



UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

College of Nursing

HANDBOOK FOR Ph.D. PROGRAM IN NURSING

Fall Semester 2010

**UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER
COLLEGE OF NURSING**

HANDBOOK FOR PhD PROGRAM IN NURSING

This *Handbook for the PhD Program in Nursing* is focused on policies and procedures intended to assist faculty and graduate students on matters specific to the progression of PhD students. This *Handbook* should be used in conjunction with: the College of Nursing *Student Handbook*; application materials; University of Colorado Denver (UC Denver) Anschutz Medical Campus (AMC) Graduate School Rules; Graduate School Policies and Procedures; *Graduate School Handbook* (including packets developed for candidacy application, thesis preparation, and graduation); the UC Denver *Coursebook*; and other official documents prepared and distributed by the UC Denver College of Nursing Office of Student Services and Diversity or Graduate Programs Office.

The policies specified here as University and UC Denver AMC Graduate School policies are verbatim statements found in the rules of the AMC Graduate School. The policies that have been elaborated in the application to the PhD Program in Nursing are labeled "College of Nursing." Policies and procedures undergo revision periodically; all notices of changes in policy and procedure will be distributed electronically through the official UC Denver student email system or in letters sent electronically or through the US Postal Service. As a general rule, the policies in effect at the time of admission govern a student's progression.

The PhD curriculum, course schedules, and offerings are subject to change. Courses are offered pending required minimum enrollment numbers. If curriculum changes are made, courses in the current curriculum will be offered for a specified period of time; students who decelerate or otherwise change their program plans may be asked to substitute another course for required courses being discontinued or with insufficient enrollment. All program plan changes will be discussed and approved by the student's advisory committee.

Please direct questions or recommendations for changes in the *Handbook* to:

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Also, please consult the AMC *Graduate School Handbook* for policies
<http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/Graduate-School/program-resources/Forms/Graduate%20Student%20Handbook.pdf>
or UC Denver AMC Graduate School Office with questions
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This *Handbook*, which includes parts of the AMC Graduate School Rules and College of Nursing Rules, does not constitute a contract with the University of Colorado Denver AMC Graduate School or College of Nursing, either expressed or implied. The AMC Graduate School and the College of Nursing reserves the right at any time to change, delete, or add to any of the provisions at its sole discretion. Furthermore, the provisions of this document are designed by the AMC Graduate School and College of Nursing to serve as firm guidelines rather than absolute rules, and exceptions may be made on the basis of extenuating circumstances.

PhD Program in Nursing

The University of Colorado Denver (UC Denver) College of Nursing (CON) offers a PhD program in nursing designed to prepare nurse scholars to advance the art, science, and practice of the discipline. Doctoral preparation in nursing develops abilities to engage in all dimensions of professional and scholarly life, including the conduct of scholarly inquiry, leadership in health care delivery systems, and public policy formation. Emphasis is placed upon the use of a broad range of methods of inquiry appropriate for describing nursing phenomena, developing nursing theory, and evaluating the outcomes of nursing interventions and health care delivery models. Students in the PhD program select one of two practice-inquiry focus areas for special emphasis, congruent with their research goals: the Human Experience of Health, Illness, Healing, Dying and Environmental Contexts and Outcomes.

Practice-Inquiry Foci

- 1. Human Experience of Health, Illness, Healing, Dying (HEIHD):** The lived experiences of health, illness, healing, and dying. Includes the study of and practice application of knowledge regarding health belief systems and practice, and health promotion; illness phenomena such as illness behavior, pain, isolation, uncertainty functional impairment; stress-coping, including psychological stress dynamics, intrapersonal and interpersonal coping resources; psycho-neuro immunology; healing dynamics and therapeutics; and death and dying. Includes development and testing of perceptions and subjective meanings of experiences surrounding health and healing to inform and enhance nursing care.

Environmental Contexts and Outcomes (ECO): Environmental Contexts and Outcomes: The delivery of nursing care that reflects current expectations and standards of the professional discipline with attention to judicious use of resources. This focus includes the study of the effectiveness and efficiency of nursing interventions and health care processes with individuals, families, communities, and systems. The measurement of and research regarding patient and systems outcomes is considered in depth. The influence of socio-cultural-political-economic-physical environments on health and health care systems is considered. Includes the generation and practice application of knowledge regarding the environmental context of professional nursing and its individual patient populations, families and communities to inform and enhance nursing care.

The PhD Program in Nursing and curriculum development work are grounded in the Philosophy of the College of Nursing, College of Nursing Curriculum Model and Framework.

Students are asked to keep current with College of Nursing and PhD program policies by visiting the College of Nursing Web pages frequently.

- College of Nursing: www.nursing.ucdenver.edu/PhD
- Student resources: visit the website above; click on Students and then Academic Resources

PhD Program Outcome Competencies

The College of Nursing Faculty believes that the Doctor of Philosophy in nursing prepares scientists for stewardship of the nursing discipline and membership in the community of scholars. Further, the purpose of doctoral study in nursing is to engage students in intellectual inquiry, knowledge development, and the conduct of independent research to understand and enhance the health and wellbeing of, and the healthcare for individuals, families, and populations. Doctoral study depends on collaborative mentoring relationships between students and research faculty, other faculty scholars, and active engagement of students in the interdisciplinary community of scholars. The Faculty also believes that program graduates should be rigorously prepared to pursue careers in research intensive environments and as leaders of the profession.

Qualities of the Graduate

- 1.** Demonstrates mastery in a selected substantive area of the nursing discipline.
- 2.** Understands methodologies for critiquing, developing, and extending disciplinary knowledge.
- 3.** Pursues learning as a journey of ongoing personal development and excellence in research within and beyond the discipline.
- 4.** Applies logical, critical and creative thinking to a range of research problems.
- 5.** Works both autonomously and collaboratively as a scientist within and beyond the discipline and community of scholars.
- 6.** Commits to ethical social responsibility and action as a scientist.
- 7.** Communicates effectively as a scientist and as a leading member of the discipline.
- 8.** Appreciates an international perspective and cultural sensitivity in research.
- 9.** Embraces the diversity of opportunities for career development, professional roles, and disciplinary leadership as a nurse scientist, scholar, educator, and mentor.

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLLEGE OF NURSING

HANDBOOK FOR Ph.D. IN NURSING PROGRAM

I. THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE (UC Denver AMC Graduate School)

The degree, Doctor of Philosophy, is the highest academic degree conferred by the University. To state the requirements for the degree in terms of credit hours would be misleading because the degree is not conferred merely upon the satisfactory completion of a course of study, however faithfully pursued. Students who receive this degree must demonstrate that they are proficient in some broad subject of learning and that they can critically evaluate work in this field; furthermore, they must have shown the ability to work independently in their chosen field and must have made an original contribution of significance to the advancement of knowledge.

General Requirements

Please refer to University of Colorado Denver AMC Graduate School *Graduate Student Handbook 2006-2007* for all Graduate School requirements and policies. Only College of Nursing policies will be in the *PhD Handbook*. Students are responsible for following all UC Denver AMC Graduate School policies, especially related to deadlines, examinations, and registration. The AMC *Graduate School Handbook* can be found on the AMC Graduate School web page at: <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/Graduate-School/student-services/academic-resources/Pages/graduate-student-handbooks.aspx>

II. Ph.D. IN NURSING PROGRAM

The University Of Colorado Denver College Of Nursing offers a PhD program in nursing designed to prepare nurse scholars who advance the art, science, and practice of the discipline. Doctoral preparation in nursing develops abilities to engage in all dimensions of professional and scholarly life, including the conduct of scholarly inquiry, leadership in health care delivery systems, and public policy formation. Emphasis is placed upon the use of a broad range of methods of inquiry appropriate for describing nursing phenomena, developing nursing theory, and evaluating the outcomes of nursing interventions and health care delivery models. Students in the PhD program select one of two practice-inquiry focus areas for special emphasis, congruent with their research goals: the Human Experience of Health, Illness, Healing, Dying and the Environmental Contexts and Outcomes.

PhD Program Admissions Requirements

1. Completion of bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing from NLN accredited schools. Applicants who have equivalent nursing preparation or a non-nursing master's degree may be considered for admission. BS to PhD applicants must complete a BSN or BS in Nursing.
2. Graduate Record Examination with a 1004 overall and a minimum of 450 on each portion and a 4.0 on the writing test.
3. A 3.0 undergraduate and/or a 3.5 graduate grade point average.
4. Completion of a graduate level inferential (intermediate) statistics course with a minimum grade of B (3.0). This pre-requisite must be completed no later than the end of the first semester of study; earlier completion is preferred.
5. Completion of master's level nursing theory course with a minimum grade of B (3.0).
6. Portfolio that provides evidence of independent scholarly work focused within the domain of nursing.

