



**PROGRAM POLICY STATEMENT**  
**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD) IN HEALTH BEHAVIOR SCIENCE AND PROMOTION**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH BEHAVIOR AND NUTRITION SCIENCES**

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## I: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### A. Mission Statement.

The Health Behavior Science and Promotion (HBSP) Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) provides the highest degree for health promotion and behavioral science professionals, preparing graduates for research careers in many settings, including academia, non-governmental organizations (business and non-profit), allied health fields, and public service at all levels of national government. The curriculum will provide graduate students with the training needed to become effective scientific practitioners with the capacity to conduct independent research in health-related outcomes and promotion, in academic and applied settings. Completion of a high-quality PhD dissertation, **based on original research**, is a key feature of the academic program. Students' capacity to complete dissertation research is developed through a rigorous curriculum designed to bring students to the intellectual forefront of their discipline. The research emphasis of the Health Behavior Science and Promotion field is on the individual (including cognitive and affective domains), social, behavioral and environmental determinants of health and health behavior change across levels of the social ecological model, and the development of high quality, evidence-based health promotion interventions.

### B. Current Status.

The HBSP PhD Program was approved by faculty senate in February 2018. The first student was enrolled in fall 2018. The program will be reviewed for permanent status in fall 2025.

### C. Degree Offered.

The degree awarded to those who complete this program is a PhD in HBSP.

## II: ADMISSION

### A. Admission Criteria and Requirements

#### *A1. Criteria*

Applicants from diverse educational and professional backgrounds in health behavior science and promotion or a related science/health field, who have a strong interest in health behavior science and Promotion, are encouraged to apply. Each application will be evaluated individually on the basis of the following key areas:

- 1) Academic record/achievement;
- 2) Work, research, and/or community health experience;
- 3) Matching interest with, and availability of, current HBS faculty to serve as the students' faculty mentor; and,
- 4) Commitment to, and, interest in the individual, social, behavioral and environmental determinants of health, health behavior change across levels of the social ecological model, and the development of high quality evidence based health promotion programs.

#### *A2. Requirements*

Applicants must submit all materials directly to the University of Delaware Graduate College using the online admission process to be considered for admission.

Admission decisions will be made by the Health Behavior Science Graduate Programs Committee. Students will be admitted to the program based on enrollment availability, the availability of faculty mentorship, and their ability to meet the following **minimum** entrance requirements:

1. A master's Degree in a related field from an accredited college or university with a GPA  $\geq 3.3$  for the HBSP PhD program **or** a bachelor's degree in a related field from an accredited college or university with an undergraduate GPA  $\geq 3.3$  for the Master of Science (MS) to PhD bypass option.

2. GRE scores within the past 5 years.
3. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score of at least 600 (paper based), TOEFL iBT of at least 100, or IELTS (International English Language Testing System) overall band score of 7.0 for non-native English speakers.

#### B. Prior Degree Requirements.

A completed master's degree in health promotion, public health or the related social and behavioral sciences is required for admittance to the HBSP PhD Program.

Students enrolled in the MS in Health Promotion (currently offered within the Department of Health Behavior and Nutrition Sciences [HBNS] at the University of Delaware) may apply to the HBSP PhD program in the winter of their first year of study and with agreement in writing from their MS mentor. If admitted, they may begin their HBSP PhD program in what would have been their second year of their MP in Health Promotion within the Department . Students applying to the MS to PhD bypass option must:

- (1) have exceptional performance during the first year of the MS in Health Promotion program, and
- (2) have the approval of the HBS graduate programs committee and their mentor.

#### C. Application Deadlines.

Applications (all materials) for the HBSP PhD Program will be reviewed on a rolling basis between January 15 and March 15 for admission to the program at the beginning of the following fall semester. Since application decisions will be made on a rolling basis within this timeframe (January 15<sup>th</sup> – March 15<sup>th</sup>), applicants are strongly advised to complete and submit applications as early as possible.

The admission process at the Department level will be completed as follows: completed applications will be reviewed by HBS graduate programs committee and applicants who meet the admission criteria will then have their application file reviewed by all Health Behavior Science graduate faculty. Graduate faculty members will provide written feedback on each applicant and each applicant will be reviewed at a Health Behavior Science Program meeting. . Faculty identified by applicants as having shared research interests will also comment on his/her willingness and ability (in terms of time and funding) to serve as the applicant's mentor. A faculty member can advise no more than two HBSP PhD students simultaneously (regardless of where the students are in their course of study). In special circumstances if enrolled students of a faculty member have successful progression towards degree requirements, additional students may be allowed. The goal is for faculty to advise/mentor students whose background, goals and objectives are compatible with their own research and funding. Only qualified applicants who have a potential faculty mentor will be invited to complete an interview. To be admitted to the HBSP PhD program, a student must have a faculty mentor. The HBS graduate programs committee in conjunction with potential mentors will make final decisions on admission. Admitted students will begin the program in the fall semester. Admission to the program is limited and not all qualified applicants will be admitted.

