Ph.D. Program in Rehabilitation Science

Ph.D. Student/ Faculty Handbook 2026-2027

University at Buffalo

Revised 5.18.2026

Contents

Program Description
The University at Buffalo's PhD program in Rehabilitation Science has an interdisciplinary curriculum that offers a theoretical understanding of rehabilitation science—the study of physical, musculoskeletal, psychological and functional disorders in humans—while the emphasis on research provides the practical skills needed to investigate key issues in the field. As part of the program, the student will gain valuable experience in identifying and addressing major research questions by designing, conducting and publishing research that is most significant to the student through a faculty mentor match.

Students must complete a minimum of **72 credit hours,** outlined here**:**

Dissertation Guidance:	12 credit hours
Core RSC courses:	12 credit hours
Graduate seminar:	4 credit hours
Statistics courses:	11-12 credit hours
Public Health requirement:	3 credit hours
Formal Teaching requirement:	4 credit hours
Grant writing course	2-3 credit hours
TOTAL	48-50 credit hours

The remaining 22-24 credit hours include Independent Study or elective courses chosen by the candidate with the approval of his/her major advisor. These courses may be chosen from elective courses offered by any department at UB.

It is advisable to complete the 60 course credits in the 2 years prior to the Qualifying Exams.

Curriculum
The PhD program requires the following coursework:

Core courses (see below for descriptions): 12 credits total
- RSC 603 – Theories and Mechanisms of Change in RS (3cr)
- RSC 604 – Disability and Rehabilitation (3cr)
- RSC 602 – Research Ethics for the Health Sciences (3cr)
- RSC 522 – Research Design and Methodology for Clinical Problems (3cr)

Graduate Seminar
RSC 600 – Research in Rehab Science (1cr – 4 semesters)

Required Public Health course: 3 credits
- CHB 550 – Public Health and Population Well-being (3cr)

Statistics courses: 11-12 credits total. The third statistics course may focus on either quantitative (STA 529) or qualitative (i.e. NUS 697, NUS 710) stats.

STA 527 – Statistical Analysis I (4cr total: Lec (3cr), Rec (1cr))
STA 528 – Statistical Analysis II (4cr total: Lec (3cr), Rec (1cr))
Choose one of the following:
STA 529 – Statistical Analysis III (4cr total: Lec (3cr), Rec (1cr))
NUS 697 – Advanced Qualitative Research Methods (3cr)
NUS 710 – Interpreting Phenomenology (3cr)

Research Ethics/Research Methods courses: 6 credits

Formal Teaching Requirement: 4 credits

Supervised Teaching Experience approved by PhD Directors or Chair (3cr)
RSC 598 – Supervised Teaching (1cr)

Grant writing elective courses: 2-3 credits

Examples:
ES 620 – Grant Writing for Health Scientists (2cr)
CHB 605 – Research Methods-Community Health & Health Behavior (3cr)

Other courses:

RSC 599 – Independent Study (1-6 variable credits)
RSC 699 – Dissertation Guidance (1-12 variable credits)

Core Course Descriptions

RSC 600 - Research in Rehabilitation Science – 1 credit each for 4 semesters

This course will provide the student with information about rehabilitation research topics from a multidisciplinary perspective. The student will engage in discussion and presentations about rehabilitation topics and research strategies.

RSC 602 – Research Ethics for the Health Sciences – 3 credits

This course meets the requirements for research ethics training mandated by federal sponsors (i.e. NIH). RSC 602 will give students a broad overview of research ethics and regulation. It conveys the moral basis of scientific ethics and the historical evolution of social science and biomedical research ethics and the development, implementation, and limitations of US human subjects' regulations. The course includes readings, lectures, and case-based discussions on topics such as ethics and morality in science, scientific integrity, misconduct, whistleblowing, conflicts of interest, collegiality, publication/authorship, peer review, history and development of human experimentation ethics and regulations, IRBs, informed consent, privacy/confidentiality of records, ethics in the social and medical sciences, and research using animal subjects.

RSC 603 – Theories and Mechanisms of Change in Rehabilitation Science

The ability to utilize theoretical models to explain and predict outcomes is an essential competency for the development of new knowledge in rehabilitation science. This is a

foundational course that prepares the students to have a conceptual and theoretical foundation to explore the research questions central to rehabilitation science.

