  
  • 18 hours of research |
| Students entering with a Master’s degree in Epidemiology or a closely related field | Advanced | • 18 hours of coursework***  
  • 18 hours of research |

*Courses counting towards the 24 or 48 (36-18 for those matriculating September 2013 or later) credit hours of advanced standing are from courses appearing on the next page in the “Epidemiology Department Requirements” or other graduate level electives relevant to the degree and approved by the DGS. TATTO and PSI hours do not count towards advanced standing.

**Students enter Advanced Standing after 24 hour of coursework. No more than 12 credit hours in any semester may be applied towards Advanced Standing eligibility.

*** Up to 4 credit hours may be directed study if the student has already taken many electives at Rollins School of Public Health (RSPH).
## Epidemiology PhD Coursework Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Number</th>
<th>Semester Offered</th>
<th>Class Name</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EPI 530</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Epidemiologic Methods I</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 533</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>SAS Programming</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 534</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Epidemiologic Methods II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 591U</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Application of Epidemiologic Concepts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 738</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Advanced Epidemiologic Methods I</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 739</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Advanced Epidemiologic Methods II</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 740</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Epidemiologic Modeling</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 750</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Longitudinal Data Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 790R*</td>
<td>Fall, Spring</td>
<td>PhD Journal Club</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOS 500</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Biostatistical Methods I</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOS 591P</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Biostatistical Methods II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOS 510</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Probability Theory</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI XXX</td>
<td>Fall, Spring</td>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 701**</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Translational and Interdisciplinary Public Health Research</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 731</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Analytical Foundations of Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 798R***</td>
<td>Fall, Spring</td>
<td>Research hours</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TATT 600</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant Training Course</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TATT 605</td>
<td>Fall, Spring</td>
<td>Teaching Assistantship</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TATT 610</td>
<td>Fall, Spring</td>
<td>Teaching Associateship</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 791</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Teaching Epidemiology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPE 600</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Jones Program in Ethics Core Course</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Program Based Instruction (6 hours)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPE 610</td>
<td>Fall, Spring</td>
<td>Jones Program in Ethics Workshops</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Enrollment in Journal Club is required every semester until graduation unless the student is excused by the DGS

**EPI 701 and EPI 791 do not count towards 6 hours of EPI electives requirement.

***Research hours may be taken before or after the qualifying exam but must be completed to advance to candidacy
Department of Epidemiology Curriculum Requirements

The Epidemiology Core consists of **required** classes that provide students with a foundation in epidemiologic methods and statistics as well as in advanced methodologic training. Required courses may be waived if students have learned the concepts in coursework taken prior to entering the program. This is determined on a case-by-case basis upon consultation with the DGS and ADAP when the student first enters the program prior to matriculation. If the Department approves required course waivers, students must take elective hours in graduate level coursework relevant to the degree to replace the hours waived. These elective hours must be taken for a letter grade as required courses are taken for a letter grade. The elective coursework is meant to provide substantive information in areas of interest, to demonstrate how the methods are applied in different areas, and to teach students how to critically review epidemiologic literature. Students are required to take at least three substantive epidemiology courses in at least two different areas of research to equal no less than 6 credit hours. Students are encouraged to take additional electives in different areas or different departments. Required courses and all epidemiology electives must be taken for a grade; other courses may be taken with the satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading option (with permission of the course instructor).

Students must complete all required courses (except research hours) before they are eligible to take the written qualifying examination that is offered once per year in the summer. All students are strongly urged to take the qualifying exam after their second year in the PhD program; however some students may take the exam after one year with the permission of their advisor and the DGS. Students who take the exam after one year of coursework are typically those who recently completed their MPH/MSPH at RSPH.

EPI 701 Public Health Research: Discovery to Practice (1 credit hour)

All first year students are required to enroll in their first semester. The course enables students from all doctoral programs in the public health sciences to describe how research in the fields of public health (epidemiology, biostatistics, environmental sciences, health services research and health policy, and behavioral sciences) have been translated into public health practice, clarify terminology differences across the disciplines, summarize principles of community engaged research, and analyze ethical complexities of conducting community-engaged research. This course is graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

1.3.2 Teaching Assistant Training and Teaching Opportunity Program (TATTO) Requirements

All students in LGS must participate in the Teaching Assistant Training and Teaching Opportunity (TATTO) program. The program consists of four components: (1) a three-day course offered by LGS; (2) the department course “Teaching Epidemiology”; (3) a teaching assistantship; and (4) a teaching associateship. Each of these components is described in more detail below. TATTO credits on the student transcript indicate fulfillment of the degree requirement. Although academic credit is earned for these courses, the hours do not count toward the total number of credits required for the doctoral degree (24(18) or 48(36) hours). Students are encouraged to complete their teaching assistantship and associateship prior to
completing the written portion of the qualifying exam since TAing often provides an opportunity for preparing for this exam.

TATTO requirements are graded on an S/U basis. Students receiving a “U” for a TATTO requirement will repeat TATT 600 and the TATTO rotation in which they received a “U” (TATT 605 or TATT 610). Student’s earning TATTO credit do not receive payment for being a TA, however there are opportunities for paid TA positions once the TATTO credit has been completed.

Both the students in the lab section that the PhD student is teaching and the course instructor evaluate students’ TA performance. The evaluations are distributed to the PhD student, the course instructor and DGS at the conclusion of the semester, and a copy is included in the student file.

The requirements for completion of the TATTO program are as follows:

1. **Teaching Assistant Training Course (TATT 600); 1 credit hour**
   This is a three-day course taught in August. This course must be taken before students can receive credit for the teaching assistantship or teaching associateship. The course covers syllabus writing, grading, lecturing, facilitation of discussion, the use of writing as a pedagogical tool, the conduct of lab sessions and the use of new technologies. Though this course occurs in the summer, it appears on the student transcript as a fall course.

2. **Teaching Epidemiology (EPI 791); 1 credit hour**
   This departmental teaching course is taken concurrently with TATT 605 and is taught by an Epidemiology Graduate Faculty Member.