#### D. Admission Categories.

Students may be admitted into the HBSP PhD program in one of four categories:

- 1) Admitted full-time with full assistantship that provides tuition and a stipend support;
- 2) Admitted full-time with partial assistantship that provides tuition support ;
- 3) Admitted full-time with no assistantship support; or
- 4) Admitted part time with no assistantship support.

Graduate Assistantship support will be provided only to full-time students on a year-to-year basis. See Section V: Financial Aid for additional information about funding.

#### E. Application Documents Required.

PhD applicants are expected to submit:

1. A graduate application essay;
2. Current curriculum vitae;
3. A minimum of three letters of recommendation, it is recommended that at least two be from academic references;
4. Official transcripts and GRE scores; and, as necessary
5. TOEFL or IELTS scores (for international applicants only).

MS to PhD bypass applicants are expected to submit:

- 1) A letter of recommendation from their MS mentor to the PhD Program Director indicating their recommendation for acceptance into the PhD program;
- 2) A letter of recommendation from the identified PhD mentor to the PhD Program Director indicating their agreement to work with the student; Note: If the student's MS mentor is going to be their PhD mentor, then just one letter of recommendation is needed;
- 3) An updated graduate application essay;
- 4) Current curriculum vitae; and
- 5) Unofficial copy of graduate transcripts.

All documents to apply for the MS to PhD bypass should be combined into a single PDF document and submitted to the Graduate Services Coordinator before the March 15 deadline.

#### F. HBNS Statement of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Department of Health Behavior and Nutrition Sciences (HBNS) is committed to sharing values of diversity, equity and inclusion. We believe that we can best promote and endorse these values by recruiting and retaining a diverse group of students, faculty and staff and by creating a climate of respect that is supportive of their academic success. This climate for diversity, equity, and inclusion is central to achieving our academic potential through research and scholarship, teaching, and service.

The Department of Health Behavior and Nutrition Sciences gives definition to this climate of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community as it relates to:

1. **Access to our Departments Programs and Practices:** We implement academic programs and scholarly practices that seek to provide equitable access and enable all students to grow academically. Specific strategies that we keenly use include:
  - Active participation in the annual, 6-day College of Health Sciences Summer Camp that provides a deep exploration into health sciences majors and careers for traditionally underrepresented students (i.e., minority, low-income, or (soon to be) first generation students).
  - The provision of a dynamic and up-to-date HBNS website that utilizes culturally diverse images and engages current and potential students, as well as their families, in learning about our on-going programs.
  - Engaged with the Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement Program (the McNair's Scholars Program). The McNair Scholars program is renowned for preparing traditionally underrepresented groups for graduate education.
  - Recruitment of students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and organizations. Specifically, we engage with central organizations such as The Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence & Equity (formerly the Delaware Valley Minority Student Achievement Consortium or DVMSAC), and The New Jersey Network to Close the Achievement Gaps to directly market our academic programs to traditionally underserved groups.

2. **Teaching and Learning:** We are rigorous and empathetic teachers who collectively seek to examine and revise our curriculum and teaching practices as necessary to ensure that we are effective in helping all students achieve their academic potential. Specific strategies that we use to promote inclusive teaching and learning include:

- Prior to the start of each academic year, graduate students and faculty can participate in an intensive in-service training related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This interactive training focuses on individual cultural competence and specifically works to build participant's cultural awareness, knowledge and skills. At the conclusion of the training, attendees are encouraged to develop a cultural competence plan for an aspect of their work in the coming academic year.
- Faculty are trained and actively encouraged to connect students (both direct advisees and any student who solicits help) with professional groups and organizations that promote diversity and assist in establishing networks as per the Office of Equity and Inclusion at the University of Delaware.
- All PhD students in the program will be provided with a tailored advising and mentoring plan that will be designed to maximize academic success. The University of Delaware's Diversity and Inclusion resources will be consulted in the development of this plan.

#### **G. University Statement.**

Admission to the graduate program is competitive. Those who meet stated requirements are not guaranteed admission, nor are those who fail to meet all of those requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths as determined by the HBS Graduate Programs Committee.

### **III: ACADEMIC DEGREE: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD) IN HEALTH BEHAVIOR SCIENCE AND PROMOTION (HBSP)**

The HBSP PhD Program provides the highest degree for health behavior science and promotion professionals, preparing graduates to become effective scientific practitioners who conduct independent research. Completion of a high-quality PhD dissertation includes the degree requirements outlined below as a key feature of the academic program. In addition, students are expected to actively engage in other research and scholarly pursuits including the design, execution and dissemination of research activities (e.g., data collection, data analysis, presentations, manuscripts, grant writing).

#### **A. Degree Requirements and Program Learning Outcomes.**

The HBSP PhD program requires successful completion of a minimum of 48 credit hours, completion of a comprehensive examination, a dissertation which includes oral and written components, and a publishable paper. The HBSP PhD is designed to be completed over a 4-year period for full-time students and no more than 7 years (14 consecutive semesters) for part-time students.