RSC 604 – Disability and Rehabilitation – 3 credits

This course will introduce students to the Science of Disability and the Science of Rehabilitation. The course will present models of rehabilitation and disability research and discuss controversies and commonalities between these areas. It will form the groundwork for future coursework in Rehab Science. It will also provide a broad understanding of disability and rehabilitation for non-Rehab Science disciplines.

Overview of the Requirements for Degree Completion
https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/succeed/graduate/phd-checklist.html

The following are required for completion of the Ph.D. in Rehabilitation Science:

- A minimum of 72 credit hours, inclusive of a minimum of 12 Dissertation Guidance credits. Students must complete a dissertation.
- It is recommended that the student complete the minimum of 60 course credits prior to the qualifying exam.
- Transfer credits: Credits from a Master's degree may be petitioned for transfer (see Appendix for form) with the approval of the PhD program director and the student's major advisor. No more than 12 transfer credits may be applied to the 72 credit total. No more than 50 percent of the total credits required for a doctoral program may be comprised of non-UB credits or credits applied toward another UB graduate degree.
- University regulations require that all graduate work credited to the doctoral degree must be completed within seven years of the first registration date in the doctoral program.
- Maintenance of a 3.0 GPA is required each semester.
- Upon admission, a major advisor will be assigned based on the student-mentor match identified during the application process. The student, with the assistance of the advisor, will develop the plan of study using the program's Student Advisement Form (see Appendix). This form will be updated and reviewed with the student's major advisor and the PhD program director every 6 months for the first 2 years in the program and then annually.
- Students must pass a qualifying examination. The exam requires the candidate to synthesize knowledge gained in course work and in one or more significant problem areas in Rehabilitation Science. This exam will be given after all significant academic courses have been completed.
- Once admitted to candidacy, a Dissertation Committee will be selected in cooperation with the major professor. Members of the Dissertation Committee should be:
    - The first three members of the committee must have full University at Buffalo Graduate Faculty status (reference roster published by the UB Office of the Graduate School)
    - 2 members of the core committee should be from the Department of Rehabilitation Science – one of these may be affiliated faculty.
    - Committee members should represent at least two different fields within Rehabilitation Science.

Dissertation topics will primarily focus on research problems within rehabilitation science. Once the Dissertation Committee approves the dissertation proposal, candidates must file a formal **Application to Candidacy form** (see Appendix) with the University at Buffalo Graduate School. Candidates are required to register for 12 semester hours of Dissertation Guidance during this phase of their educational program.

- Supervised teaching experiences are required. A variety of such experiences are available through the Rehabilitation Science department.
- Upon completion of all coursework and the dissertation, candidates are required to present and defend the dissertation research in an open forum. The Dissertation Committee will have final approval on the dissertation.

F-1 student visa course registration requirements for International Students

F-1 student must always be registered full time each Fall and Spring semester.

Summer and winter term do not require any enrollment. Any courses registered for Summer and Winter term are charged extra tuition and are *not covered* by the scholarship provided by the department.

Sample Curriculum Plan

Year 1 – Fall – 15 credits

RSC 600 Research in Rehab Science (1)
STA 527 Statistical Analysis I (Lec) (3)
STA 527 Statistical Analysis I (Rec) (1)
RSC 602 Research Ethics in the Health Sciences (3)
RSC 603 Theories and Mechanisms of Change in Rehab Science (3)
RSC 522 Research Design & Methodology for Clinical Problems (3)
RSC 599 Independent Study (1)

Year 1 – Spring - 14 credits

RSC 600 Research in RS (1)
STA 528 Statistical Analysis II (Lec) (3)
STA 528 Statistical Analysis II (Rec) (1)
RSC 604 Disability and Rehabilitation (3)
Elective (6)

Year 2 – Fall – 13 or 14 credits

RSC 600 Research in RS (1)
CHB 550 Public Health & Population Well-being (Lec & Rec) (3)
STA 529 or NUS 697 or NUS 710 (3 or 4)
Elective (3)
Elective (3)