7. Curriculum Vitae or Resume of educational and professional experience.
8. An in-person or telephone interview for applicants meeting the above requirements.
9. Four written recommendations (2 academic, 2 discretionary).
10. Completion of Parts I and II of the University of Colorado Graduate Admission Application and application fee. (online)
11. Completion of three essay questions. Submit a typed essay response no longer than one page, double spaced for each question.
 - Discuss your current area(s) of research interests and goals (be specific, as possible, about topics, concepts, variables of interest) and identify your selected area of practice-research focus (Human Experience of Health, Illness, Healing, Dying; or Environmental Context and Outcomes).
 - What factors led you to pursue doctoral study at the University of Colorado Denver College of Nursing at this point in your career? Please identify any faculty members with whom you would like to work in support of your response to question # 1.
 - What are your short and long term career goals?
 - How will doctoral study enhance these goals?
12. Two copies of official transcripts from each college/university attended.

Additional Requirements for International Students

International applicants are encouraged to begin the application process two years prior to the term for which they wish to be admitted. In addition to the above requirements, international applicants must submit the following:

1. Application for Admission – International Students
2. Financial Statement for International Applicants
3. Minimum TOEFL score of 550 (paper), 213 (computer) or 80 (Internet) for applicants whose first language is not English
4. Further information for international students can be obtained from the Graduate School website.

Provisional Status

Students who do not meet the minimum requirements for admission to a AMC Graduate School program (low GPA, low test scores, or inadequate preparation) may be admitted to the Graduate School on provisional status. Requirements to be removed from provisional status are stated on the provisional form, a copy of which you should have received with your admissions information from the AMC Graduate School. The conditions of provisional status must be met to progress to regular status. Failure to meet these conditions can lead to dismissal.

You cannot obtain a degree from the University of Colorado Denver while on provisional status.

M.S. Degree Equivalency Policy (College of Nursing) and MS to PhD

Applicants who hold an earned master's degree in a field related to nursing, but who do not possess a master's degree in nursing may be admitted to the Ph.D. program pending demonstration of advanced knowledge and skills in a nursing specialty area, but we highly recommend that this person pursue an MS degree in Nursing via the MS to PhD option (below). Many states, including Colorado, are considering the requirement for nurse educators to have master's preparation in nursing to teach in undergraduate and graduate programs. Students' interests and needs for a specialty area will be considered by the appropriate faculty and the student's 1st-year advisor in planning course work. Course work generally includes Masters core courses, nursing theory and advanced nursing practice courses in one of the currently offered master's options. Master's level course deficiencies should be removed before the student enrolls in doctoral discipline of nursing and theory courses. Credits earned in the master's specialty courses will not be counted toward the doctoral degree. A **post baccalaureate MS to PhD option** is now offered for students with a BS degree in Nursing. A 30 credit MS degree is earned along the way.

Readmission of Former Students (College of Nursing)

Students who were previously enrolled in the Ph.D. program but who did not complete requirements for the degree and who have not been registered continuously or have not requested leave of absence should proceed as follows in seeking readmission:

1. The student must submit a written request for readmission as well as a formal student application to the Office of Student Services and Diversity.
2. Eligibility for readmission will be determined by the PhD Steering Committee or CON Student Academic Affairs Committee. Final determination is made by the Graduate School.
3. The Office of the PhD Program Director will advise the student in writing regarding readmission status with approval of the Graduate School.
4. An individual program plan will be designed for the student which may include testing for validation of current knowledge in courses previously completed.

Leave of Absence (College of Nursing)

A leave of absence may be granted for up to one year by written request to the PhD Program Director and AMC Graduate School. Please refer to the AMC Graduate School Rules, page 12. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the CON Graduate Programs Office or PhD Program Director in writing, one month prior to the end of the LOA to discuss progression in the PhD program and prepare for re-entry.

Degree Requirements (College of Nursing)

Award of the Ph.D. degree will be based on completion of a minimum of 72 semester hours of acceptable post-baccalaureate graduate work including 42 semester hours of course work and 30 semester hours awarded for the dissertation. The requirements for the Ph.D. can be expected to take approximately three and one half years to five years of full-time study and research or four to six years of part-time study. All requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree must be completed within **seven** years of matriculation. Approval of up to 18 hours of transfer credit will be

based upon the relevancy and equivalency of the applicant's prior work. Each student will be expected to demonstrate competence in certain basic areas of theory and research.

Successful completion of the following are required for graduation:

- A written preliminary examination within one year of admission to regular degree status
- Completion of all coursework
- A written comprehensive examination paper and completion of an oral comprehensive examination to advance to PhD candidacy within three years after admission
- Successful defense of dissertation proposal
- An independent scholarly dissertation and final examination (defense)

Curriculum and Required Courses (College of Nursing)

The PhD program facilitates building a community of scholars among faculty and students. The curriculum has two program foci and course content in foundational and advanced knowledge development in nursing. These foci emphasize substantive knowledge in nursing congruent with faculty expertise and scholarship. Students are admitted into the PhD program on the strength of their research interests and matched with faculty in their selected focus area. To facilitate the dissertation process, students should work closely with their dissertation mentor and align their dissertation research topic with the work of the faculty mentor. Each student will build an area of concentration, including in-depth study in the selected focus area and supportive nursing and non-nursing coursework.

Course Work

The course work required for the degree is a total of 42 credits of coursework, plus 30 credits of dissertation study. The curriculum includes foundational core courses in Philosophy of Science, the Discipline of Nursing (and Reflective Practice), and Methods of Disciplined Inquiry, practice-inquiry foci seminars and electives, and advanced research and theory courses as shown on the PhD Program Curriculum Plan and Curriculum Model. Nine credits of non-nursing electives courses supportive of the dissertation or doctoral role are required. Courses will be determined by the academic background and research interests of the student. Following completion of core courses, the remaining courses may be taken in any sequence according to the student's individual program plan, developed under the guidance of the academic advisor. In general, taking the quantitative and qualitative research courses or other advanced coursework in the numerical order (i.e., NURS 7300 prior to 7310) will facilitate learning. Students may take graduate level electives at other higher education institutions and may request transfer of up to 18 hours of graduate credit into the program. The doctoral dissertation completes the program of study. Students are strongly encouraged to take at least one elective course outside the discipline of nursing for breadth and depth of learning.

**PhD Curriculum Model with Courses
2010**

PhD Foundational Core

- NURS 7000 Philosophy of Human Science (3 cr.)
- NURS 7020 Methods of Disciplined Inquiry in Nursing (3 cr.)
- NURS 7030 The Discipline of Nursing (3 cr.)

Advanced Theory & Research Core

- NURS 7846 Research Practicum & Ethics of Inquiry (3 cr.)
- NURS 7120 Theory and Knowledge Development in Nursing (3 cr.)
- NURS 7300 Qualitative Empirical Research (3 cr.)
- NURS 7310 Qualitative Interpretive Research (3 cr.)
- NURS 7400 Experimental Design and Analysis (3 cr.)
- NURS 7410 Multivariant Design and Analysis (3 cr.)

Practice – Inquiry Focus (Will be merging with new curricular foci)

Human Experience of Health, Illness, Healing and Dying <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NURS 7713 Seminar in HEHIH (3)• NURS 7714 Selected Topics in HEHIH (3)	Environmental Context and Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NURS 7652 Quality and Cost Effective Outcomes: Health Systems Perspectives (3)• NURS 7653 Quality and Cost Effective Outcomes: Micro-level (3)
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Electives

Supportive Nursing and/or non-Nursing Electives (9 cr.)

Dissertation

NURS 8990 Dissertation (30 cr.)

42 credits PhD coursework + 30 credits dissertation

Total Credits = 72 credits

**MS to PhD Curriculum Model with Courses
2010**

MS Foundational Core

- NURS 6010 Philosophical, Theoretical, and Ethical Foundations (3 cr.)
- NRUS 6011 Evidence Based Practice (4 cr.)
- NURS 6012 Health Systems, Policy, and Social Justice (3 cr.)
- NURS 6013 Human Technology Interface (2 cr.)
- NURS 6493 Inferential Statistics (3 cr.)

MS Advanced Practice Core

- Selection of 15 credits from informatics OR
- Selection of 15 credits from primary, acute, chronic care advanced practice core

PhD Foundational Core

- NURS 7000 Philosophy of Science (3 cr.)
- NURS 7020 Methods of Disciplined Inquiry (3 cr.)
- NURS 7030 The Discipline of Nursing (3 cr.)