In addition to the minimum of 48 credit hours, degree requirements for the HBSP PhD include:

1. Comprehensive exam (section A.5)
2. Oral dissertation proposal defense and oral dissertation defense (section A.6)
3. Written dissertation (section A.7, Table 3)
4. Other (Publishable Paper Requirement, section A.8)

#### ***Coursework and Credit Hours***

An outline of the 48 required credit hours is provided in Table 1. Students who have had substantially similar courses to one or more of those required prior to entering the HBSP PhD may substitute other

appropriate courses with the approval of the mentor, and the HBS graduate programs committee, and the completion/approval of the course substitution form required by the Graduate College. A maximum of 9 credits may be substituted in the program of study. Only those courses in the 600, 800

<b>Table 1: Outline of HBSP PhD Program Coursework</b>	<b># Credits</b>
HBNS803 Advanced Health Promotion Programming	3 credits
HBNS813 Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine	3 credits
HBNS820 Social and Environmental Determinants of Health	3 credits
HBNS855 Qualitative and Mixed Methods in Health Sciences	3 credits
HBNS856 Multivariable Biostatistics for Population Health	3 credits
Statistics or Data Analysis/Research Methods Electives (List of <b>possible</b> statistics electives provided in Appendix; electives are approved by mentor)	9 credits
<b>ELECTIVE COURSE</b> (3 course , 9 credits) 3 credits of graduate coursework in any subject area at the 600 level or higher	9 credits
HBNS Seminar	0 credits
Preliminary Examinations	0 credits
HBNS868 Independent Research	6 credits
HBNS969 Dissertation Research	9 credits
<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>48 Credits</b>

and 900 levels can apply towards the HBSP PhD. Independent study courses will be accepted based on approval of the student's mentor . A maximum of 6 independent research study credits may be included in the program of study.

## A2. Planned Program of Study

Students are required to develop a plan for a program of study with their mentor during the first semester of study. Students admitted part-time will develop an individual program of study with their mentor that will outline the timeline for completion of degree requirements. It is expected that the part-time students will take longer to complete the program requirements than full-time students. Depending on the student's background and interests, the program of study may include courses beyond the minimum number required for the degree. The planned program of study must first be approved by the student's mentor. A typical plan for the program of study (**showing only the minimum requirements for the degree**) is shown in Table 2a. A typical plan for the program of study for students wishing to complete the MS/HBSP PhD bypass option is shown in **Table 2b**, page 10. Please see **Section III item F.2** for information about development of student advising and mentoring plans.

**Table 2a:** Sample Plan for HBSP PhD Program of Study (for those with MS degree and enrolled full-time)

\*Dissertation proposal defense to occur by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester of full-time study but no later than prior to the start of the second summer session during Year 2. \*\*Note that *sustaining* in this context means that the student is still classified as a full-time student.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<b>Fall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HBNS Seminar (0)</li> <li>● HBNS803 Advanced Health Promotion Programming (3)</li> <li>● HBNS855 Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research in Health Sciences (3)</li> <li>● Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3)</li> <li>● HBNS868 Independent Research (1)</li> </ul> <p>[10 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HBNS Seminar (0)</li> <li>● Elective (3)</li> <li>● Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3)</li> <li>● Elective (3)</li> <li>● HBNS 868 Independent Research (1)</li> </ul> <p>[10 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HBNS Seminar (0)</li> <li>● HBNS969 Dissertation Research (9)</li> </ul> <p>[9 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HBNS Seminar</li> </ul> <p>*Sustaining</p>
<b>Winter</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Comprehensive Exam</li> </ul>		
<b>Spring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Elective (3)</li> <li>● HBNS820 Social and Environmental Determinants of Health (3)</li> <li>● HBNS856 Multivariate Biostatistics for Population Health (3)</li> <li>● HBNS868 Independent Research (1)</li> </ul> <p>[10 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HBNS868 Independent Research (3)</li> <li>● HBNS813 Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine (3)</li> <li>● Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3)</li> </ul> <p>[9 credits]</p>	*Sustaining	<p>*Sustaining</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Final doctoral dissertation defense</li> </ul>
<b>Summer</b>	<i>Research (0)</i>	<p><i>Research (0)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Preliminary Exams and Doctoral proposal defense (<i>have to be completed by August 1</i>)</li> </ul>	<i>Research (0)</i>	

**Table 2b:** Sample Plan for HBSP PhD Bypass Option (for those enrolled full-time)

<b>MS Year 1</b>	
Fall	HBNS609 Research Design (3) HBNS809 Health Behavior Theory (3) HBNS 634 Health Science Data Analysis
Winter	<i>Apply to MS/PhD program bypass option)</i>
Spring	HBNS 605 Chronic Disease Management (3) HBNS819 Social Marketing (3) or HBNS610 Health and Media  Elective (3)