3. **Teaching Assistantship (TATT 605); 2 credit hours**
   Students assist faculty in the teaching of one of the basic epidemiology courses (EPI 530 or 534, or other courses as needed) as a lab section leader. As a general rule, elective courses do not fulfill the TATT 605 requirement. Responsibilities include: developing and grading homework, holding problem and review sessions, providing individual help to students through office hours, and other duties deemed necessary by the instructor. Students who are fulfilling this requirement must be present from the first course meeting through grading of the final exam or equivalent.

4. **Teaching Associateship (TATT 610); 2 credit hours**
   A student co-teaches with a regular faculty member by collaborating in the development and teaching of a course. Teaching Associates take more responsibility for curriculum, lecturing and student evaluation and are responsible for 15% to 20% of the course. The requirement will usually be fulfilled through EPI 534, EPI 591U, EPI 740, EPI 750 or other courses as needed. As a general rule, elective courses do not fulfill the TATT 610 requirement. Students who are fulfilling this requirement must be present from the first course meeting through grading of the final exam or equivalent.
1.3.3 Jones Program in Ethics Requirements
Students receive training in ethics in research both through the Department of Epidemiology and the Laney Graduate School. Within the required Epidemiology PhD coursework students may gain exposure to topics such as ethics in human subject research, data management, and scientific writing. The Laney Graduate School sponsors numerous seminars and workshops on scholarly integrity. Students matriculating in Fall 2012 and later are required to enroll in JPE 600 and JPE 610. Additionally, students receive at least 6 hours of ethics training related to Epidemiology through EPI 790R (Journal Club) class sessions.

1.3.4 Primary Data Collection
It is required that all PhD students have primary data collection experience during their doctoral training. Primary data collection refers to obtaining data from the primary source (e.g., recruiting study participants, conducting interviews with participants, abstracting medical chart data, collecting laboratory data, etc). Both the student’s advisor and DGS must approve a student’s satisfactory completion of at least one relevant primary data collection experience.

Although some students will collect primary data for their dissertation, it is strongly recommended that students fulfill this requirement prior to beginning their dissertation research. For most, this experience can be received during one of their RA opportunities (refer to next section).

1.3.5 Research Assistantships
All students are required to complete two research assistantships (RA) prior to advancing to candidacy. The goal is for the student to gain experience in a real research setting, performing tasks that he/she would do as a practicing epidemiologist. It could include conducting a literature review, data management, performing analyses, developing questionnaires, interviewing study participants, working in a laboratory, contributing to a grant proposal, or writing a manuscript. It is also an opportunity to develop a relationship with a faculty member and explore and develop dissertation research ideas. Specific details about the RAs include the following:

1. Two RA rotations must be completed prior to the dissertation proposal.
2. Each RA should be with a different faculty member.
3. The skills/experience gained through the RAs should be different.
4. The faculty supervisor typically has a primary or joint appointment in the Department of Epidemiology. However, in some circumstances, a supervisor may have primary affiliation elsewhere (e.g., CDC). If the student is interested in completing an RA with an individual not affiliated with the Epidemiology Department, they must receive approval from the DGS and must be (co)-supervised by a faculty member in the Department of Epidemiology.
5. The student should work **200 hours** per RA (approximately 15 hours per week over the course of a semester), under faculty supervision.

6. Research completed during the RA **cannot be counted** toward the three paper dissertation requirement.

7. Students must submit the required RA forms (located on the PhD student Blackboard site) at the beginning and end of their RA in order to fulfill their graduation requirement.*

8. Certain funding sources may have additional criteria related to RAs. Please check with the DGS or ADAP for more information.

*All forms should be submitted electronically to Jena Black with all signatures. Electronic Forms should be titled: “StudentLastName_RA1_Contract_FacultyLastName” or StudentLastName_RA2_Completion_FacultyLastName.” Do not submit forms that do not have signatures of the faculty member supervising the RA and the DGS.

### 1.3.6 English as a Second Language Program (International Students Only)

International students must participate in mandatory English assessment sessions by the LGS prior to the first day of class. Students that do not meet the minimum assessment requirements must participate in oral and written English communication classes directed by LGS. The ESL curriculum consists of three courses:

1. Intermediate Pronunciation/Communication
2. Advanced Pronunciation/Communication
3. Graduate Writing

These required courses carry 2 - 4 hours credit and are graded S/U. Courses appear on official transcripts. ESL Curriculum does not count towards the 24 or 48 hours of EPI required coursework in Full or Advanced Standing.

### 1.3.7 Student Research and Progress Symposium

Each Fall, the faculty and students convene for a one-day conference to share the research and progress of our PhD students. **All PhD students, including incoming students, are required to attend this Symposium every year.** Beginning as early as their second year, students will present at the Student Research and Progress Symposium. Students should plan on presenting approximately every other year. The setting is conducive to giving the student feedback and preparing the student for her/his dissertation proposal and defense. The research day also serves the purposes of promoting discussion about research-in-progress, introducing the incoming students to the kind of research going on in the Department and fostering collaborations through intellectual and social exchanges during the formal sessions. There are opportunities throughout the day for informal conversations between students and faculty.

### 1.3.8 Written Qualifying Examination

Upon completion of all required coursework and TATTO program the student may take the written portion of the qualifying examination. The written qualifying examination determines the student’s qualifications to develop and implement a dissertation proposal.
Students entering with a recent Master’s degree in epidemiology from Emory may take the Qualifying Exam after completing two semesters of coursework with permission from the DGS and his or her advisor. Students who enter without a Master’s degree in epidemiology or a degree from another program will take the qualifying exam after their second year.

Students who opt to take the written Qualifying Examination after only one year of study in the PhD program should be aware that the sequence of required courses is most appropriate when spread out over two years and there will be topics that are out of sequence for students completing required coursework in just one year. Students are encouraged to form study groups and set aside a period of two to three months of intense study before the examination.