Advanced Theory & Research Core

- NURS 7846 Research Practicum & Ethics of Inquiry (3 cr.)
- NURS 7120 Theory and Knowledge Development in Nursing (3 cr.)
- NURS 7300 Qualitative Empirical Research – (3 cr.)
- NURS 7310 Qualitative Interpretive Research – (3 cr.)
- NURS 7400 Advanced Quantitative Analysis and Design I (3 cr.)
- NURS 7410 Advanced Quantitative Analysis and Design II (3 cr.)

Practice – Inquiry Focus (Will be merging with new curricular foci)

Human Experience of Health, Illness, Healing and Dying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NURS 7713 Seminar in HEHIH (3) • NURS 7714 Selected Topics in HEHIH (3) 	Environmental Context and Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NURS 7652 Cost/Quality Outcomes: Health Systems Focus (3) • NURS 7653 Cost/Quality Outcomes: Micro-level (3)
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Electives

Supportive Nursing and/or non-Nursing Electives (9 cr.)

Dissertation

NURS 8990 Dissertation (30 cr.)

30 credits MS + 42 credits PhD coursework + 30 credits dissertation

Total Credits = 102 credits

Doctoral Program Required Courses:

Course titles, credits and semester of offering are listed on the **COURSE OFFERING PLAN** (available on the web in the CON **Students/Academic Resources** web pages under PhD); consult the UC Denver *Course Book* for further information on all Graduate Level Nursing courses.

Course schedules are posted in Students

<http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/nursing/students/Pages/academic-resources.aspx>

prior to each semester to facilitate registration. The PhD Course Offering Plan lists the semesters each course is usually offered and is subject to change. (Note: some courses have prerequisites; see *Course Book*. The program reserves the right to provide a substitute course or adapt the program plan for students who may have decelerated their program (e.g. LOA or taking fewer than 6 credits/semester). PhD courses have a minimum enrollment of 6 students; a course with less than minimum enrollment at the end of the pre-registration period is subject to cancellation.

It is essential that students pre-register for courses each semester as directed by the Registrar's office to avoid course cancellations. Students in dissertation work must also register during the pre-registration period under the section number of their advisor. Notification of dates for pre-registration is by student email only. Students must check their student email frequently for important announcements such as registration related information.

Other Course-Related Policies

Transfer Credit

A maximum of 18 credit hours may be transferred to the Ph.D. program, including 9 hours (maximum) allocated for elective credits and 9 hours (maximum) allocated for courses equivalent to one or more of the School's nursing courses listed below:

	<u>Credits</u>
7000 Philosophy of Human Science	3
7120 Theory and Knowledge Development in Nursing	3
7300 Qualitative Empirical Research Designs and Methods	3
7400 Experimental Research Design and Analyses	3

Transfer credit is defined as any credit earned at another accredited institution, credits earned at another campus of the CU system, or credits earned as a non-degree student within the CU system not applied to a previous degree.

The AMC Graduate School accepts transfer credits only after approval of those transfer credits by the student's program director and the Dean. Credit may not be transferred until the student has established a satisfactory record of at least one term of enrollment at UC Denver and a minimum 3.00 GPA. Transferred courses do not reduce the residency requirement but may reduce the amount of work required at UCD for the degree. Further information on transfer credits is available in the AMC Graduate School Rules. **All credits transferred must carry a grade of B or higher.**

Independent Study Policy

CON policy states that no required courses may be taken for credit as independent study without the prior approval of the Student Academic Affairs Committee. Independent study is arranged with the approval of the Academic Advisor and the faculty member supervising the study (instructor); the student and instructor may name the course as it will appear on the transcript. Competencies, activities, and outcome criteria are collaboratively determined by the student and the instructor.

PhD Course Offering Plan

Students are required to come to the UC Denver Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora Colorado once each semester (fall, spring and summer) for one or two weeks. Each PhD course will begin online and includes a one week intensive. The course is then completed online through the end of the semester. Occasional courses will be offered online only or in intensive format only. The usual offering plan is for PhD intensive weeks to be the second and third week of each fall and spring term and the second week of summer term.

Grades and Quality of Graduate Work

Please refer to the AMC Graduate School Rules, *Graduate School Handbook*
<http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/Graduate-School/program-resources/Forms/Graduate%20Student%20Handbook.pdf>

Pass/Fail Policy

Courses taken for graduate degrees may not be taken pass/fail. All courses taken to satisfy the minimum requirements for a degree and listed on advancement to candidacy forms) shall be taken on the A - F grading system. B- is the lowest possible passing grade for the College of Nursing graduate programs.

Challenging Graduate Course work

Credit by examination is not allowed for graduate students. Programs may allow a student to challenge and test out of a given course, but the student does not register or receive credit for it unless she/he registers for that course. If a student successfully challenges a course, the program can require the student to take a different course or an elective. In all cases, the student must meet the minimum 72 credits required for the PhD degree.

CON Policy on Incomplete Grades

CON Policy states that "An incomplete grade is given only when students, for reasons beyond their control, have been unable to complete the course requirements. It is understood that a **substantial amount of work** must have been satisfactorily completed before such a grade is given." If students have not completed a substantial amount of work, they should be advised to drop the course within the first two weeks of the term. IW grades are given at the discretion of faculty by written request of the student, with an agreement made as to the time frame and work required to complete the course satisfactorily.

The issue is especially important with web-based courses. These courses are removed from the server within 2 to 3 weeks after the completion of a term to provide server space for the next term's

offering. Students with an IW for a web-based course must definitely have a substantial amount of work completed in the course since it will be impossible for them to access these courses on an indefinite basis. An IW grade is not to be used for students who are failing a course and want extra time to improve their grade. In this case the grade of IF is awarded. Please be sure to follow our policy when considering an incomplete for a course and evaluate whether an incomplete or dropping the course is the appropriate action.

Grade Changes

IW, IF, and IP (used only for dissertation) grades are changed to final letter grades when the required work has been completed by the student and accepted by the original instructor. IW and IF grades automatically change to W or F after one year if no grade changes are initiated. In addition, letter grades may be changed due to clerical or administrative error. However, no other grade changes are allowed by the AMC Graduate School from the last day of the semester of enrollment; i.e., students are not allowed to perform additional work for a course already completed in order to have their grade improved.

Grade Below (3.0)

AMC GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICY ON REPEATING COURSES AND CALCULATING GRADE POINT AVERAGES.

1. A graduate student who receives an unsatisfactory grade in a course (as determined by the AMC Graduate School or individual programs) may repeat that course once, upon written recommendation by the Program Director and approval by the Campus Graduate Dean, provided the course has not been previously applied toward a degree. The two grades received will be included when calculating the grade point average, and all grades will appear on the student's transcript. The course may be counted only once toward satisfying the unit requirement for the degree. NOTE: a grade of B- is now acceptable for passing a PhD or graduate level course, but the GPA must remain at 3.0 for progression.
2. Courses in which grades below "B minus" (2.7) are received are not accepted for the Ph.D. program.
3. Grades received in courses transferred from another institution and/or grades earned while a student was classified as a Special Student are not included in calculation of the grade point average.
4. The status of a student who receives a grade of less than a B- two times or receives less than a B- in any two courses, at any time in the program, will be referred to the SAAC for recommendation. The student may complete a Petition for Academic Progression at the time of the SAAC review. A recommendation for Progression, Suspension or Withdrawal will be made by the SAAC. A recommendation for Suspension or Withdrawal will be forwarded by the SAAC to the Dean of the AMC Graduate School for action. The AMC Graduate School has a separate appeals process, as listed in the Handbook <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/Graduate-School/program-resources/Forms/Graduate%20Student%20Handbook.pdf> .

Student Ethical Conduct

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of personal integrity and professional ethics. Students must adhere to the UC Denver CON Honor and Conduct Code, as printed in the CON Student Handbook. Students who do not meet these standards and/or who violate the codes may be dismissed immediately or placed on disciplinary probation by the Dean of the CON or the Dean of the AMC Graduate School upon recommendation of the CON Student Academic Affairs

Committee and/or the AMC Graduate School Student Conduct and Academic Appeals Committee. Refer to the AMC Graduate School Handbook
<http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/Graduate-School/program-resources/Forms/Graduate%20Student%20Handbook.pdf>

Probation and Suspension

Please refer to AMC Graduate School policies and/or AMC Graduate School Rules.

English Proficiency

A student who is noticeably deficient in the spelling and use of the English language shall not obtain an advanced degree from the University of Colorado. Each program will judge the qualifications of its students in the use of English. The Ph.D. Program Director is responsible for deciding whether or not a student is proficient in the use of English. The CON Office of Learner Support may refer a student for supportive assistance for English as a second language issues. A TOEFL test is required for admission with minimum scores listed in the AMC Graduate School Handbook.