	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>
<b>Fall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HBNS Seminar (0)</li> <li>HBNS803 Advanced Health Promotion Programming (3)</li> <li>HBNS855 Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research in Health Sciences (3)</li> <li>Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3)</li> <li>HBNS868 Independent Research (1)</li> </ul> [10 credits]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HBNS Seminar (0)</li> <li>Elective (3)</li> <li>Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3)</li> <li>Elective (3)</li> <li>HBNS 868 Independent Research (1)</li> </ul> [10 credits]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HBNS Seminar (0)</li> <li>HBNS969 Dissertation Research (9)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HBNS Seminar (0)</li> </ul> *Sustaining
<b>Winter</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive Exam</li> </ul>		
<b>Spring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elective (3)</li> <li>HBNS820 Social and Environmental Determinants of Health (3)</li> <li>HBNS856 Multivariate Biostatistics for Population Health (3)</li> <li>HBNS868 Independent Research (1)</li> </ul> [10 credits]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HBNS868 Independent Research (3)</li> <li>HBNS813 Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine (3)</li> <li>Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3)</li> </ul> [9 credits]	*Sustaining	*Sustaining <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final doctoral dissertation defense.</li> </ul>
<b>Summer</b>	<i>Research (0)</i>	<i>Research (0)</i>	<i>Research (0)</i>	

\*Dissertation proposal defense to occur by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester of study but no later than prior to the start of the second summer session during Year 2. \*\*Note that *sustaining* in this context means that the student is still classified as a full-time student.



### *A3. Residency Requirement*

While students who receive graduate assistantships need 8 academic semesters to complete the HBSP PhD degree, self-funded students with exceptional progress towards degree may complete the requirements in a minimum of 6 academic semesters. At least one continuous academic year must be devoted exclusively to full-time study (6 credit hours per semester for a student receiving an assistantship, 9 credit hours per semester for a student not on assistantship) in Health Behavior Science and Promotion in residence at the University of Delaware. To fulfill the residency requirement, part time students need to be enrolled in credit hours for a continuous academic year and engaged in program-related activities as defined by their individual plan of study. This residency requirement may be fulfilled using a fall and spring semester combination or a spring and fall semester combination, but summer and winter sessions do not count toward the residency requirement.

### *A4. Progress Requirements*

Students must convene their dissertation committee at the latest during the second semester of study and each semester thereafter arrange a meeting to formally share progress towards their degree. Following each dissertation committee meeting, the student must complete a meeting report that is signed and approved by the mentor. Upon approval, the student will share the report with the dissertation committee and the HBSP PhD Director who will then share it with the HBS Graduate Programs Committee. Students who do not have committee meetings in a timely manner will be considered as failing to progress and will be required to meet with the HBSP PhD Director to determine whether a recommendation for dismissal from the program is warranted.

### *A5. Comprehensive Examination Requirement*

Students must pass a comprehensive examination that tests their general knowledge base in health behavior science and promotion and their ability to critically evaluate scientific literature. Specific details are as follows:

1. The HBS graduate programs committee will have responsibility for the written examination, including writing and grading examination questions.
2. The comprehensive exam must be taken after completion of approximately 30 credits which for a full-time student typically occurs during Winter Session in the second academic year of study. The comprehensive exam for part time students will be scheduled and included in their individual plan of study.
3. The written examinations are graded on a pass/fail basis, with a letter grade of C or greater indicating "pass". Students who fail the comprehensive examination will be provided with a marked copy of their exam and have a feedback session with their mentor where areas to improve will be discussed. Students have one opportunity to retake and pass the examination sections that were failed. The retake must be taken within two months of the initial examination. A failure on the re-take would result in dismissal from the PhD program and students will have the option to complete the MS in Health Promotion program requirements.
4. Students must pass the comprehensive examination requirement before proceeding to the dissertation proposal defense.

### *A6. Dissertation*

A student's dissertation is a substantial original study in the area of health behavior science and promotion that requires approval at the dissertation proposal stage by the dissertation committee. Independent study time and all research activity prior to the dissertation proposal are intended to be productive and lay the groundwork for the dissertation. All work included in a student's dissertation must be formally approved by all members of the student's dissertation committee, at dissertation committee meetings and at the oral dissertation proposal defense. The dissertation includes both oral and written components.

#### *A6a. Oral Dissertation Proposal Defense and Oral Dissertation Defense Requirements*

Full time students in the HBSP PhD Program must complete an oral dissertation proposal defense preferably by the end of the fourth semester of study but no later than prior to the start of the second summer session during Year 2. The deadline for completion of an oral dissertation proposal defense by a part-time student will be identified in the written individual program of study. Prior to the oral presentation, the student should have prepared their full Institutional Review Board (IRB)/Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC) package [e.g., protocol, consent, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (also known as HIPAA)], if applicable. Following the successful oral defense of the dissertation proposal, the student should submit their IRB/IACUC materials as soon as possible.

Procedures for the oral dissertation proposal defense and the oral dissertation defense are the same. The written dissertation proposal and the final written dissertation will be made available to the student's PhD dissertation committee members at least two weeks prior to the oral defense date. The oral defense meetings will include both a defense of the student's proposed or completed dissertation research and an in-depth examination of the student's knowledge of their research specialization. Students are expected to demonstrate competency in both oral and written communication skills. All HBNS faculty and students will be invited to attend the oral dissertation proposal defense meeting and oral dissertation defense meeting.