Year 2 – Spring – 13 credits

RSC 600 Research in RS (1)
LAI 699 Seminar in College Teaching (3)
RSC 599 Independent Study (3) or Elective
Elective (3)
Elective (3)

Year 2 – Summer – Qualifying Exam

Year 3 – Fall – 9 or 10 credits

RSC 598 Supervised Teaching (1)
Grant writing course (ES 620, CHB 605 or equivalent) (2 or 3)
Elective (3)
RSC 699 Dissertation Guidance (3)

Year 3 – Spring – 9 credits

Elective (3)
RSC 699 Dissertation Guidance (6)

Year 4 – Fall – 2 credits

RSC 699 Dissertation Guidance (2)

Year 4 – Spring – 1 credit

RSC 699 Dissertation Guidance (1)

Formal Teaching Experience

Students must all complete a formal teaching experience in a Rehab Science related course. This may be accomplished when taking RSC 598-Supervised Teaching. Proof of previous teaching experience in relevant content areas can be used to meet this requirement. Such approval must come from the Ph.D. Program Director or Chair of the Department of Rehabilitation Science.

Qualifying Exam
There are three options for a qualifying exam. One of these options will be decided upon in consultation with the faculty advisor. It is expected that this exam will be taken during the end of their 2nd year of study. If one or more parts of the exam are not passed, the student will have one additional opportunity to pass those parts. If the student fails after the second attempt, then they will be dismissed from the program.

Three options:

A) Write the first three chapters of their dissertation over the course of a month.
B) Write the first three chapters of their dissertation followed by an oral defense.
C) Qualifying Exam: six questions total will be prepared by the faculty from all of the core courses, including: Statistics, Rehabilitation Science Research Design;

Rehabilitation Science Research Ethics, Theories and Mechanisms of Change in Rehabilitation Science; Disability and Rehabilitation

Dissertation Proposal

All Ph.D. students must complete a doctoral dissertation proposal.

- The student will propose this work at a public dissertation proposal meeting. The student's primary mentor must approve the dissertation proposal prior to scheduling the defense.
- The dissertation proposal is the first three sections of your dissertation: the Overview, the Literature Review, and the Methods.
- The appendix of this handbook includes a format for the dissertation as a guide. The format can be flexible and can include a series of papers. Please see your mentor for final approval.
- The dissertation committee must be comprised of:
    - a minimum of three faculty members who have full University at Buffalo Graduate Faculty status (see UB Office of the Graduate School graduate faculty roster),
    - Two of the three core faculty members must be faculty within the Rehab Science Dept (one of these may be an affiliate faculty).
    - If the Chair is from outside of the Department of Rehabilitation Science, then the remaining two committee members (or the majority of the committee, if there are more than 3 members), must have their primary appointments in the Department of Rehabilitation Science.
    - It is required that one committee member be from outside of the Rehab Science dept. It is suggested that a committee member come from outside of UB.
- All committee members must be present at the proposal defense, and the defense must be announced at least two weeks in advance. The student's primary mentor must approve the dissertation proposal prior to scheduling the defense.
- All committee members must receive the proposal for review at least one month before the defense date.

Dissertation

- See Appendix I: "Structure of a Dissertation"
- The dissertation is retained by the department in electronic form.

Dissertation Defense

- All committee members must be present at the defense of the dissertation, and the defense must be announced at least two weeks in advance. The student's primary mentor must approve the dissertation prior to scheduling the defense.
- All committee members must receive the dissertation for review at least one month before the defense date.
- No dissertation defenses will be scheduled during intersession, except under extraordinary circumstances, and with the permission of the Ph.D. Program Director and/or the RS Departmental Chair. Note that it is acceptable for such defenses to be held during academic summer sessions.
- The dissertation must be appropriately formatted, and given to all committee members two weeks prior to the defense.

- The final dissertation defense should start on time, last no more than 45 minutes, followed by questions by non-committee members, and followed by a closed session where committee members ask the students their questions.
- Please follow the guidelines for the dissertation defense and submission of the final document located here: https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/succeed/graduate/electronic-submission.html
- The committee signs the M form following the defense. The chair of the committee signs the M form when all final edits are approved following the defense. The PhD will then review the dissertation and sign the M form/
- The student submits the final electronic copy of the dissertation along with the Mform with all signatures to the website and completes all of the requirements from the website.
- A hard copy is submitted to the RS department..