Americans with Disabilities Act

UC Denver supports the spirit and the letter of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This law is designed to help persons with disabilities access the physical facilities, academic programs and employment opportunities of the institution. A disabilities handbook, Disability Service Resource Guide, has been developed to acquaint students, faculty and staff with various aspects of the law. Questions regarding the ADA should be directed to Lisa McGill, UC Denver Disability Resources Officer Lisa.McGill@ucdenver.edu

Lisa E. McGill, Director
Disability Resources & Services (DRS)
University of Colorado Denver
lisa.mcgill@ucdenver.edu

Or

Sherry Holden, AMC Disability Resources Coordinator
Disability Resources and Services
Building 500, Room W1103
Phone: 303.724.5640
Fax: 303.724.5641
sherry.holden@ucdenver.edu

Part-time: Monday-Thursday

Please see the UC Denver CON Technical Standards required for graduation from a CON degree program in the Student Handbook:
<http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/nursing/Documents/PDF/CONStudentHandbook.pdf>

Policies for Guided Research Practicum

Prior to taking the Comprehensive Examination, all PhD students are required to complete 3 credits of NURS 7846, PhD Program Research Practicum and Ethics of Inquiry. The purpose of the research practicum is to provide an experiential learning opportunity for all PhD students to become

immersed in state of the art nursing research under the guidance of an experienced research mentor. Ninety contact hours of research activities and Internet seminars are required as part of the practicum. Seminar content will include scientific ethics, inquiry issues, and progress of the practicum experience. Refer to the course syllabus for details on evaluation and grading, development of a portfolio, and seminar participation.

III. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT FOR Ph.D. STUDENTS

At the time of admission to the Ph.D. program, the student is assigned a First Year Academic Advisor by the PhD Program Director. Criteria for selection include a strong match with the faculty member's program of research. The following policies and procedures of the Graduate School and the College of Nursing govern this process.

1. **The First Year Academic Advisor** will assist the student in selecting and sequencing courses and planning other activities to progress through the program. The projected courses for meeting the degree requirements, plans for additional course requirements specified on admission at the master's level, and projected dates for preliminary and comprehensive exams will be recorded on the PhD Program Plan. Students should meet with their advisor regularly for discussions of research ideas, grant and course opportunities and other advising; it is the student's responsibility to initiate these meetings.
2. By the end of the first year of course work, each student will complete the PhD Program Plan, and will distribute these documents to the First Year Academic Advisor and Graduate Programs Advisor (CON Graduate Programs Office) with a copy to the PhD Program Director. Updates are requested in writing and should be distributed to the same individuals. This information is key in planning future course offerings and for insuring that the student can complete the program in a reasonable period of time. Accurate program plans help prevent unnecessary closure of classes due to low enrollment. A copy will be placed in the student's advising record in the CON Graduate Programs Office. Confidentiality of data will be protected. **Updated program plans and current address and phone are the responsibility of the student. Please provide this information to the CON Graduate Programs Office.**
3. By the completion of the **first year** of study the student is responsible to select a Major Advisor, also called the Mentor and two CON faculty members to serve as members of the Advisory Committee. The Major Advisor will also serve as the director of the Comprehensive Examination but the Examination is chaired by another faculty member, the Comprehensive Examination Chair (usually the First Reader). The Advisory Committee members also will serve as members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee. The Major Advisor must hold a regular Graduate Faculty appointment; the members must hold regular or special Graduate Faculty appointments.
4. At the time the student selects the Major Advisor and the Advisory Committee members, the student must file the "ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT" form (sample attached) in the CON Graduate Programs Office with a copy to the PhD Program Director. This form is to be signed by the First Year Academic Advisor and all Advisory Committee members. Note: This Advisory Committee serves as three of the five members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee. The Dissertation Committee may or may not include members of the Advisory Committee but it is best for the student to keep the committee membership stable for continuity of the educational program. Separate action is required to initiate the Dissertation Committee. When changes are made in committee membership, former and new committee members must be notified.

5. The overall purposes of the Advisory Committee are to guide the student through her/his graduate studies and to insure against too narrow a specialization. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee has been designated to review the student's progress through the program. Upon recommendation of the Advisory Committee and the PhD Program Director, and with the approval of the Dean of the AMC Graduate School, a student may be required to withdraw at any time for failure to maintain satisfactory progress toward the degree.

The primary role of the Major Advisor/Mentor is to continue academic advising beyond the first year, with a focus on the selection of elective courses that are supportive of the projected dissertation, and to assist the student in preparing for the comprehensive examination. The members of the advisory committee primarily assist the student in preparing for the comprehensive examination (see policies and procedures relevant to this examination).

6. The First Year Academic Advisor followed by the Major Advisor/Mentor and Advisory Committee shall assist students in selecting and sequencing courses and planning other activities to progress through the program to candidacy status. The projected degree plan is formed in the first year for meeting the degree requirements, for remediating deficiencies, and dates are identified for preliminary and comprehensive exams. For further information on student advising, please refer to the CON Student Advising Policy.

IV. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS

Purpose and Procedures

Specific guidelines and procedures for the administration of the preliminary exam are included in the current examination packet distributed at the time a student indicates intent to take the examination. These guidelines are governed by the following general policies:

1. General
 - a. The AMC Graduate School requires a preliminary examination to ensure that students are qualified for doctoral study. The purpose of the Preliminary Examination is to determine potential for successful completion of the program and to use the results in subsequent academic advising. The examination will test first level synthesis of knowledge acquired from the areas of philosophy of science, the discipline of nursing, and methods of inquiry. Criteria for evaluation include:
 - i. NURS 7000 Philosophy of Human Science
 - ii. NURS 7020 Methods of Disciplined Inquiry
 - iii. NURS 7030 The Discipline of Nursing
 - b. To be eligible to write preliminary examinations, students must have completed the following nine credits:
 - i. NURS 7000 Philosophy of Human Science
 - ii. NURS 7020 Methods of Disciplined Inquiry
 - iii. NURS 7030 The Discipline of Nursing
 - c. Preliminary examinations will be offered **two to three** times per year depending upon the number of students needing the exam: in January, May and August on the Friday nearest to the 15th of that month.
 - d. The Preliminary Examination is offered in a take-home format and consists of responses to written question(s). The response will be a clear argument, logically developed and supported, that affirms or refutes the authors' position on the scholarship of engagement in nursing. The student may draw from any existing literature in developing the response. Responses to the examination questions are limited to 1500 words and are submitted in

double-spaced, typewritten format, using 12-point font. Students have a maximum of one week to complete the take-home preliminary examination.

- e. **Students must complete preliminary examinations within one calendar year of admission to the program.** However, students will be encouraged to take preliminary exams after the completion of not more than 9-15 credits of course work. The results of the examination are reported to the AMC Graduate School.
- f. Any deficiencies (inferential statistics) and grades of "IW" or "IF" in required courses will have been eliminated before a student takes preliminary examinations. (IW grades are acceptable if they are in courses not prerequisite to the Preliminary Examination).
- g. Students and First Year Advisor will together complete the "Intent to Take Preliminary Examinations" form and submit it to the CON Graduate Programs Office with copy to the PhD Program Director at least **six weeks** prior to the examination date.
- h. After the Preliminary Examination results have been reported to the student, the student will meet with the Advisor to discuss the results of the examination. The Advisor and student will both receive copies of the examination, responses, and critique. The Advisor will then work with the student and make appropriate recommendations related to the critique of the exam.

2. Guidelines for Evaluation of Doctoral Preliminary Examinations

- a. A team of doctoral faculty members will read and score the exam independently. Copies of the exams will be prepared so that the readers can read the exams at the same time. Students **are expected to type the exam**. Students will be identified only by ID numbers on the exams. A score of pass or fail will be assigned by each reader to the student's exam. Criteria for grading of preliminary examinations include evaluation of analysis, synthesis, and critical scholarly abilities. The results (pass/fail) will be reported to the UC Denver AMC Graduate School.
- b. In the case of scoring disagreements between exams, readers first will try to resolve the discrepancy themselves. If they cannot reach agreement, the majority position will hold. An outside reader may be requested and appointed by readers and by the PhD Program Director.
- c. Criteria

ANALYSIS

- Identify and organize elements in ways that provide logical coherence to the response
- Explain the central issues, problems and "puzzles" with respect to the topic under discussion
- Identify and explain unstated assumptions, logical fallacies, and extraneous aspects of an issue, problem or position
- Project the implications of an issue, problem, or position for nursing practice, research, or theory
- Explain and compare alternative views that could be assumed in reaching alternative value judgments

SYNTHESIS

- Present succinct summaries of ideas that reflect comprehension of the whole while building a deliberate message concerning the topic under discussion
- Convey abstract relationships that form conceptual wholes
- Integrate a variety of sources to form a foundation for the student's unique ideas
- Build a comprehensive conceptual bridge between existing literature and the author's own unique insights and independent thinking

CRITICAL SCHOLARLY ABILITIES

- Demonstrate open-mindedness, critical self-awareness, and reflective thinking
- Provide succinct, complete and direct responses to the issues
- Demonstrate a breadth of knowledge of the topic under discussion that is consistent with the breadth covered in the entry doctoral level courses
- Interpret existing literature without misrepresentation
- Take risks in challenging existing ideas while presenting sound rationale for doing so
- Demonstrate the ability to defend a logical position without prejudice.