Immediately following the oral presentation of the defense, the PhD dissertation committee will meet separately to pose questions to the student. Once all questions have been answered the student will leave the room and the PhD dissertation committee will vote on the outcome of the defense. The possible outcomes of the oral defense are:

1. Pass. The student may proceed to the next stage of his/her degree training.
2. Conditional pass. In the event that the dissertation committee feels the student's proposal/dissertation materials were generally acceptable but with a specific deficiency, condition(s) will be specified that the student must revise to achieve a Pass and remain in the HBSP PhD program.
3. Re-examination: This result is appropriate for a student whose performance was unsatisfactory, but displayed evidence of the potential to complete graduate degree training. Re-examination must be completed by the end of the next semester. The possible outcomes of the re-examination are pass or failure. The student may not take the exam a third time.
4. Failure. This outcome would indicate that the student's PhD dissertation committee considers the student incapable of completing degree training and the student would be recommended for dismissal from the program and may be awarded the MS in Health Promotion degree pending the completion of any outstanding coursework.

The outcome will be presented to the student. If 'conditional pass' or 're-examination' all conditions or requirements for proposal or dissertation revisions will be documented in a written format that is signed by the student, the Faculty Mentor (Dissertation Chairperson) and all members of the Dissertation Committee. For 're-examination' why the student failed and what a 're-examination' means needs to be detailed in the written documentation. For conditional pass, specific deficiencies or conditions must be addressed within two months of the original oral defense date. For re-examination, the revised written dissertation and revised oral defense must be completed by the end of the next semester. The possible outcomes of the re-examination are pass or failure. The student may not take the exam a third time.

Once the proposal defense has been successfully completed, the student must apply to the Graduate College for admission into candidacy. For students with the outcome 're-examination' students must register for pre-candidacy credits that can be transferred to candidacy credits upon receiving a 'pass' or 'conditional pass'. Once the final dissertation defense has been successfully completed, the student should notify the PhD Program Director who will provide additional directions.

#### *A.6b. Written Dissertation Format*

The Department supports both a traditional and article style (“Three Papers”) written dissertation format. While the scope and expectations for the HBSP PhD dissertation is provided elsewhere, Table 3 depicts the general content for both formats.

**Table 3: Written Dissertation Requirements Based on Format**

	Traditional Dissertation	Three Papers Dissertation*
Chapter Requirements	Minimum of 5 chapters, may be more. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chapter 1: Introduction and specific aims</li> <li>● Chapter 2: Substantive review of the literature/conceptual framework</li> <li>● Chapter 3: Methods</li> <li>● Chapter 4: Result</li> <li>● Chapter 5: Discussion, conclusion</li> </ul>	Minimum of 5 chapters, may be more. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chapter 1: Introduction, overarching purpose, and conceptual framework</li> <li>● Chapter 2: Manuscript 1</li> <li>● Chapter 3: Manuscript 2</li> <li>● Chapter 4: Manuscript 3</li> <li>● Chapter 5: Summary chapter of key findings, future research directions</li> </ul>
Manuscript Types	N/A	Minimum of 3 manuscripts. Up to 1 of the 3 manuscripts may be any type of review or meta-analysis manuscript.
Manuscript Status	N/A	At least one manuscript must be published or submitted for publication; other manuscripts must be suitable for publication at the dissertation defense.
Authorship	PhD candidate is sole author of the dissertation	Students are to be the first author on each manuscript. Co-first authorship is acceptable if the student is one of the first and submitting author and the student’s Dissertation Committee has provided approval; documentation of Dissertation Committee approval should be documented in the minutes from the meeting in which the co-first authorship was approved.
References	Comprehensive reference list at the end of the dissertation	References are included within the manuscripts of Chapters 2-4 and if needed, an additional reference list covering Chapters 1 & 5 at the end of the dissertation

\*Adapted from Indiana University Richard M Fairbanks School of Public Health

For the Three Papers Dissertation format, if a paper has been accepted for publication, the published manuscript in a word (not PDF) version should be included as the chapter. Permissions that include the “rights link” from the journal that it is okay to copyright these articles should be disclosed in an associated appendix. It is the responsibility of the student and his/her mentor to ensure compliance with permissions requirements.

#### *A.7. Other (Publishable Paper Requirement)*

The HBSP PhD Program requires all students to be the first author or a co-author on at least one manuscript that is published or submitted for publication prior to final oral dissertation defense.

### B. Faculty Mentors and PhD Dissertation Committees

#### *B1. Faculty Mentors.*

During the application process, each student will nominate a minimum of two potential HBSP PhD Program faculty members with which they share research interests. At least one faculty member must be willing and have the time to serve as mentor and to accept responsibility for oversight of the student’s academic progress in the program. Final faculty mentor selection will be made by the HBS Graduate programs committee and will be based on converging research interests and faculty availability. PhD student faculty mentors can typically advise no more than two HBSP PhD students simultaneously (regardless of where the students are in their respective HBS PhD Programs).

If, during the course of a student's academic program, the faculty mentor is unable or unwilling to continue as mentor, the student will work with the HBS graduate programs committee to identify another faculty member willing to be the new mentor. The new mentor must be identified within two months in order for the student to be considered making satisfactory progress toward the degree. Switching mentors does not change the deadlines for completing the degree requirements.