The Examination consists of two parts: 1) a general section covering epidemiologic methods, data analyses, and an article critique; and 2) a substantive section.

Students taking the exam in June 2017 will be asked to identify one substantive area that aligns with their research interests no later than January 25, 2017 on which they will be tested during the QE period. The options for substantive area questions include: Cancer Epidemiology; Cardio-Metabolic Epidemiology; Reproductive, Perinatal and Pediatric Epidemiology; Genetic and Molecular Epidemiology; Social Epidemiology; and Infectious Disease Epidemiology.

The Qualifying Exam will be held during the week of June 12-16, 2017. Students must take these dates into account when making summer plans. Students are bound by the honor code and are not to discuss the examination with anyone.

The specific format of the Examination (i.e., open/closed book, hours, etc.) will be determined by the and may vary from year to year. At least two faculty members will grade each question. A letter with exam results is sent to each student from the Department Chair by mid-August. There are two possible outcomes for each section: pass or fail. A failing grade on one of the two sections of the examination requires that the student retake that section of the examination the following year. A second failure on the examination results in dismissal from the program.

1.3.9 Oral Qualifying Examination
The oral portion of the qualifying exam is a presentation and defense of the protocol for the proposed dissertation research and any methodologic or substantive material deemed appropriate by the Dissertation Committee. The student should be prepared to complete the oral examination within 12 months of passing the written qualifying examination.

The student should gain research experience (e.g., through RAs) during the first two years in the program and work with faculty to develop a proposal for dissertation research (regardless of whether the student takes the qualifying exam after 1 or 2 years in the PhD program). Therefore, students who take the written qualifying exam after their second year should not be slowed in their dissertation progress toward the degree. In fact, the students who take the qualifying exam after their second year usually have greater opportunity to gain research
experience and develop their dissertation proposal. Thus, they are likely to be able to defend their dissertation proposal at the same time as someone who took the written qualifier a year earlier but who had little time for research.

The student will prepare a written proposal to submit to the Dissertation Committee. The written proposal submitted to the Dissertation Committee must include a review of the relevant literature and a discussion of how the dissertation will make a significant contribution to the field. The proposal shall also include specific study goals and/or hypotheses, a methods section, typically including the study design, population, methods of data collection and methods of analysis for all components of the research. The Committee determines the exact format of the dissertation proposal, although typically the proposal is approximately 25 pages in length and covers many of the sections included in federal grants (NIH, CDC).

In most circumstances, members of the Dissertation Committee will have met individually or as a group several times with the student to help refine the research hypotheses and the plan to evaluate these hypotheses. The student is responsible for scheduling a time, date and room for the proposal (classrooms may be reserved at: https://25live.collegenet.com/emory/, students should consult Jacque Berry if they have any difficulties reserving a room).

Students must submit a dissertation proposal announcement (1-page summary) that will be distributed to the department (faculty and PhD students) to the ADAP at least two weeks prior to the proposal, after the Dissertation Chair has approved the announcement. The announcement must include the student’s name; preliminary dissertation title; committee members; date, time and location of the proposal; and a brief structured abstract (approximately 300-500 word limit). The abstract should include the following content: study goals/objectives and/or hypotheses; methods, including study design, population, methods of data collection and analysis methods, and potential impact.

When making a dissertation proposal or defense time students may not use Fridays between 12:00 and 2:00 pm. These times are traditionally used for Faculty Meetings, Epidemiology Grand Rounds, and Public Health Sciences Grand Rounds. Other times to avoid include EPI PhD Program Committee Meetings (typically first or second Friday of the month from 2:00-3:30 p.m. though this changes on an annual basis), EPI PhD Applicant Interviews (February 2 and 3, 2017), and the MPH Admitted Student Visit Day (typically second or third Friday in March). Students are encouraged to check potential times with their ADAP to make sure there are not any unexpected conflicts.

The oral qualifying exam will include a presentation of the proposed research for approximately 40-45 minutes, a question and answer period for 15-20 minutes, and then a closed session with Committee members only. At the conclusion of the closed session, the Dissertation Committee must decide whether or not the dissertation project is acceptable and satisfies the dissertation proposal requirement of the PhD program. It is anticipated that in most circumstances this requirement will be fulfilled since the Dissertation Committee will have been involved in the development of the project. The major objective of the oral examination is to evaluate
whether or not the student has the necessary knowledge and skills to successfully implement the PhD dissertation work. A student who fails the oral examination will be given one additional attempt. Students failing the oral examination twice will be dismissed from the Program.

The student is responsible for submitting required paperwork to Laney Graduate School (Ms. Renee Webb) immediately following the proposal that includes the LGS Committee Form and Application to Candidacy. In addition to these forms, the student must submit the Epidemiology Committee Form to the Department ADAP preferably as soon as the Dissertation Committee is formed but no later than the day of proposal. Copies of forms submitted to LGS must be also emailed to the EPI ADAP. Dissertation Committee Information can be found here: http://www.graduateschool.emory.edu/academics/policies/candidacy.html.

1.3.10 Dissertation
(A) Overview
Students are encouraged to begin exploring research topics as soon as they enter the program. The faculty advisor and DGS will help to guide the student in this search. The doctoral dissertation must meet the requirements of the Department of Epidemiology and the LGS. In particular, the dissertation must demonstrate mastery of epidemiologic research methods and the capability for independent and creative thought and research. As indicated in the LGS catalog, "the dissertation must make an actual contribution to existing knowledge or be a fresh and significant critical interpretation of existing knowledge."

Dissertation research involves elements of hypothesis formation, study design, analysis, interpretation and summarization. A student should be involved in data acquisition specific to the hypothesis under question. In some instances students will be allowed to utilize only secondary datasets for their dissertation research. In these instances the student must make a methodologic contribution to epidemiology.

Dissertation research in epidemiologic methods shall significantly advance epidemiologic techniques, methods or theory. Except in rare instances, the relevance of the methodologic research to epidemiology shall be demonstrated using existing data from a substantive study rather than simulated data.