- d. The overall scoring of the exam is as follows
 - i. Pass = Adequate demonstration of critical thinking/analysis/synthesis of knowledge and general scholarship on exam as a whole.
 - ii. Fail = Inadequate demonstration of critical thinking/analysis/synthesis of knowledge and general scholarship on exam as a whole.
- e. Official notification of the examination outcome will be conveyed to students by letter. Copies of the letter will be sent to each member of the student's Advisory Committee, and a copy becomes part of the student's official record.
- f. Students will be given written summary feedback on their exams (to include strengths and weaknesses, prepared by the readers for each exam question and the overall score). Copies of the feedback statements will not be included in the official permanent record of the student.
- g. After students have received their scores, they may review their exams, and provide copies of the questions and their answers to their Advisor. This strategy is especially recommended in the case of scores of "Fail."
- h. AMC Graduate School Rules state "any doctoral student who fails the examination is subject to immediate dismissal from the AMC Graduate School upon the recommendation of the program and concurrence of the Dean. At the program's discretion, a student who fails the exam may retake one time.
- i. The CON policy is: Doctoral students who fail the exam on the first take of the preliminary examination may continue progression (i.e., registration in courses) up to 15 credits with permission of the PhD Program Director, pending satisfactory completion of the preliminary examination at the next offering.
- j. CON policy states that a student receiving a score of "Fail" on the preliminary exam must re-take the preliminary exam the next time it is offered; students who do not adhere to this policy may not continue to register in courses.

- k. If a student repeats the preliminary examination and receives a score of Fail a second time, a recommendation for dismissal from the program will be forwarded to The CON Student Academic Affairs Committee and the AMC Graduate School.
- l. If a student chooses to initiate a grievance procedure regarding a recommendation for dismissal from the program, he/she may not continue to register for courses until the grievance process and/or recommendations are completed. Grievance policies of the CON and AMC Graduate School are listed in the respective handbook.

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

A. Admission to Candidacy

UC Denver AMC Graduate School Rules (July 2000) apply to comprehensive exams of all CON PhD students. The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is to provide the candidate with the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of a broad range of knowledge in nursing science. While specific courses completed by the candidate are important, their content has been tested as a portion of the grading process for the course. The comprehensive examination is not, therefore, a re-examination of course content. The candidate should demonstrate synthesis of nursing knowledge, including a mastery of a broad range of knowledge in the areas of [nursing specific]:

- theory construction, analysis, and evaluation;
- research and analytic methods required to answer significant nursing questions;
- existing and emerging knowledge in the nursing focus area, area of concentration and
- relevant knowledge from other fields that contribute to nursing science.

After completing or registering for all program-required non-thesis coursework, and concurrently with applying for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D., students must take a comprehensive examination in their respective discipline. This examination will test a student's mastery of a broad field of knowledge, not merely the formal coursework which she/he has completed. The oral part of the comprehensive examination is open to members of the Graduate Faculty. This examination must be completed **no later than the end of the student's third year**. Individual programs may establish an earlier deadline. Under extenuating circumstances, and with the recommendation of the program director and concurrence of the Dean, the examination may be taken during the fourth year.

Comprehensive Examination Policies, College of Nursing:

1. In concert with the AMC Graduate School rules, the CON Policies state that the Major Advisor/Mentor cannot serve as Chair of the exam. The Advisory Committee members serve as members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee. The Advisory Committee members are selected by the Major Advisor and the student shortly after the selection of the Major Advisor. The remaining two members (one additional CON faculty member and one "outside" member) are appointed by the PhD Program Director. The Chair of the exam should be selected from the four members of the committee and require a regular AMC Graduate School appointment. The order of readers of the examination is Major Advisor/Mentor, first reader, second reader, third reader, and fourth reader (usually the outside member). It is common for the first reader to chair the examination since the Major Advisor is ineligible to chair.
2. The outside member must hold a primary appointment outside the College of Nursing. A non-nurse is preferred. In some cases a nurse with special expertise in the student's area of interest from another University may be acceptable as the outside member. The student, with the Major

Advisor, provides nominees to the PhD Program Director to fill these two committee appointments at least six weeks prior to the expected date of the examination. Any costs incurred to bring an outside member to campus or connect the member via interactive video are the responsibility of the student, not the CON. If the outside member does not hold a current UC Denver AMC Graduate Faculty Appointment, the Major Advisor must request an appointment by submission of a letter and a completed AMC Graduate School biosketch form for this individual. The processing of graduate faculty membership can take several weeks, so the process must be initiated as early as possible to avoid delay of the examination date. (Suggested time - 10 weeks).

3. The Comprehensive Examination will be taken during or immediately following the last semester of formal course work (all required nursing course work is completed). AMC Graduate School policy states this exam must be completed successfully within 3 years or with permission of PhD and AMC Graduate School Dean within 4 years, under certain circumstances. **Students must be registered for a minimum of one credit at the time of the examination.**
4. The Major Advisor/Mentor and the initial two advisory committee members shall assess the completion of the program requirements and readiness of the student to take the mandatory oral component of the Comprehensive Examination. Readiness to take the oral component of the examination is determined by success in the completion of course work, and by favorable evaluation of a written comprehensive paper. The comprehensive paper is a preliminary indicator of readiness to take the comprehensive examination and is used by the committee as a basis for developing questions for the examination; it is not evaluated as part of the examination.
5. The Major Advisor/Mentor provides guidance and consultation to the student in selecting the topic of the comprehensive paper and in projecting the overall development of the topic. The topic should be carefully considered for doctoral level thinking; there should be potential for sufficient breadth and depth in addressing the topic so that basic assumptions are examined and well analyzed, and a direction that the student can see leading to a creative approach to the topic. Once the topic and the direction have been clarified, the student completes the paper independently of assistance from the Major Advisor or committee members. It is helpful to have the Major Advisor and first and second readers approve an outline for the paper prior to initiating this work.
6. The comprehensive paper is to be no more than 20 typed, double-spaced pages in length (exclusive of references), prepared using the APA format and equivalent to a publishable manuscript. The paper should reflect original thinking of the student, drawing on and reflecting synthesis of knowledge and skills acquired during the total doctoral program experience. While the paper should build from the doctoral program experience, it is to move beyond work completed as requirements for courses. The paper may provide foundational material that the student will use in conceptualizing the dissertation, but the comprehensive paper is to reflect all knowledge and intellectual skills acquired in the program and not narrowly focused on the projected dissertation. (The faculty encourages students to submit comprehensive papers for publication on advice of comprehensive committee).

The College of Nursing PhD Program has a policy that major papers such as the comprehensive examination paper, dissertation proposal, and dissertation defense drafts be submitted to committee members with at least 4 weeks time allowed for reading and response. This policy is written to accommodate the varying teaching, research, clinical, and travel schedules of the faculty and is respectful of their time and efforts. Usually the Major Advisor/Mentor and First Reader read major papers identified above, to conduct initial editing and make recommendations for changes prior to submitting the document to the other two members of the committee. This process again allows for initial editing to be

completed and respects the time that each committee member spends reading major student papers. Therefore, the time frame for submission should be adjusted accordingly.