#### *B2. PhD Dissertation Committee*

The student is expected to work with their faculty mentor to assemble a dissertation committee by the second semester of the program. Part-time students will identify when they are to assemble their dissertation committee in their written individual program of study. The dissertation committee will consist of:

1. not less than four and not more than six members and shall be chaired by the faculty mentor. These four members must hold a terminal doctoral degree.
2. at least two of the four members must represent currently employed HBSP PhD Program faculty, one of whom shall be the faculty mentor/committee chairperson; and
3. at least one of the four members must be an external examiner chosen from a different academic program or from outside the University; and
4. the Committee can have up to two additional members (outside the four members who hold a terminal doctoral degree) who must be experts in the field of dissertation study.

*\*In some situations, student may select one member of the HBSP PhD Program and one member from the Health Behavior Science and Promotion (HBSP) PhD program instead of two members currently employed in the Health Behavior Science and Promotion PhD program.*

The faculty mentor/committee chairperson shall have established a record of publication in the field of the dissertation and shall be a member of the faculty of the HBS Program in the Department. Faculty who have retired or resigned from the University may chair committees of students whose work began under their direction prior to their retirement or departure from the University. A faculty mentor/committee chairperson who is not employed by the University of Delaware may serve as co-chair of the committee providing that the other co-chair meets the conditions stated above.

### C. Timetable and Definition of Satisfactory progress towards the degree.

#### *C1. Time Limit for Completing the Degree.*

The time limit for completion of the HBSP PhD degree requirements begins with the date of matriculation and is specifically detailed in the student's letter of admission. Students entering the HBSP PhD program with a master's degree who receive graduate assistantships will need 8 academic semesters to complete the HBSP PhD degree; self-funded students with exceptional progress towards degree may complete the requirements in a minimum of 6 academic semesters. A maximum length of up to 10 semesters is allowed to complete the requirements. Students who change their degree plan and have transferred from one degree program to another degree program are given 10 consecutive semesters from the beginning of the first year in the HBSP PhD program. Students in the MS to PhD bypass option are given up to 14 consecutive semesters to complete the degree requirements. This time limit for completion of the HBSP PhD Program applies to students admitted as part-time; however, the time limit can be adjusted if appropriate progress is being made based on the individual plan of study.

An extension of time limit may be granted on a case-by-case basis. The student, Mentor, and Dissertation Committee will discuss and outline the extension of time being requested in writing. The HBSP PhD Program Director and Department Chairperson will approve the request and forward the request to the Graduate College.

HBNS

### ***C2. Submission of Required University Forms.***

When a student has met the requirements for admission to candidacy as previously explained (section IV, A5), the student will submit a Recommendation for Candidacy [form](#) to the HBSP PhD Degree to the Graduate College. The student's classification will change to post-candidacy upon admission to candidacy status. The deadline for admission to candidacy for the fall semester is August 31. The deadline for admission to candidacy for the spring semester is January 31. The deadline for admission to candidacy for the summer is April 30. **The student is responsible for ensuring that admission to candidacy is secured at the proper time.**

To initiate the process for degree conferral, candidates must submit an "Application for Advanced Degree" to the Graduate College. The application deadlines are February 15 for Spring candidates, January 15 for Winter candidates, March 10 for Summer candidates, and September 15 for Fall candidates. The application must be signed by the candidate's mentor, the HBSP PhD Program Director and Department Chair; therefore, routing of the application for advanced degree must begin at least two weeks prior to the application deadline. An application fee for PhD degree students is required when the application is submitted. Upon completion of the degree audit, the Graduate College notifies students in writing when they have met all degree requirements.

### ***C3. Grade Requirements for Satisfactory Progress.***

Failure to satisfactorily progress in the program will be based on the University Graduate Policy as noted below (Table 4):

The Graduate College monitors the academic progress of all graduate students and notifies students in writing of all academic deficiencies. The cumulative GPA after each 9-hour increment determines academic standing.

**Table 4. The University's Academic Probation Policy is expressed in the following chart:**

If student is on:	And earns a GPA of:	The status becomes:
Any status	3.0 or above	Clear
Clear	2.99-2.5	Warning
Clear	2.49-2.0	Probation
Probation	Below 3.0	Dismissal
Warning	Below 3.0	Probation
Any status	Below 2.0	Dismissal

#### *C4. Reasons for Dismissal from the Program.*

The Graduate College notifies students when they are dismissed from graduate programs without completing a degree. Dismissals usually take place at the end of a term. Students may be dismissed for reasons stated in the Dismissal Policies of the Graduate College.

In the case of dismissal, the HBSP PhD Program Director is required to send a report to the Graduate College that states the HBS Graduate Programs Committee vote on the decision causing dismissal and the justification for this action. The Graduate College will notify a student in writing when the student is being dismissed for failure to make satisfactory progress in the program. Students who are dismissed from the Doctor in Health Behavior Science and Promotion program may apply for admittance to the Master's (MS) in Health Promotion program.