Students whose dissertation does not involve study design and data collection (such as methodologic research) shall gain that experience before completing the doctoral program through work on some other epidemiologic study (during an RA or other arrangement). This work shall include writing the study design section of a protocol for a research project, even if that project is not implemented and being involved with original data collection for an epidemiologic research project. The student’s advisor and DGS shall determine whether or not the student’s work meets these criteria.

The Department approved piloting the Epidemiology PHD Program Committee’s proposal for a Dissertation Concept Letter and Dissertation Proposal Overview as steps between passing the
qualifying exam and making the oral proposal. All students who have not yet proposed are required to submit both the Concept Letter and Proposal Overview. Please see appendix for further detail.

(B) Dissertation Committee
Student's research is to be supervised by a committee of advisors. The committee must consist of at least four qualified individuals, fulfilling the following requirements:

- Three Committee Members must be Emory Graduate Faculty
  - Epidemiology Graduate Faculty are denoted on the faculty webpage (http://www.sph.emory.edu/cms/departments_centers/epi/faculty/index.php) with an asterisk. Students should consult their committee chair or ADAP if they have any difficulties determining if a faculty member from another department is also Graduate Faculty.
- Two Committee Members must have primary appointments as Graduate Faculty in the Department of Epidemiology.
  - Jointly appointed faculty whose primary appointment is in another department may serve as one of these two committee members (including chair) with approval of the Department Chair and the DGS.

It is recommended that the committee include a member whose expertise is related to the clinical and/or biologic understanding of the proposed area of research, and also one member representing methodologic expertise.

The PhD Program Committee will approve composition of the dissertation committee after the student submits their “Dissertation Concept Letter.” Students must meet with their committee at least once per year; it is the responsibility of the student to coordinate the time and location for committee meetings.

In circumstances where a proposed Committee Member does not have affiliation with Emory University, an outside reader request must be sent to Laney Graduate School from the DGS including a letter outlining why this particular proposed member is necessary to the Committee and the proposed member’s CV. This request should be submitted with the Dissertation Committee form and Application to Candidacy. Students are encouraged to contact Jena Black for assistance prior to submission.

(C) Dissertation Format
The format of the dissertation shall follow Emory University guidelines and shall include a number of chapters. Typically, the first chapter consists of an introduction to the problem including a literature review and justification and rationale for the research. Students may write dissertations in a traditional form with separate, additional chapters for methods, results, discussion and conclusions. However, students are strongly encouraged to include manuscripts that are suitable for publication in lieu of the results chapters; this may include three or more publishable papers. In addition to the manuscripts, the dissertation would still need to include an introduction, an elaboration of the results (e.g. more tables and details of analyses) and a
discussion of the strengths, limitations and conclusions of the research. Details of the dissertation format are negotiable with students' dissertation committee. The student must submit the complete written dissertation to his or her committee at least four weeks prior to the final defense. Students may access successful epidemiology dissertations via https://etd.library.emory.edu.

(D) Dissertation Defense

The Committee members will indicate to the student when the final oral defense of the dissertation research may be scheduled. It is expected that the full Committee will be provided the document with sufficient time to have read a complete draft prior to the oral defense. An oral presentation, which is open to the public, shall be made to Department faculty and students including a question and answer period. This public presentation is then followed by a closed-door session with the Committee. Questions and concerns may be raised at this time with the student present and requested revisions may be specified. The final discussion of approval is made by the Committee in the absence of the student. After submission and prior to graduation, the Dean reviews the dissertation. The Dean of the Laney Graduate School must approve the dissertation.

Students ready to defend their dissertation should submit an announcement for the ADAP to disseminate to faculty and students, at least two weeks prior to the defense. This announcement should include the following information: student name, title of dissertation, committee members, date, time, and location of the defense, and an abstract following the format of the dissertation proposal. Students are responsible for arranging the time and location of their defense (refer to previous specifics for coordinating the oral qualifying exam presentation).

Students should refer to the Laney Graduate School website for dissertation submission deadlines related to Fall, Spring, and Summer graduation dates. Typically, submission of paperwork and the dissertation to Laney Graduate School is required at least one month prior to the conclusion of the semester. http://www.graduateschool.emory.edu/academics/policies/completion.html

(E) Dissertation Publication Guidelines

To prevent the order of authorship from possibly becoming a problem, this should be determined as early as possible, preferably as the dissertation research begins. The student should be first author on publications of their dissertation research. The Committee Chair is generally senior author on all publications from the dissertation (this may be second or last, depending on the Chair’s preference). Members of the committee are generally co-authors on at least one publication from the dissertation. Manuscripts should be reviewed and approved by all authors prior to submission for publication. Persons who have made contributions to the study that are not sufficient to merit authorship should be acknowledged. Those who are acknowledged should agree to be named. If unpublished work is cited as “personal communication”, the individual who communicated the information should agree to have their work cited in this way.
PhD students should note that it is a policy of the Laney Graduate School that it be acknowledged on all work published during their doctoral studies. For example, PhD student affiliation should be listed as “Department of Epidemiology, Rollins School of Public Health and Laney Graduate School, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.”

1.3.11 Departmental Citizenship
Departmental citizenship enhances the learning experience. The Department expects PhD students to be active in the life of the Department throughout their time in the program. This includes attending Epidemiology Grand Rounds and other Department-sponsored lectures and seminar series, and supporting other students by attending their dissertation proposals, defenses, and job talks. Developing relationships with other students and with departmental faculty through these activities helps prepare students for their own presentations and sets the foundation for professional ties that last after graduation.

Doctoral students are expected, on average, to attend at least one Department, Rollins School of Public Health, or Laney Graduate School sponsored event a week during the academic terms. This may include dissertation proposals or defenses, EPI Grand Rounds (2nd and 4th Friday of the months during the Fall and Spring), Faculty Candidate Seminars, or a variety of Laney Graduate School workshops.