Grant Experience

- Grant Proposal: Each Ph.D. student will write and submit a grant proposal, with the support and mentorship of their advisor, to assist with dissertation project funding. The grant proposal will be submitted to his/her Committee, and may be presented to the faculty and graduate students of the Rehabilitation Science Department through the Works in Progress seminar. This small grant proposal should be submitted to any agency deemed appropriate by the advisor.

Policy on AI use in Theses, Dissertations, and Capstones

The student's advisor will decide which of the following three AI policies are best for the student's specific research or capstone project: use not allowed; limited use; use encouraged. This policy will be reviewed during each annual advising meeting as it relates to any aspects of a thesis, dissertation, or capstone completed by the student.

a)

AI Policy: Use Not Allowed

Using AI can impede your learning. The thesis, dissertation, and capstone aspects of your program challenge you to develop creativity, critical-thinking, and problem-solving skills that AI does not have. Using AI technology could limit your capacity to do this type of work, and your advisor urge you not to miss out on the educational opportunities that this process will provide. As is the case for all courses at the University at Buffalo, work submitted by you should reflect both your own *ideas* and your own *language* and you should properly cite any resources you have consulted. If you have any questions about citation or about what constitutes academic honesty in this course, please feel free to raise these questions with your advisor and/or contact your advisor to discuss your concerns.

AI Policy: Limited Use

In this course, you may use AI tools (such as Bard or ChatGPT) to help you generate ideas and to brainstorm. However, you should note that the material generated by these tools may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Beware that overuse of AI may stifle your own

independent thinking and creativity, and use any tools (for generating text, code, video, audio, images, or translation) wisely and carefully.

You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material—including both *ideas* and *language*—generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material. If you have any questions, please contact your advisor.

AI Policy: Use Encouraged

Learning to use AI tools is an emerging skill that will be explored during the thesis, dissertation, or capstone process. Your advisor expects you to use AI ([list which tools are relevant for your research project]) during this process.

However, you should be aware of the limits of AI:

- AI is a tool, but one that you need to acknowledge using. Any *ideas*, *language*, or *code* that is produced by AI must be cited, just like any other resource. [sample suggestion: Please include a paragraph at the end of any assignment that uses AI explaining what you used the AI for and what prompts you used to get the results.]
- Don't trust anything AI says. If it gives you a number or fact, assume it is wrong unless you either know the answer or can check in with another source. AI works best for topics you understand.
- If you provide minimum effort prompts, you will get low quality results. You will need to refine your prompts in order to get good outcomes. This will take work.
- Be thoughtful about when this tool is useful. Don't use it if it isn't appropriate for the case or circumstance.

b)

Upon submission of a project, including theses, dissertations, and capstones, all students will complete the following declaration:

Declaration of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the thesis/dissertation/capstone preparation process:

- *I did use AI: During the preparation of this work, I used the following AI engines:*
  - _____
  - *I used this AI in order to* _____

After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the published article.

- *I did not use AI*

This declaration will be reviewed for in-process and future projects during annual advising meetings.

Educational Requirements for Conducting Research/Office of Research Compliance

All students must complete the appropriate mandated CITI training that is required by UB in order to conduct either animal (IACUC) or human subjects (IRB) research, as well as conflict of interest training. These training modules must be completed prior to beginning any type of research.

The links for these services can be found at: http://www.buffalo.edu/research/about-us/units/ORC.html

Support for Research

The Rehabilitation Science Department will provide limited financial support for research depending on fiscal availability (see Appendix for funding request form). The funding amount will depend on the student's year of study, progress towards completion of degree and grant funding secured by themselves and/or their mentor. Possible sources where UB students can apply for funding for their dissertation project include the Mark Diamond Research Fund (up to $3000) - https://gsa.buffalo.edu/student-resources/mdrf/ , Graduate Student Association ($550 for conference presentations, $200 if only attending conference) - https://gsa.buffalo.edu/student-resources/conference-funding/ , as well as any professional organization of which the student has membership (eg. AOTA, APTA).