#### *C5. Procedures for Student Appeals.*

Students who receive what they perceive as an unfair evaluation by a faculty member or faculty committee may file a written grievance in accordance with the University of Delaware policies.

Specifically, If the issue remains unresolved after a meeting between the student and the HBS Graduate Programs Committee, the student may submit a written appeal to the Department Chair within 10 business days of the meeting. The Department Chair will issue a written decision on the appeal, and a description of the proposed resolution within 10 business days of appeal receipt.

In the case of academic dismissal, the student may appeal the termination by writing to the Graduate College. Please see the process for appeals under Dismissal Policies of the Graduate College.

- i.
- ii. All access to student records is in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

## **IV: ASSESSMENT PLAN AND PROGRAM EDUCATION GOALS**

A variety of internal and external mechanisms will be used to evaluate the curriculum and overall effectiveness of the HBSP PhD program. Established program educational goals (Table 5) will be evaluated on an annual basis.

**Table 5.** HBSP PhD Program Education Goals

	<b>PhD in Health Behavior Science and Promotion Program Educational Goals</b>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• : Students will demonstrate an understanding of social and behavioral risk factors on individual and population health behavior.</li></ul>
2	Students will demonstrate written proficiency of the literature in a health behavior science and promotion-related content area
3	Students will demonstrate oral proficiency of the literature in a health behavior science and promotion-related content area
4	The student will demonstrate the ability to: (1) generate and code summary variables; (2) code and run appropriate descriptive, bivariate, and multivariable models; (3) interpret output for descriptive, bivariate, and multivariable models
5	Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and answer a novel research question.

6	Students will demonstrate the ability to disseminate written scientific literature
7	Students will demonstrate the ability to verbally present scientific results in a scholarly setting

Internally, the HBSP PhD Program Director and the HBS graduate programs committee will review student progress, grades, and pass/fail rate on coursework, comprehensive examination results, enrollments, and curricular program of study on an annual basis. This information will be used to evaluate the extent to which students are developing critical competencies in HBS and to assess and adjust student flow through the HBSP PhD program.

Markers of students' success will be tracked, including:

1. Publications (chapters, peer-reviewed journal articles, books)
2. Presentations (invited and national conferences)
3. Awards and honors
4. Fellowships and grants to support research
5. Job placements (post-PhD and faculty positions, leadership positions in private and governmental public health organizations)

In addition, we will track how effectively the HBSP PhD Program advances students by tracking the following:

1. Program attrition (dropouts, dismissals)
2. Time to complete the PhD degree

Finally, we will use a variety of mechanisms for tracking students' perceptions of the program, including:

1. Anonymous student surveys to assess different aspects of the program including: classes, mentoring, funding, and research opportunities
2. Unsolicited student feedback

Externally, the HBSP PhD program will be subject to program review every seven years by two or more external reviewers in the field of health behavior science one permanent status is achieved..

## **V: FINANCIAL AID**

Funding for HBSP PhD students will come from a variety of sources including, but not limited to department graduate assistantships (*Department-funded*) and faculty mentor grant support (*Faculty-funded*).

Different types of assistantships (Department funded and Faculty funded) may be awarded to full-time students (registered in at least 6 graduate credits each semester) based on admission ranking, needs of the program, experience and expertise of the graduate student and funding availability. Students appointed to assistantships, who are on contract, are provided experiences that can only be gained by performing instructional or research activities that are compensated based on the University's Graduate College guidelines and policies. Students may pursue additional employment beyond their contract however it must be within the Graduate Contract Additional Employment Policy.

For Department-funded assistantships, it is expected that students will serve in a teaching and/or research capacity to best meet the needs of the Department. This may include serving as a teaching assistant (TA) and/or instructor of record (IOR). Continuation of this award is contingent upon feedback from the faculty mentor, the HBSP PhD Program Director, and the Department Chair. The student must remain in good academic standing to be eligible for the continuation of the award. Students are only eligible to receive a Department-funded assistantship for 8 semesters. Once a student is in sustaining status, tuition for courses taken by the student will no longer be covered by the Department.

Faculty-funded assistantships will be dedicated to the execution of the grant-funded activities as directed by the faculty mentor. Continuation of this award is primarily contingent upon the evaluation of the faculty mentor (study Principal Investigator) and secondarily with the HBSP PhD Program Director and the Department Chair. The student must remain in good academic standing and meet the demands of the grant proposal and research activities directed by the faculty mentor to be eligible for the continuation of the award.

Students can also apply for internal funding through the University of Delaware and the Graduate College. Students can also apply for pre-doctoral support from funding agencies such as the American Heart Association and National Institutes of Health, or professional organizations such as Society of Behavioral Medicine. All students will be encouraged to apply for these external awards. The faculty mentor will mentor the student on the writing of the proposal.

## VI: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

### A. Program Faculty.

The following HBNS faculty specialize in Health Behavior Science and Promotion and have research and teaching expertise that will be central to the implementation and administration of the proposed program. Responsibilities of program faculty include oversight of program policies and curriculum.