1.3.12 Individual Development Plan
In accordance with recommendations from the National Institutes of Health, all Epidemiology PhD students are required to submit an Individual Development Plan (IDP) on an annual basis after discussion with his or her advisor(s) and review with the DGS. Returning students must submit the IDP in September and matriculating students submit an IDP in January of their first year.

The IDP provides an opportunity to reflect on previous successes and look to the year ahead. This is a detailed assessment and planning document. The IDP serves as a reference point for an annual discussion with a student’s faculty mentor/dissertation chair regarding plans to achieve short and long term goals. Students are invited (and encouraged) to consult with other appropriate faculty and public health professionals in completion of this document.

1.4 Admission to Candidacy
When a student passes the written and oral qualifying examinations, that student may become a candidate for the PhD degree upon recommendation of the student's Dissertation Committee Chair. Application for admission to candidacy is made by submitting the “Application for Admission to Candidacy” form to the LGS. Information and forms related to applying for candidacy can be found at:

http://www.graduateschool.emory.edu/resources/progress.php?entity_id=5

Application for admission to candidacy requires that all coursework, including 18-24 research hours*, two Research Assistantships of no less than 200 hours each, and TATTO and JPE
requirements have been completed and that passing grades have been received on both the written and oral qualifying examinations. Students must be admitted to candidacy at least one semester before applying for the degree. Students must complete and submit the Admission to Candidacy Form within one week of completing all requirements to apply for Candidacy.

*18-24 depends on year of matriculation.

Part 2: Student Due Progress

2.1 Due Progress Expectations
Students are expected to make continuing satisfactory progress towards graduation throughout their tenure in the doctoral program.

During coursework, due progress according to Laney Graduate School, is indicated by maintaining a GPA of 2.7 or higher in each semester, receiving no grade lower than a B- in any required course, taking no more than one grade of incomplete in any semester, having no more than two grades of incomplete active at any point, and completing a TA or RA rotation during each semester of the first two years.

Receiving less than an A- in any required Epidemiology coursework may raise concerns about the student’s ability to succeed in the program and successfully pass the Qualifying Examination. Any PhD student having difficulty in coursework and/or earning less than an A- in a required course should meet with his or her faculty advisor and the DGS.

Students are expected to be making full time progress towards the degree at all times. During every semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer) after the Qualifying Exam when students are registered in five or more research hours, a Research Hours Contract Form must be submitted prior to the first day of the semester. The Research Hours Contract, found on the Epidemiology PhD Blackboard site, requires students to submit at least three measureable objectives that will focus their progress towards the degree in a particular semester. This form must be reviewed and signed by the student, the student’s advisor, and the DGS. An electronic copy of the form must be emailed to Jena Black no later than the first day of the semester. A student’s grade in Research Hours is assigned by the Faculty Mentor listed on the Research Hours Contract.

Students who are determined to be making inadequate progress by the DGS and Faculty Advisor in consultation with the PhD Curriculum Committee (based on GPA, ability to complete Research and/or Teaching Assistantships within the first two years, or receipt of an unsatisfactory grade in Research Hours) may be placed on probation. The student’s advisor, Department Chair and/or DGS will establish the terms and conditions of the probationary period (at least one semester), and the probation will be reevaluated each semester. At the end of the probationary period, the DGS will provide each student who is on probation with a written evaluation of their progress under probation. Students who meet the condition of their probation will be reinstated to good standing. The Department, rather than the LGS, will notify
the student of this action. Students who have not met the condition of their probation will continue on probation for a second semester. A student who merits a third consecutive probationary semester will be terminated from the program by Laney Graduate School unless (1) the department provides written justification for the student’s continuation and (2) the LGS approves.

2.2 Time to Degree
It is difficult to place a precise timetable for progress to graduation following completion of the oral qualifying examination because of idiosyncrasies associated with the specific dissertation research project. However, steady progress towards graduation should be maintained. Generally, students will be considered to be making due progress if their research has advanced in substantial, demonstrable ways over the past 12 months. Students are required to meet with their full dissertation committee annually and more frequent meetings are recommended.

PhD students typically complete their program within five to six years. Students complete required coursework during the first and second years, followed by successfully completing the written qualifying exam during June of their second year in the program. In their third year in the program, students typically focus on preparing their dissertation proposal and orally present it to the department by the end of their third year. Subsequent completion of their dissertation occurs during their fourth and fifth years in the program.

Students are encouraged to complete their dissertation in a timely manner making use of all research and mentoring opportunities available. The Department recognizes the dissertation process as an opportunity for students to gain skills in guided, independent research.

A student must complete all requirements for the PhD within eight years of admission to advanced standing. Extensions beyond this will be granted only under extraordinary circumstances and as described in the Laney Graduate School Handbook.

2.3 Terminal Masters Degree
Some students admitted to the doctoral program may leave the program before completing the requirements for a PhD. Such students may choose to petition the Epidemiology PhD Program Committee to earn a Master’s of Science in Epidemiology. The PhD Program Committee reviews all petitions. If the petition is approved, then all Laney Graduate School requirements for the Master’s degree must be satisfied and additional Departmental Requirements, such as a thesis, must be fulfilled for the degree to be awarded. The requirements for the Master’s degree are specified in the Laney Graduate School Handbook: http://www.graduateschool.emory.edu/uploads/LGS-Handbook_2013-14.pdf.
Part 3: Academic Policies and Procedures

3.1 Registration
Students will register for coursework after consultation with their advisor and with the aid of the ADAP. Students will self-register, or ask the ADAP to enroll them in courses, during the pre-registration period. Pre-registration begins in April for the following fall and in October/November for the following spring. Students are responsible for enrolling in at least 9 hours per semester.

3.2 Auditing Courses
Students should consult with their faculty advisor, DGS and ADAP as needed prior to registering. All courses taken as audit status and/or outside RSPH require instructor permission. If, upon consultation with their advisor, the student chooses to audit a course or register for a course outside RSPH, the student must first get permission via email from the course instructor. The email approval should be submitted to the Epidemiology Department ADAP for registration in the course. Audited courses do not fulfill degree requirements, count towards full-time student status, or fulfill specific hour requirements.