- 7. The paper is due to the Major Advisor/Mentor and two members of the Advisory Committee at the time that the student files the "Application for Candidacy" form, approximately 10 weeks prior to the planned date for the oral comprehensive examination. Usually revisions are requested and the student then submits the paper to the full 5 member committee in final form. The Major Advisor will notify the student of the Committee's evaluation of the paper no later than four weeks after it is presented to the Committee (approximately 6 weeks prior to the planned oral comprehensive). It is essential that the student allow sufficient time for committee members to read these documents.**
8. Criteria for the evaluation of the comprehensive paper are as follows:
 - a. The paper is focused on a substantive topic in the discipline of nursing that synthesizes the theory, research and philosophy components of the doctoral program, and that emphasizes nursing knowledge components of the program.
 - b. The paper is focused, concise, logically ordered and readable.
 - c. The discussion reflects breadth of knowledge in the field.
 - d. The discussion reflects depth of understanding of the issues and problems related to the topic.
 - e. Original ideas and sound rationale for those ideas are presented; the significance of the ideas for the discipline of nursing is convincing.
 - f. The student's position on controversial issues in the area of inquiry is defended with sound rationale.
 - g. The content of the paper is well-founded and accurate.
 - h. Scholarly methods and approaches to inquiry are reflected.
 - i. Citation and documentation of sources used are accurate and comprehensive.
9. Consensus that the student is ready to take the comprehensive examination is required by the three Advisory Committee members prior to confirming the date and time of the oral comprehensive examination. The final approved comprehensive paper is retained in the student's official file in the College of Nursing. If the Advisory Committee does not agree that the student is ready to take the exam, the Committee will meet with the student to convey its evaluative comments and to provide guidance regarding the steps required to demonstrate readiness to take the oral comprehensive. The planned comprehensive examination is to be canceled, and rescheduled when the requirement of the Committee is to resubmit the paper. A written contract of agreement between the committee and the student is to be prepared and distributed to all concerned. The time frame will be specified by the contract. This contract may include agreements that the student completes additional course work, critical reading, or tutoring, among other steps. One additional opportunity to take steps to prepare for the comprehensive exam will be available. The committee's second assessment of readiness for the examination will be accomplished by review of one revision of part or all of the original paper. If the requirements are not satisfied within the agreed-upon time frame, the student will not be eligible to take the oral comprehensive examination, and will be dismissed from the program.
10. If the committee does not agree that the student is ready to enter the oral examination, registration must be maintained according to the rules of the AMC Graduate School; these credits may be dissertation credits (up to the maximum allowable of ten credits).
11. The student will obtain instructions and an Application for Admission to Candidacy form from the UC Denver AMC Graduate School Office. When the student completes and returns this form, the Graduate School Office will: send a copy of this form to the program; type a notice of examination

and distribute copies of it to the student and examination committee members; provide an Examination Results Form for the Committee to sign after the exam. The student also will obtain and complete a Request for Scheduling Exam form and obtain the signature of the College of Nursing PhD Program Director. Both forms are due in the AMC Graduate School Office at least two weeks before the examination. The Graduate Programs Advisor can assist the student to schedule a room for the exam.

12. UC Denver AMC Graduate School Rules apply to the conduct of the examination and scoring of the exam. **All members must be present for this exam. However one member, not the chair or student, may participate via interactive video only. Any costs incurred in the interactive video exam are the responsibility of the student.**
13. If a student fails to complete all requirements for the degree within seven years of the date of matriculation, and within four years of the date the comprehensive examination was passed, a second examination similar in extent to the first will be required before the candidate may take the final examination.
14. When the student passes the comprehensive examination, The AMC Graduate School is notified of the results of the examination.
15. Following completion of the comprehensive examination the Advisory Committee concludes its activities and is discontinued. The same committee or a new committee will be appointed for the dissertation as described below; note: it is in the student's best interest to maintain a consistent committee for a smoother progression through the dissertation process. However, due to faculty retirements, change of topic or interest area and expertise needed, it is possible the student will need to reconstitute the committee. The PhD Program Director's approval is required for this change and former and new members of the committee must be notified by the student.

VI. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR DISSERTATION (College of Nursing and AMC Graduate School)

1. A dissertation thesis based on an original investigation and showing scholarly and critical judgment, as well as familiarity with tools and methods of research, must be written on a subject approved by the student's Dissertation Committee. To be acceptable, this dissertation should be a worthwhile contribution to knowledge in the student's area of concentration in nursing and make a strong contribution to nursing science.
2. Upon successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination and attainment of Doctoral Candidate status, the candidate will select a **Dissertation Advisor or Mentor**. The Dissertation Advisor and the candidate will select four other committee members from the Graduate Faculty. At least one member must be from outside the College of Nursing. The outside member shall be a member of the graduate faculty and shall represent the Dean at the defense. If the outside member does not hold a current UC Denver Graduate Faculty Appointment, the Dissertation Advisor must request an appointment from the AMC Graduate School by submitting a letter and a completed Graduate School biosketch form for this individual. The processing of graduate faculty membership can take several weeks and should be initiated as soon as the individual is selected for the committee. (Suggested time – 10 weeks) (PhD students in Nursing must register under course NURS 8990 (previously NURS 8996), listing the section number of the dissertation advisor on the registration form.) The rules of the UC Denver AMC Graduate School (July 2000) apply to the dissertation process.

3. Committee members will be designated by the student as: Dissertation Advisor/Mentor, 1st Reader, 2nd Reader, 3rd Reader, and 4th Reader according to their expected contributions to the thesis. Formal agreement to serve on the committee will be obtained on the Dissertation Committee Membership form. The PhD Program Director must approve the Dissertation Committee. Changes in committee membership shall be processed similarly. Although the Dissertation Advisor/Mentor will guide the student through the thesis this person cannot serve as Chair of the defense examination. Therefore **the first reader is usually the person selected to chair the dissertation defense examination to comply with AMC Graduate School rules. Refer to AMC Graduate School Rules on Thesis for other details.**
4. Early in the dissertation development, the student should meet with the Dissertation Committee to discuss the proposed topic and to make tentative plans for the preparation of the dissertation proposal and propose a timeframe for the dissertation process.
5. **Students must submit for approval by the Dissertation Committee a written statement of plans for doctoral dissertation research (the proposal). This plan must consist of a general description of the proposed research and its original contribution to the field, and a description of research design and methods. In the UC Denver College of Nursing, the dissertation proposal is usually in the format of the first three chapters of the dissertation: Chapter 1, Introduction, problem statement, significance, purpose, etc.; Chapter 2, Literature Review and Conceptual Framework if appropriate to design; Chapter 3, Methods.**
6. The written proposal should be circulated to the Dissertation Committee at least four weeks prior to the formal presentation (the CON calls this meeting the Proposal Defense). The written dissertation proposal shall be approved by each of the Dissertation Committee members prior to the Proposal Defense. While it is helpful to have all members of the dissertation committee present at the proposal defense, it is permissible to have one or two members (not the advisor) join by telephone. The Dissertation Advisor/Mentor may chair the proposal defense meeting as this examination is a CON requirement rather than the AMC Graduate School's requirement. At the end of the examination the members of the committee must sign the *Approval of Dissertation Proposal form* to indicate their contract with the student to conduct the dissertation as approved.
7. **The College of Nursing PhD Program has a policy that major papers such as the comprehensive examination paper, dissertation proposal, and dissertation defense drafts be submitted to committee members with at least 4 weeks time allowed for reading and response. This policy is written to accommodate the varying teaching, research, clinical, and travel schedules of the faculty and is respectful of their time and efforts. Usually the Major Advisor and First Reader read major papers identified above, to conduct initial editing and make recommendations for changes prior to submitting the document to the other two members of the committee. This process allows for initial editing to be completed and respects the time that each committee member spends reading major student papers. Therefore, the time frame for submission should be adjusted accordingly.**
8. The proposal must have written approval from all members of the Dissertation Committee and the Institutional Review Boards of the university [Colorado Multi-Institutional Review Board (COMIRB)] and any data collection sites **prior to beginning any data collection.** The completed Approval of Dissertation Proposal form shall be submitted to the PhD Program Director.
9. All research conducted to the PhD degree must meet regulatory standards specified by federal, state, and local agencies regarding ethical research, animal use, human subjects and environmental safety. Colorado Multi-Institutional Review Board (COMIRB) approval for protection of human subjects also must be obtained; HIPAA policies must also be followed. **Students are**

listed as the PI of projects submitted to the COMIRB office; the mentor is also listed. All students must complete all training and certification required by the COMIRB office, including HIPAA training and certification and updates. If another institution is involved in or the site of data collection, e.g., the VA or The Children's Hospital, students are also responsible for fulfilling requirements of that institution. Students are referred to the College of Nursing Research Committee and the <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/research/AboutUs/comirb/Pages/comirb-home.aspx> web page for specific advisement regarding this process.