**Table 5:** Summary of HBNS Faculty with HBS Research Expertise

Faculty Member	Research Expertise
<b>Adam Davey, PhD</b>	Bioinformatics, latent variable modeling, healthy aging, health Disparities
<b>Gregory Dominick, PhD</b>	Health literacy, program evaluation, use of wearable technology to promote physical activity and other behaviors to improve cardiovascular health
<b>Jody Greaney, PhD</b>	Mood disorders, stress susceptibility/resiliency, cardiovascular and neurocognitive health, autonomic function
<b>Daehyoung "DH" Lee, PhD</b>	Disability and health, physical activity measurement and evaluation, mobile & wearable technology and gamification for physical activity behavior change
<b>Laura Lessard, PhD, MPH</b>	Program and policy evaluation, the wellbeing of the childcare workforce and childcare settings
<b>Iva Obrusnikova, PhD</b>	Inclusion, active community living, and cardiometabolic risk factors of individuals with disabilities
<b>Elizabeth Orsega-Smith, PhD</b>	Psychosocial determinants of physical activity, aging and health,



	Community based participatory research with eating and physical activity behaviors
<b>Freda Patterson, PhD, MS</b>	Sleep and circadian health, sedentary behavior, cardiovascular health, multiple health behavior change and population health
<b>P. Michael Peterson, EdD</b>	Social marketing and health communication, workplace stress, behavior change strategies
<b>Laurie Ruggiero, PhD</b>	Developing/tailoring community and technology-based interventions to promote healthier lifestyles, especially with underserved populations; diabetes self-management/diabetes prevention; behavior change theory
<b>Richard Suminski, PhD, MPH</b>	Community-engaged research, built-environment/physical activity promotion, community-level physical activity infrastructure, physical activity measurement

Additionally, the Department of Health Behavior and Nutrition Sciences faculty include those with expertise in nutrition science; these faculty frequently collaborate with HBS faculty, serve on Dissertation committees and teach graduate elective courses that PhD HBS students may take as an elective course. HBNS

#### B. HBSP PhD Program Director.

The HBSP PhD Program Director will be a tenured faculty member affiliated with the program who holds the rank of associate or full professor. The term of service for the HBSP PhD Program Director is three years, with a limit of two consecutive terms. The HBSP PhD Program Director is the central program representative and point person.

iii.

**iv.** The responsibilities of the HBSP PhD Program Director include:

- 1) Providing leadership and oversight for the program
- 2) Organizing and leading meetings of affiliated faculty and the HBS PhD Program Committee; reviewing annual doctoral student progress reports
- 3) Communicating as necessary with the Graduate College
- 4) Serving as the first point of contact for issues arising with program students and faculty
- 5) Approving all changes to programs of study
- 6) Approving all changes in faculty mentors
- 7) Corresponding with prospective students and overseeing program recruitment in collaboration with the Graduate Services Coordinator, and admission decisions; and
- 8) Program evaluation and assessment

#### C. HBS Graduate Programs Committee.

The HBS Graduate Programs Committee will consist of the director of each MS, PhD, and/or certificate program, and additional graduate program faculty who are interested in serving. Graduate program faculty consist of any faculty member teaching graduate courses or mentoring graduate students. The Health Behavior Science Graduate Programs Committee will be chaired by the HBSP PhD Program Director and will be responsible for the administrative duties needed to run the HBSP PhD program in the Department of HBNS. Responsibilities of the HBS graduate programs committee shall include (but not limited to):

- Admission of students into the program,
- Approval of student programs of study,
- Approval of student selection of a new faculty mentor after admission to the program,
- Writing and grading written comprehensive examination questions,

- Oversight of student progress in the program, including dismissal of students who fail to make satisfactory progress,
- Approval of dissertation committees, and
- Other tasks required for the continued success of the program.

D. Program Resources.

D.1. *Travel for Professional Meetings or Presentations.*

NS PhD students may apply for funding to support conference attendance. Refer to the HBNS Travel Policy for PhD Students.

**Appendix A:** List of Sample Elective Courses

<b>General Electives</b>	
COMM656	Communication in Organizations
PHYT809	Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Disease
EPID627	Social Epidemiology
HBNS819	Social Marketing
HBNS804	Advanced Health Promotion Program Evaluation
NTDT610	Overweight and Obesity Prevention and Management
NURS812	Responsible Conduct of Research
EPID964	Grant Writing in Epidemiology
<b>Statistical/Data Analysis/Research Design Electives</b>	
HBNS609	Research Methods in Health Science
BISC643	Biological Data Analysis
EDUC812	Regression and Structural Equation Modeling
EDUC826	Introduction to Statistical Inference
EPID605	Epidemiology Methods I
EPID610	Epidemiology Methods II
MMSC635	Practical Genomics, Proteomics and Bioinformatics
PSYC809	Research Design
PSYC860	Psychological Statistics
PSYC878	Hierarchical Linear Modeling
STAT608	Statistical Research Methods
STAT613	Applied Multivariate Statistics
STAT615	Design and Analysis of Experiments
STAT656	Biostatistics
STAT617	Multivariate Analysis