3.3 Grades
Courses have the following grading options: letter grade (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, or F), satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) or audit. All required courses and epidemiology electives must be taken for a letter grade; other courses may be taken for S/U or audit, provided the student obtains permission from the instructor of the course and the course is not counting towards advanced standing hours.

Please note that per Laney Graduate School Policy (1.1.1 C), courses in which students receive a letter grade of C do NOT count towards the 24 (18) or 48 (36) hour coursework requirement.

TATTO requirements are graded on an S/U basis. Students receiving a “U” for a TATTO requirement are required to repeat the unsatisfactorily performed teaching experience (including TATT 600).

3.4 Add/Drop/ Swap
Students may change their course schedule through OPUS during add/drop period. This period usually occurs during the first five days after registration in the fall and spring semesters.

3.5 Transfer Credit
Coursework taken at other institutions may be accepted as transfer credit toward a degree program with departmental approval. To be considered for transfer credit, the coursework cannot have been used toward another degree and must have been completed within eight years prior to entering the Epidemiology program.
3.6 Course Waivers
Students may petition the Department to waive out of a required course if they can demonstrate they have sufficient knowledge in the subject matter. If a student would like to waive a required course he or she must submit a detailed syllabus of a course covering the same material that has been previously taken. If approved, the student will be required to replace those hours with electives. See the Department ADAP for more information.

3.7 Leaves of Absence
A student in good standing may be granted two one-year leaves of absence. A leave of absence provides time away from the program for the student to attend to any personal or family issues. Time spent in leave of absence does not count towards the eight-year limit in advanced standing. Students interested in taking a leave of absence should first contact the DGS and ADAP; if they approve, the Department forwards a recommendation that the student be granted the leave of absence to the LGS Dean who provides final approval. For additional information, see the LGS Handbook. Per LGS policy, a readmission form must be filled out by the student returning from a leave of absence. This may be done as early as the pre-registration period prior to the semester the student wishes to return or at least two weeks prior to registration.

3.8 Completion of Degree
A student approaching the end of a degree program is responsible for ensuring that all Departmental, Laney Graduate School and University requirements are met. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of and to meet all deadlines. Failure to do so may result in failure to receive the degree until the following semester. Students must be registered in the semester they receive their degree. Detailed steps for graduation are available at: http://www.gs.emory.edu/resources/progress.php?entity_id=7. Consult the ADAP or DGS regarding the latest policy on restricting access to your dissertation submitted through the Emory Electronic Dissertation (EDT) system.

Part 4: Financial Information

4.1 Tuition and Stipend Information
Most doctoral students accepted into Epidemiology receive funding either from the Laney Graduate School (merit scholarship) or from an external source (e.g., training grant). PhD students matriculating in Fall 2012 and later will receive two years of institutional funding that includes almost full tuition support and stipend support 12 months set at the NIH predoctoral training level. In most instances, this support will come from the Laney Graduate School, but may be in the form of training grants or faculty mentor funding. This support covers the student’s time to complete coursework, RA, and TA requirements. Students receiving a stipend, who are in good standing, and who are in years 1-4, most often receive health insurance.
Students receiving stipends must be registered as full-time students (9 credit hours/semester) during the period that they are receiving their stipend and be in good standing with both Laney Graduate School and the Department of Epidemiology. During the summer, students must register for 9 credit hours of Research to maintain their full-time student status. Students are expected to be working full-time towards their degree during the summer although not enrolled in coursework.

After the second year, students are expected to transition to alternative sources of funding such as training or research grants, dissertation grant support, fellowships, etc. Towards the end of their first year, students will work with their advisor, mentors and DGS to develop a plan for ongoing support. Students are encouraged to proactively seek funding opportunities; in this process, they will gain valuable experience in proposal writing and the funding process. Students admitted to the program will be provided with ample opportunities and help by faculty to successfully obtain funding after year 2.

4.2 External Funding
Given the importance of grantsmanship to professional development in the field of epidemiology, students are encouraged to seek external funding for research projects through writing grants to federal or private agencies. Students who seek external funding should discuss their plans with their advisor or dissertation chair. The student’s advisor/chair administrative support person can assist with navigating the Emory financial and Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) systems. The DGS should also be informed of any grant submissions.

4.3 Student Fees
Students are responsible for all activity, athletic, computing and mental health fees throughout their tenure in the doctoral program unless a Training Grant or other funding source specifically covers these fees.

4.4 Employment while receiving a stipend
Students receiving stipends must request special permission from the Department and the Laney Graduate School Dean before accepting any employment for Fall, Spring, and Summer terms. To facilitate meeting this requirement, all students must submit information regarding their employment to the DGS and ADAP each semester via email. Employment of up to 10 hours per week is usually approved by the DGS and ADAP and Principle Investigator of the funding source (if applicable). Students receiving a stipend may not work more than 10 hours/week within and outside Emory while receiving a stipend. If a student plans to work more than ten hours a week at any time while receiving a stipend from Emory, the student must contact the DGS and ADAP.

After eight years in Advanced Standing, tuition scholarships are no longer provided. If the student is granted an extension, he/she will be responsible for paying tuition until the approved graduation date.
A summary of tuition and fees can be found here:
http://www.gs.emory.edu/financial_support/scholarships/index.html

4.5 Professional Development Support Funds
All students are encouraged to apply for PDS funds for financial assistance with attending
conferences, gaining special training that is not available at Emory, and conducting research.
Approval from the DGS must be acquired prior PDS fund submission. Instructions for applying
and application forms can be found at:
http://www.gs.emory.edu/resources/professional.php?entity_id=23

Students are strongly encouraged to plan to request funds in advance of conference deadlines.
PDS applications for funding are typically not accepted mid-June through mid-September.