Office Support

- Karen Barnes, Main Office Administrator – purchasing
- Emily Westphal, Assistant to Chair – personnel appointments, HR
- PhD office – Two desks, a desk phone, two desktop computers, and a network printer are provided for PhD students in the PhD office in 618 Kimball Tower.
- PhD mailboxes are in the PhD office, 618 Kimball Tower.

IT Support

If you need help from the SPHHP IT department, they are very responsive and ready to assist. Please fill out an IT ticket for yourself at this website:
https://ubuffalo.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/39/SPHHP-IT/Home/

A photocopier for necessary course materials in 501 Kimball Tower is available for PhD students who are teaching a course. If you require access to the photocopier, please ask the PhD Program Director to request access on your behalf to Karen Barnes, barneska@buffalo.edu.

Your advisor may provide additional support and supplies as needed.

University at Buffalo Policy on Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a fundamental university value. Examples of academic dishonesty, timelines, and policies are housed online here: https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/succeed/current-students/policy-library.html#academic-integrity

It is recommended that the instructor and student each consult with the Academic Integrity Office and/or the Office of Student Advocacy for guidance and assistance.

Conflict Resolution

On occasion, a problem with an instructor or your major advisor may occur. The following steps for resolution are recommended.

For Conflicts with an Instructor:
Step 1: Make a formal appointment to talk directly with the instructor.
Step 2: Provide your supporting documentation.
Step 3: Let the instructor present their side of the issue.
Step 4: Stay professional and do not get defensive.
Step 5: Develop a mutual understanding of how the conflict will be resolved.
Step 6: Mutually determine a deadline for when the conflict will be resolved.
Step 7: In the event that the conflict cannot be resolved, talk with your advisor about other possible actions.

For Conflicts with your Advisor:
Step 1: Make a formal appointment to talk directly with your advisor.
Step 2: Provide your supporting documentation, if applicable.
Step 3: Let the advisor present their side of the issue.
Step 4: Stay professional and do not get defensive.
Step 5: Develop a mutual understanding of how the conflict will be resolved.
Step 6: Mutually determine a deadline for when the conflict will be resolved, if applicable.
Step 7: In the event that the conflict cannot be resolved, talk with the PhD Program Director about other possible actions.

The official University Policy on Grievance Procedures can be found at http://ed.buffalo.edu/policies.html under Academic Grievance.

University Non-Discrimination Policy can be found at http://www.buffalo.edu/equity.html.

University-wide Student Resources for Graduate Students

MyUB (http://www.buffalo.edu/ubit/services/all/myub.html) MyUB is the web portal for all UB services. It can also be used to access your email and UBLearns.

UB Learns (https://ublearns.buffalo.edu/) UB Learns is the blackboard-based instruction platform used by UB. Whether you are involved in your own coursework or teaching in a course, you will use this software extensively.

The Graduate School at the University at Buffalo (https://grad.buffalo.edu/succeed/current-students.html) provides a wealth of online information to successfully navigate your career at UB. All university-wide policies, requirements, forms, professional development and career resources are available.

Safety and Essential Services

- 1Capen –essential student services - https://1capen.buffalo.edu/
- Academic Calendars - https://registrar.buffalo.edu/calendars/index.php
- Campus Maps - http://www.buffalo.edu/home/visiting-ub/CampusMaps.html
- Campus Dining and Shops - https://myubcard.com/dining
- International Student and Scholar Services - http://www.buffalo.edu/international-student-services.html
- Parking and Transportation – parking permits, bus (Stampede) schedules http://www.buffalo.edu/parking.html
- Registrar - https://registrar.buffalo.edu/registration/
- Student Accounts - http://www.buffalo.edu/studentaccounts.html
- UB Alert website - http://emergency.buffalo.edu/
- UB Card – ID card - https://myubcard.com/card
- UB Child Care Center - http://www.buffalo.edu/ubccc.html
- UB Libraries - https://library.buffalo.edu/
- UB Bookstore - https://www.bkstr.com/buffalo-northcampusstore
- UB Police - http://www.buffalo.edu/police.html

