

Program Guidelines for the Ph.D. Degree Program in School of Public Health

Amended and approved by the Academic Affairs Meeting on September 18, 2018

Amended and approved by the Academic Affairs Meeting on September 22, 2021

Amended and approved by the Academic Affairs Meeting on May 17, 2024

Amended and approved by the Academic Affairs Meeting on September 18, 2024

I. Maximum length of study: same as specified by TMU regulations.

II. Course Credits and Graduation Requirements

1. Students should select courses from one of the following tracks: Environmental & Occupational health, Epidemiology & Biostatistics, or Health Behavior & Policy. The track selected should be consistent with the specialty of one's academic advisor.
2. One needs to fulfill the "Mandatory / optional course" specifically for his or her year of enrollment to graduate.
3. Those enrolled in 2024 (academic year) must complete at least 36 hours of the "Research and Learning Passport" program. After passing the review, students will be eligible to apply for the defense.
4. Graduation requirement for English proficiency
 - a. Those enrolled in 2016 (academic year) or before must fulfill one of the following requirements:
 - General English Proficiency Test B2 certificate
 - TOEIC > 750
 - TOEFL ITP > 527
 - TOEFL iBT > 71
 - 2 credits from undergraduate English proficiency classes. These credits cannot be included as part of the graduation credits.
 - b. Those enrolled in 2017 (academic year) or after should adhere to TMU Guidelines for Graduate School English Language Proficiency Requirements.

III. Academic advisor

1. In accordance with TMU Guidelines for Advisors' Qualifications
2. Application form to select an advisor should be submitted to the department in the first year of study, and to be approved by the program director.
3. Advisor can continue to serve as a co-advisor after retiring from TMU.

4. When changing academic advisor, a formal application should be submitted to the department, and to be approved by the academic advisory board. Students can only change academic advisor once for the entire duration of study. Credits and course work should be adjusted as well, in accordance with the area of specialty of the new advisor.

IV. Ph.D. qualifying examination and dissertation proposal defense

1. Ph.D. qualifying examination will take place after the first year of study, and after one has at least taken 16 credits. Students have to pass Ph.D. qualifying examination before 3rd year of study, and have to pass proposal defense before 4th year.

2. Topics for qualifying examination:

a. For all students: Research Method, Planning, and Design

b. Study track specific: Special topics in Environmental Health; Special topics in Epidemiology; Special topics in Health Policy and Behavioral Science.

c. If failed the first try, students can take it again in the following semester.

d. If failed twice, students will be dis-enrolled from the program.

3. Students can apply for proposal defense after passing the qualifying examination. A formal application should be filed with the department administrative faculty. The list of committee members and a proposal needed to be submitted together with the application form. Proposal topic and content should be within the scope of public health research.

4. The proposal defense is open to public. If failed, the proposal should be revised in accordance to comments from the committee. The defense can be held again in the following semester.

5. After passing the proposal defense, a progress update with committee members should be organized by the academic advisor each semester.

V. Dissertation defense.

1. Additional regulations for students enrolled before 2016 (academic year) NOT APPLICABLE for international students, and hence, no English version is provided here.

2. Additional regulations for students enrolled after 2016 (including 2016)

a. Pre-requisites for dissertation defense

i. Published one original article in SCI or SSCI journals, and have submitted another original article in SCI or SSCI journals. A letter of acceptance will suffice to prove publication.

- ii. The student has to be the sole first author, with Taipei Medical University affiliation.
 - iii. The bulk of the research has to be directed by the advisor in SPH and the advisor has to be the corresponding author. If there is a co-advisor, the co-advisor can be listed as the co-corresponding author.
 - iv. The publication should be part of the dissertation.
 - v. Students are required to present his or her research paper in the form of an oral presentation in an international conference. The research paper needs to satisfy the requirement of Clause V.2.a.ii and Clause V.2.a.iii .
- b. Preliminary review of dissertation defense: With the approval of one's academic advisor, a student can then file for application for dissertation defense in the first week of the semester. A faculty committee will then review all requirements. Supporting documents, such as letter of acceptance of paper, conference attending records, etc. should be submitted as well. If all requirements are fulfilled, a student then may proceed with dissertation defense.
- c. Dissertation defense: Dissertation oral defense should be conducted in accordance to TMU Implementation Guidelines of Master and PhD Degree Examination Regulations. The oral defense is open to public. Time, location, and topic of the oral defense is announced one week before the defense. If the oral defense was unsuccessful, the student can hold the defense again in the following semester or later. If failed again, the student will be dis-enrolled from the program. When holding the defense, student must provide the "Turnitin Report" for review by the defense committee. The similarity index for both the draft and the final version of the thesis must not exceed 30% (with appropriate exclusion of references and quoted material). If plagiarism or any form of academic misconduct is confirmed by the defense committee, the student will be deemed to have failed the defense. If successfully defended, the dissertation should be revised based on comments from oral defense committee members, after passing the oral defense. Upon fulfilling requirements of university administrative procedures, diploma can then be awarded.

VI. Issues or topics not covered here in this document should comply with other regulations of Taipei Medical University and Ministry of Education.

VII. Guidelines and any modifications of guidelines specified here in this document is effective upon approval by the Academic Affairs Committee.