Money for conference attendance is reimbursed after the student has returned from the
conference. The form for reimbursement is located on the PhD student Blackboard site and
should be submitted to Ms. Jacque Berry, Epidemiology Department Program Coordinator,
(CNR 3000B).

Part 5: Grievance Policy

Students who have a grievance related to some aspect of their PhD program in Epidemiology
should report it to the DGS. The student should describe the grievance and relevant details in a
letter addressed to the DGS, who will try, if possible, to resolve the grievance in conversation
with the student and relevant parties. If this is not successful, the DGS will appoint a committee
of three Epidemiology Graduate faculty members (or faculty members outside the
Epidemiology Graduate Faculty if the situation warrants) who will review the grievance and
propose an appropriate response. If it is impossible to resolve the grievance within this
committee or within the framework of the Epidemiology PhD administrative structure, the DGS
will forward the grievance to the Office of the Senior Associate Dean of the Laney Graduate
School. From this point forward, the grievance will be handled according to the Grievance
Procedure outlined in the Laney Graduate School Handbook. If the issue is with the DGS, the
student should go directly to the Senior Associate Dean of the Laney Graduate School.
Appendix

Course plans vary by student and depend on the courses the student has completed prior to entering the PhD program. All students MUST be registered for at least 9 hours a semester to be in full-time status. The below course plans do not include TATTO class hours or other course requirements NOT specified as EPI required coursework on page 5.

Possible course plan for a student entering without a Master’s degree in epidemiology (Departmental Full Standing)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequence for Entering Students without a Masters Degree in Epidemiology</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 530 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI Methods 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOS 500 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biostats 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 533 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOS 510 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probability Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 790R (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 701 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPE 600 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested TA/RA Order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 530; TA EPI 530 if waived</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Possible course plan for a student entering without a Master’s degree in epidemiology (Departmental Full Standing)
Possible course plan for a student entering with a Master’s degree in Epidemiology or a related field (Departmental Advanced Standing) from a program outside of Rollins School of Public Health; exact courses will depend on the student’s prior coursework completed.

| Required Course Sequence for Students Entering with an MPH in EPI (Not RSPH) |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| **Fall 1**                    | **Spring 1**    | **Fall 2**      | **Spring 2**    |
| EPI 530 (4)                   | EPI 534 (3)     | EPI 739 (2)     | EPI 750 (3)     |
| EPI Methods 1 (Typically waived) | EPI Methods II | Advanced EPI Methods II | Longitudinal |
| BIOS 500 (4)                  | BIOS 501 (4)    | BIOS 790R (1)   | EPI 790R (1)    |
| Biostats 1 (Typically waived) | Biostats II     | Journal Club    | Journal Club    |
| EPI 533 (1)                   | BIOS 510 (4)    | BIOS 790R (1)   | BIOS 790R (1)   |
| SAS (Typically waived)        | Probability Theory | Electives | Electives |
| BIOS 790R (1)                 | EPI 731 (3)     | EPI 790R (1)    | JPE 605 (0)     |
| Journal Club                  | Analytical Foundations of EPI | Journal Club | |
| EPI 701 (1)                   | Elective(s)     | EPI 790R (1)    | JPE 605 (0)     |
| JPE 600 (0)                   |                  | EPI 790R (1)    |                 |
| **Suggested TA/RA Order**    | **Suggested TA/RA Order** |
| TA EPI 530                    | RA              | RA              | TA 534 or 591U or RA |
Possible course plan for a student entering with a Master’s degree in Epidemiology or a related field (Departmental Advanced Standing) from Rollins School of Public Health; exact courses will depend on the student’s prior courses completed. Student’s taking just one year of coursework prior to the written qualifying exam should note that some topics will be taught out of order since the ideal sequence of courses takes two years to complete.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequence for Students Entering with an MPH in EPI from RSPH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOS 510 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probability Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 739 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Methods II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 790R (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPI 701 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPE 600 (0)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suggested TA/RA Order</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Suggested TA/RA Order:
- TA EPI 530 or EPI 740
- TA EPI 534 or 591U
- RA
- RA
# Epidemiology PhD Program Candidacy Checklist

For Students Matriculating Fall 2013 and later

## Coursework Requirements
- Completion of specified required Epidemiology coursework
- Completion of 6 EPI Elective hours from at least two substantive areas
- Minimum GPA of 2.7
- No I (Incomplete) or IP (In Progress) on record
- If entering in Full Standing, completion of no less than 18 credit hours towards Full Standing with no more than 9 credit hours/semester counting towards the 18*
- Completion of no less than 18 credit hours in Advanced Candidacy (see handbook) with no more than 9 hours/semester counting towards the 18*

## Research Hours Requirements
- Satisfactory completion of no less than 18 hours of EPI 798R with no more than 9 hours/semester counting towards the 18

## Primary Data Requirement
- DGS and Advisor approval that Primary Data Collection Requirement is complete OR approval dissertation involves significant primary data collection experience

## Research Assistantships
- Completion of TWO approved Research Assistantships of no less than 200 hours/each

## Jones Program in Ethics
- Complete PSI 600 course
- Completion of PSI 605 workshops

## TATTO
- Completion of TATT 600
- Completion of TATT 605 (TA 1)
- Completion of EPI 791 (Concurrent with TATT 605)
- Completion of TATT 610 (TA 2)

## Qualifying Exam
- Pass Written Qualifying Exam
- Pass Oral Qualifying Exam (Dissertation Proposal including written proposal)

## Paperwork Completion to move to Candidacy
- Submit EPI Department Dissertation Committee Form (found on Blackboard) as soon as Committee is identified to Jena Black
- Submit Committee Approved Dissertation Proposal Announcement to ADAP NO LESS than two weeks prior to proposal.
- Completion Application to Candidacy found on LGS website including DGS signature and submit to LGS (Ms. Renee Webb) with copy to ADAP
- Submit Dissertation Committee Form found on LGS website including signatures from Committee Members and DGS (copy to ADAP) AFTER Dissertation Proposal to LGS (Ms. Renee Webb)
- If a committee member is outside of Emory, work with ADAP to complete paperwork for Outside Reader Request that is submitted with Application to Candidacy and Dissertation Committee Form.