10. Following the proposal meeting, **by requirement of the AMC Graduate School, the dissertation examination committees must meet every 6 months** (telephone conference is allowed) with written minutes submitted to the CON Office of Graduate Programs with copy to the PhD Program Director, CON. Major modifications in the design and analysis of the dissertation must receive committee approval in writing.
11. Students must register for a minimum of 30 credits of NURS 8990, using the section number of the Dissertation Advisor. AMC Graduate School Rules apply to the allotments and distribution of these credits. A student must also be registered for 5 credits in the semester of defense examination, even if this semester is summer term. If the student has not defended at the time of 30 credits completed, the student will continue paying for credits according to AMC Graduate School policies through the semester of the dissertation defense examination.
12. The dissertation must be completed and submitted in typewritten form to the Committee members at least 30 days before the expected date of the Final Examination (Dissertation Defense). Members of the committee should provide feedback regarding the written thesis within 15 days of the receipt of the document. Approval by the Dissertation Committee must be obtained prior to scheduling the Final Examination. Students must comply with deadlines and rules for submission and defense examination of the completed dissertation as stated by the Rules of the UC Denver AMC Graduate School (July 2000) and UC Denver Academic Calendar. See AMC Graduate School rules <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/Graduate-School/Pages/default.aspx>
- 13. The College of Nursing PhD Program has a policy that major papers such as the comprehensive examination paper, dissertation proposal, and dissertation defense drafts be submitted to committee members with at least 4 weeks time allowed for reading and response. This policy is written to accommodate the varying teaching, research, clinical, and travel schedules of the faculty and is respectful of their time and efforts. Usually the Major Advisor and First Reader read major papers identified above, including chapters, to conduct initial editing and make recommendations for changes prior to submitting the document to the other two members of the committee. This process allows for initial editing to be completed and respects the time that each committee member spends reading major student papers. Therefore, the time frame for submission should be adjusted accordingly.**
14. After the dissertation has been completed and before the degree is conferred, a final examination on the dissertation and related topics is conducted in two parts, an oral presentation of the dissertation research that is open to the public, called the Public Seminar, and a closed examination conducted by the examining committee. NOTE: AMC Graduate School rules require that the dissertation advisor/mentor not chair the defense examination. Therefore the first reader is usually the chair of the exam. This person also signs the top line of the signature page, and approves and signs the form to schedule the exam.

15. [AMC Graduate School Rules:] The Program Director will approve the student's final examination/defense committee and the examination schedule. The AMC Graduate School must be notified on the appropriate forms at least **two weeks** before the exam. The AMC Graduate School will send announcements of the examination to appropriate faculty members, and the signature form will be sent to the program office to be placed in the student's file for use at the examination. The AMC Graduate School will also post the notice of the exam. A student must be registered at the time of the examination as noted in the AMC Graduate School Handbook. All members of the committee must be present for the examination. **One member, not the chairperson or the student, may participate by interactive video. Any costs incurred in the interactive video exam are the responsibility of the student.** The examination form is signed by the committee and returned to the AMC Graduate School Office. Please see Graduate School Rules for explanation of examination results (pass/fail).
16. In mechanical features the dissertation must comply with the specifications of the AMC Graduate School. A manual of Graduate School specification for doctoral dissertations and a checklist for such mechanical features is included in the Ph.D. Thesis Defense/Graduation Packet that is obtained from the UC Denver AMC Graduate School Office. One formally approved printed or typewritten copy of the thesis and two original abstracts must be filed in the Office of the Dean of AMC Graduate School at least two weeks before the date on which the degree is to be conferred. An abstract, not to exceed 350 words, should be submitted for publication in Dissertation Abstracts International.

Note: Please pay attention to deadlines. Following the thesis defense examination the student has 60 days to complete the dissertation and submit the written copies as outlined above. However, each semester pertinent deadlines are posted in the UC Denver Academic Calendar, on the web pages of the AMC Graduate School, and sent via email to graduate students. These deadlines will determine in which semester the student receives a diploma following thesis submission. It is helpful to plan ahead; for example, if a student plans to graduate in May, the last day to file the examination scheduling form may be mid-April. The last day to take the thesis examination would be early May and the final copy must be submitted by May mid-May.

In addition, the AMC Graduate School has a **new policy** stating that to participate in Spring commencement activities (UC Denver commencement ceremonies, AMC Graduate School and CON Convocation), a student must defend her/his thesis by no later than **April 1st** and submit the final copy to the AMC Graduate School by a specific date (mid-May). Students defending after this date but before deadlines noted in the previous paragraph can still receive a diploma for spring semester but not participate in the commencement ceremonies until the following spring.

The AMC Graduate School Web pages, Handbook, and thesis rules take precedent. Please refer to these policies for each step in the PhD program from Prelims, through Comps, and Dissertation. <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/Graduate-School/Pages/default.aspx>

Graduation The UC Denver AMC Campus holds only one commencement ceremony and convocation ceremony per year, usually the Friday prior to Memorial Day. At this time degrees are conferred. The CON and AMC Graduate School must be notified in writing (diploma card) of a student's plan to participate in the ceremony. Full academic regalia are required and may be rented.

APPENDIX

University of Colorado Denver College of Nursing Philosophy

University of Colorado Denver College of Nursing, as an integral part of its parent institution, is dedicated to the pursuit of higher learning grounded in the arts, sciences, and humanities. The College of Nursing shares the missions of University of Colorado Denver

- improving human health by educating health practitioners
- delivering exemplary health care
- conducting research in the health sciences.

The missions of the institution are directed toward a diverse community. The university acknowledges, values, fosters and benefits from the unique qualities, rich histories and wide range of cultural values. The philosophy and mission of the College of Nursing are focused on education, research, reflective practice, and service within nursing.

The College of Nursing faculty believe nursing is a professional discipline with academic and practice dimensions. As a profession, nursing serves society through delivery of direct and indirect health care services to individuals, families and communities in local, regional, national, and international contexts. Nursing is theory-guided, evidence-based, and focused on holistic, relationship-centered caring that facilitates health and healing. As a profession, nursing is committed to ensuring quality health care for all. Nurses engage in political leadership to improve the health and health care of the society they serve. As a discipline, nursing is committed to

- a search for knowledge regarding human experiences of health-illness-healing and the human/technology interface
- development and testing of explanatory models of health, illness, and healing
- positive influence on the environmental contexts of health and health care
- promotion of quality and cost effective outcomes of nursing care.

The College of Nursing faculty believe that generation of disciplinary knowledge is founded upon pluralistic forms of inquiry, continual dialogue with nursing practice, and interdisciplinary collaboration. The College of Nursing faculty believe that university-based nursing education is responsible for preparing nurses for professional and discipline-related roles. Thus the faculty believe in the equivalent importance of undergraduate education for practice, and leadership and graduate education for advanced practice and knowledge generation. The faculty believe in advocacy for social justice, responsiveness to society's needs and changing local, national and global health care environments. They are committed to promoting reflective practice with inherent reciprocity among nursing practice, theory, and research in all educational programs. The faculty further believe that preparation for various nursing roles requires education in the arts and sciences foundational to nursing and in substantive disciplinary knowledge regarding caring in the human health experience across the lifespan. The faculty believe that contemporary nursing education and practice require a commitment to diversity, interdisciplinary partnerships, and a grounding in faculty practice. This faculty practice models expert care and community service; provides opportunities to develop innovative models of health care delivery; improves access to care for underserved populations; engages in clinical inquiry; and tests nursing theories. Contemporary nursing education also is facilitated by articulated degree programs, flexible and self-directed programs that incorporate lifelong learning, innovative educational technologies, and inter-institutional collaboration.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGREEMENT

Name of Doctoral Student: _____
(type or print)

I hereby request the appointment of the following Graduate Faculty of the College of Nursing to serve as my Major Advisor and members (2) of my Advisory Committee; they will serve in this advisory capacity and as Chair and two of the required four members of my Comprehensive Examination Committee. Each of these individuals has indicated willingness to serve, and my First Year Advisor has indicated agreement, by their signatures below. I understand that upon successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination, this committee will be dissolved, and that appointment of my Dissertation Committee requires separate action.

Major Advisor:

(type or print) Signature Date

Committee member:

(type or print) Signature Date

Committee member:

(type or print) Signature Date

First Year Advisor notified:

(type or print) Signature Date

Doctoral Student: _____
(signature) Date

Submit this form to the UC Denver CON Graduate Programs Office

University of Colorado Denver
College of Nursing

Intent to Take Preliminary Exam

Directions: Attach a copy of your PhD Program Plan and submit this form to the Graduate Programs Office at least six (6) weeks prior to the scheduled preliminary exam you intent to take. Examinations may be taken in January, May or August on the Friday nearest to the 15th of the month. **PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT.**

Part I: To be complete by student.