Students are encouraged to consult the Laney Graduate School information on degree completion or later then submitting the Application for Candidacy:  
http://www.gs.emory.edu/academics/policies/completion.html

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* 18 hours

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Pilot Plan for Pre-Proposal Dissertation Research Progress Reports

PhD Dissertation Concept Letter

Students are expected to submit the Dissertation Concept Letter no later than October 15th of their third fall in the program.

I. Purpose
The PhD Dissertation Concept Letter provides the student with an initial and early opportunity to organize their thoughts regarding their dissertation topic, committee, and timeline. This letter represents the first of three milestones that aim to facilitate timely and successful progress through the dissertation process. Additionally, the Concept Letter also provides the proposed dissertation chair and the PhD program committee with the opportunity to provide early feedback about any concerns, for example that the proposed project may not meet the standards for a dissertation in epidemiology. Students should not undertake substantial dissertation work until their Concept Letter has been approved.

The projects described in the Concept Letter will likely evolve as the proposal develops and the student conducts the research and writes the dissertation. A new Concept Letter must be submitted if there is a substantial change in the dissertation. A substantial change includes a change to the proposed dissertation chair or a change to the data source.

II. Process

A. Timing: Students who pass the Qualifying Examination before the start of their third academic year should submit the Concept Letter to the PhD Program committee by October 15th of their 3rd year in the program. Students who have not passed the Qualifying Examination before the start of their third academic year should arrange a separate deadline for the Concept Letter with the DGS.

B. Approvals: The Dissertation Concept Letter should be reviewed and approved initially by the proposed dissertation chair and then submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and Program Administrator for distribution to PhD Program Committee. The PhD Program Committee will review Dissertation Concept Letters at its monthly meeting, usually held on the first Friday of each month. Approval and/or comments from the PhD Program Committee will be provided to the student and the proposed dissertation chair within a week of the review. Substantial comments may be accompanied by a request for the student to revise and resubmit the Dissertation Concept Letter for further review. Should a student submit a second Concept Letter, the PhD Program Committee must receive a student’s Concept Letter by the 15th of the month to be reviewed at the next month’s meeting. The DGS will then email the proposed dissertation chair to confirm approval of submission, confirm the date the letter will be reviewed, and ask if there are any comments to share with the Program Committee.

C. Other: The Concept Letter should be included as an objective in the Research Hours contract for the semester in which it is due.
III. Content. The Dissertation Concept Letter is a one to two-page document describing the student’s proposed research. The Concept Letter should follow the outline below.

A. The overarching research question and the public health or clinical importance of the topic.
B. Brief description of 2-4 aims that they expect to include in the dissertation.
B. Proposed approach. This should include:
   1. Potential available data sources and the student’s role in obtaining them
   2. Barriers/feasibility e.g. the main concerns with moving this project forward
   3. Next steps
C. Proposed dissertation chair and proposed areas of expertise to be represented on the committee. Note: students are not expected to have approached potential committee members, aside from the proposed chair, when they submit their Concept Letter.

PhD Dissertation Proposal Overview

Students are expected to submit the PHD Dissertation Proposal Overview no later than April 15 of their 3rd Spring in the program assuming approval of the Concept Letter submitted the previous October.

I. Purpose
The Dissertation Proposal Overview (Overview) is intended to allow the PhD Program Committee (Committee) the opportunity to provide a formal review of the proposed dissertation and dissertation committee. This letter represents the second of three milestones that aim to facilitate timely and successful progress through the dissertation process. It consists of two parts: the Epidemiology Dissertation Committee Form and a description of the proposed objectives of the dissertation and approach to achieving these objectives. This overview will help to ensure consistent application of program standards to all epidemiology dissertations.

II. Process
A student’s Overview should be reviewed and approved by the Chair and Members of the Student’s Dissertation Committee before submission to the PhD Program Committee. Committee approval of the Overview will be required after the dissertation plans and committee composition have been solidified but prior to the student completing their dissertation proposal. Submitted Overviews consist of an Epidemiology Dissertation Committee Form plus a 5-page summary of the proposed dissertation. Overviews will be reviewed and approved by the PhD Program Committee once a month. It is expected that, although multiple Dissertation Concept Letters are possible, typically only a single Overview will be reviewed and approved.

A. The Overview must be developed based on the approved Dissertation Concept Letter.
B. Students may submit the Overview only after the Dissertation Concept Letter is approved and should submit the Overview no later than April 15th of year 3.
C. The Overview should be included as an objective on the Research Hours contract all semesters following approval of the Dissertation Concept Letter until the Dissertation Proposal Defense.

D. The Overview will be reviewed and approved by the dissertation chair and committee members prior to submission to the Committee.

E. The Committee must receive the proposal overview by the 15th of the month in order for it to be reviewed at the Committee’s next meeting.

F. The Committee will usually review Overviews the 1st Friday of each month and provide approval and/or comments by the 2nd Friday of each month.

III. Content. It is expected that the Overview will be an expanded version of the Dissertation Concept Letter, including point-by-point responses to any issues or concerns raised by the Committee on the approved Concept Letter. However, the Overview should not exceed 5 pages double-spaced (not including references), 1 inch margins, in an NIH approved font and font size.

Specifically, the Overview should provide:

A. The overarching research question and the public health or clinical importance of the topic. This is likely more developed than the concept letter and should be no more than one page.

B. Specific aims and how each aim supports the overarching research question

C. A brief summary for each specific aim with information about:
   1. Study design to address the aim and data source(s)
   2. Study population, including study size considerations
   3. Potential analysis plan –this should be brief
   4. Barriers/feasibility e.g. the main concerns with moving this project forward

D. Overall study timeline

E. The composition of the proposed dissertation committee, via the Department of Epidemiology Dissertation Committee Form (not included in the page limit)

Attach the IRB approval letter, when appropriate.