Student Name: _____ ID#

I intend to take the Preliminary Exam in (check one): _____
year January
 May
 August

Exam delivery options (check one)

- I will pick-up the exam at 8:00 am on the exam date
 I would like the exam emailed to my student email account (non UC Denver accounts may not be used)
-

Part II: To be completed by First Year Advisor.

I have reviewed the student's academic folder and have verified that the following requirements have been met:

- ____ NURS 7000
____ NURS 7020
____ NURS 7030
____ no deficiencies pending
____ satisfactory work in call courses

At this time the student has completed _____ semester hours of coursework.

Advisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Submit this form to the UC Denver CON Graduate Programs Office

Criteria Used for Student Writing and Faculty Evaluation of Preliminary Exam

Consistent with the purpose of the examination to determine evidence of the student's ability to successfully complete the program, the evaluation of the examination focuses on analysis, synthesis, and general traits of critical scholarship. Volume of response is not desired; neither is text that reiterates the ideas found in existing literature. Rather, the faculty seek *evidence of substantive and original thinking that draws on the literature of the discipline*.

The guidelines for evaluation and feedback are not mutually exclusive; they are not to be used as precise "ratings" or "checklists" for scoring. Rather, they are critical traits toward which an individual's scholarly skills moves. The examination readers will therefore use these guidelines as a basis for evaluation and feedback, seeking evidence in the responses that the student has achieved reasonable progress toward demonstrating these skills of scholarship.

Instructions for Readers: Enter your comments relative to each of the guidelines below. Each faculty team will reach consensus regarding feedback relative to the guidelines, prepare a composite of all comments and will reach consensus regarding the outcome of the examination. Comments can be continued on another sheet of paper if needed. The composite comments and results of the examinations are to be returned to the Office of the Graduate Program Director no later than two weeks from the date of receipt of the examinations. The composite comments will be typed and shared with the student and the student's advisor. Students responses to exam may be shared with student's advisor with permission from student.

I. ANALYSIS

- Identify and organize elements in ways that provide logical coherence to the response
- Explain the central issues, problems and "puzzles" with respect to the topic under discussion
- Identify and explain unstated assumptions, logical fallacies, and extraneous aspects of an issue, problem or position
- Project the implications of an issue, problem, or position for nursing practice, research, or theory
- Explain and compare alternative views that could be assumed in reaching alternative value judgments

Evaluation Summary:

II. SYNTHESIS

- Present succinct summaries of ideas that reflect comprehension of the whole while building a deliberate message concerning the topic under discussion
- Convey abstract relationships that form conceptual wholes
- Integrate a variety of sources to form a foundation for the student's unique ideas
- Build a comprehensive conceptual bridge between existing literature and the author's own unique insights and independent thinking

Evaluation Summary:

III. CRITICAL SCHOLARLY ABILITIES

- Demonstrate open-mindedness, critical self-awareness, and reflective thinking
- Provide succinct, complete and direct responses to the issues
- Demonstrate a breadth of knowledge of the topic under discussion that is consistent with the breadth covered in the entry doctoral level courses
- Interpret existing literature without misrepresentation
- Take risks in challenging existing ideas while presenting sound rationale for doing so
- Demonstrate the ability to defend a logical position without prejudice.

Evaluation Summary:

Overall recommendations and summary of evaluation:

PASS _____

NOT PASS _____

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER
COLLEGE OF NURSING

**APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION PROPOSAL/ DISSERTATION PROPOSAL
DEFENSE EXAMINATION**

The following members of the Dissertation Committee have approved the dissertation proposal submitted by:

Doctoral Candidate

Completion of this form verifies prior approval of committee members by the PhD Program Director and approval of Graduate Faculty Membership for all members by the UC Denver AMC Graduate School. The signed form indicates that a formal Dissertation Proposal Defense Examination was successfully completed.

Dissertation Advisor/Mentor _____
(signature) Date

1st Reader _____
(signature) Date

2nd Reader _____
(signature) Date

3rd Reader _____
(signature) Date

4th Reader _____
(signature) Date

Student's Mailing Address: _____

Phone #: _____

This form is to be submitted to the PhD Program Director, Graduate Programs Office

**Sample PhD Program Plan
Fall 2010 Cohort**

Course #	Title	Credit	Notes
Fall 2010			
NURS 7030	Discipline of Nursing	3	Last course offering
NURS 7846	Research Practicum	3	Last course offering
NURS 6493	Inferential Statistics (pre-requisite)	3	[If not completed]
Spring 2011			
NURS 7000	Philosophy of Human Science	3	Last course offering
NURS 7020	Methods of Disciplined Inquiry	3	Last course offering
Preliminary Examination			
Summer 2011			
NURS 7120	Theory and Knowledge Development	3	Last course offering
Fall 2011			
NURS 7400	Experimental Design & Analysis	3	Last course offering
NURS 7310	Qualitative Interpretive Research	3	Last course offering
Spring 2012			
NURS 7300	Qualitative Empirical Research	3	Last course offering
NURS 7410	Multivariate Design & Analysis	3	Last course offering
Summer 2012			
NURS 7740	BBSI: Intrapersonal Determinants & Phenomena	3	HEHIHD focus
TBA	Health Care Systems Course TBA	3	ECO focus
Fall 2012			
NURS 7750	BBSII: Interpersonal Phenomena & Determinants	3	HEHIHD focus
NURS 7440	Instrumentation	3	ECO focus
Elective	Elective	3	
Spring 2013			
Elective	Elective	3	May add dissertation credits if needed
Summer 2013			
NURS 8990	Elective	3	
Comprehensive Exam			
Fall 2013			
NURS 8990	Dissertation	5	
Spring 2014			
NURS 8990	Dissertation (continue until complete)	5	
Summer 2014			
NURS 8990	Dissertation (continue until complete)	5	
Fall 2014			
NURS 8990	Dissertation (continue until complete)	5	
Spring 2015			
NURS 8990	Dissertation (continue until complete)	5	
Summer 2015			
NURS 8990	Dissertation (continue until complete)		
Dissertation Defense			
Total 72 credits (30 dissertation)			

**Sample PhD Program Plan
MS to PhD Fall 2010 Cohort**

See Sample PhD Program Plan for updated coursework

Course #	Title	Credit	Notes
Fall 2010			
NURS 6010	Theory	3	
NURS 6493	Inferential Statistics	3	
Spring 2011			
NURS 6013	Human Technology Interface	3	
NURS 6031	Research Methods for Advanced Practice	4	
Summer 2011			
NURS 6022	Health Systems, Policy & Social Justice	3	
Fall 2011			
NURS 6113	Studies in Health Promotion and Lifestyle	2	
NURS xxxx	MS Advanced Practice Core Course (e.g. adv. patho, adv. pharm, adv. assessment)	3	
Spring 2012			
NURS xxxx	MS Course	3	
NURS xxxx	MS Course	3	
Summer 2012			
NURS xxxx	MS Course	3	
MS Comprehensive Exam			
Fall 2012			
NURS 7030	Discipline of Nursing	3	
NURS 7846	Research Practicum	3	
Spring 2013			
NURS 7000	Philosophy of Human Science	3	
NURS 7020	Methods of Disciplined Inquiry	3	
Preliminary Examination			
Summer 2013			
NURS 7120	Theory and Knowledge Development	3	
Fall 2013			
NURS 7400	Experimental Design & Analysis	3	
NURS 7713	Seminar in Human Experience	3	Required for students in this foci
Or elective	Elective	3	
Spring 2014			
NURS 7300	Qualitative Empirical Research	3	
NURS 7410	Multivariate Design & Analysis	3	
Summer 2014			
Elective	Elective	3	
Fall 2014			
NURS 7714 or Elective	Selected Topics in Human Experience	3	Required for students in this foci
NURS 7310	Qualitative Interpretive Research	3	
NURS 7653	Cost/Quality Outcomes: Micro Level	3	Required for students in this foci

Spring 2015			
Elective	Elective	3	
NURS 7652	Cost/Quality Outcomes: Health Systems Perspective	3	Required for students in this foci
Summer 2015			
NURS 8990	Dissertation	5	
Fall 2015			
NURS 8990	Dissertation	5	
Elective	Elective	3	
PhD Comprehensive Exam			
Spring 2016			
NURS 8990	Dissertation (continue until complete)	5	
Summer 2016			
NURS 8990	Dissertation (continue until complete)	5	
Fall 2016			
NURS 8990	Dissertation (continue until complete)	5	
Spring 2017			
NURS 8990	Dissertation (continue until complete)		
Summer 2017			
NURS 8990	Dissertation (continue until complete)		
Dissertation Defense			
Total 72 credits (30 dissertation)			