Wellness and Support Services

- Accessibility Resources - https://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/departments/accessibility.html
- Career Services - https://www.buffalo.edu/career.html
- Counseling Services - https://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/departments/counseling.html
- Crisis Services - http://crisisservices.org/
- Equity, Diversion and Inclusion - http://www.buffalo.edu/equity.html
- *Graduate School Policy Library* – includes all policies for graduate students – very important - https://grad.buffalo.edu/succeed/current-students/policy-library.html
- Health Promotion - https://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/departments/health-promotion.html
- Network for Enriched Academic Relationship – online mentoring not related to research area - https://grad.buffalo.edu/beyond/professional-development/near.html
- Recreation Services - http://www.buffalo.edu/recreation.html
- SBI-Pharmacy and Student Medical Insurance - https://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/life-on-campus/health/medical-care/health-insurance.html
- Student Conduct and Advocacy – includes student code of conduct (see Appendix for link) - http://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/departments/conduct.html
- Student Health Services - http://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/departments/health.html
- Veteran Services - https://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/departments/veteran.html

Student Housing and Employment

- Campus Jobs - https://buffalo.joinhandshake.com/login
- Graduate Student Employees Union (GSEU) - https://gsa.buffalo.edu/gseu/

- Off-Campus Housing Tips - https://www.buffalo.edu/campusliving/find-your-home/living-off-campus.html
- On-Campus Housing - https://www.buffalo.edu/campusliving/find-your-home/where-can-i-live/apartments.html
- Research Foundation Graduate Student Employee Benefits - http://www.buffalo.edu/content/www/administrative-services/for-faculty-staff/benefits/research-foundation/grad-employee.html
- Graduate Student Assistant and Teaching Assistant Employee Benefits - http://www.buffalo.edu/content/www/administrative-services/for-faculty-staff/benefits/state/gseu.html

Technology Resources

- Activate your UBIT Name - http://www.buffalo.edu/ubit/service-guides/accounts/your-ubitname-account/getting-started-with-your-account/activate.html
- Connect to UB's Networks - http://www.buffalo.edu/ubit/service-guides/connecting.html
- Free Software - http://www.buffalo.edu/ubit/service-guides/software.html
- Getting Started with IT at UB - http://www.buffalo.edu/ubit/start.html
- Teaching Technology at UB - http://www.buffalo.edu/ubit/teaching
- UBBox - http://www.buffalo.edu/ubit/ubbox.html

Student Organizations and Clubs

- All University Clubs and Organizations - https://buffalo.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations
- Campus Ministries Association - https://ubcampusministry.com/
- Department Clubs - https://gsa.buffalo.edu/clubs/departmental/
- Graduate Student Association (GSA) - https://gsa.buffalo.edu/

Graduate Student Association (https://gsa.buffalo.edu/)

The UB Graduate Student Association (GSA) has many resources, services and opportunities available for graduate students, including:

Clubs – international (https://gsa.buffalo.edu/clubs/international/) and special interest (https://gsa.buffalo.edu/clubs/special-interest/)

GSA Governance (https://gsa.buffalo.edu/governance/gsa-committees/)

Student Resources:

- Mark Diamond Research Fund (https://gsa.buffalo.edu/student-resources/mdrf/)
- Conference Funding (https://gsa.buffalo.edu/student-resources/conference-funding/)
- Editorial Assistance Program (https://ubgsaedit.wixsite.com/gsa-editorial) - free!!
- Graduate Student Employees Union (GSEU) (https://gsa.buffalo.edu/student-resources/graduate-student-employees-union/)
- Fee Waiver Application (https://gsa.buffalo.edu/forms/fee-waiver-application/)

- Graduate Statistics Lab (through College of Arts and Sciences) (http://arts-sciences.buffalo.edu/current-students/current-graduate-students/graduate-statistics-lab.html) - free!!
- Other services funded by the student activity fee (https://gsa.buffalo.edu/student-resources/other-funded-services/)

Resources are also available through our School of Public Health and Health Professions (http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/home/information-for-current-students.html), including information about:

- Career resources
- Academics
- Class Schedules and Academic Calendars
- Learning Resources
- Policies
- Publications
- Services
- Student Organizations
- Technology

Appendices

Appendix A: University at Buffalo Student Code of Conduct -

https://www.buffalo.edu/content/dam/www/studentlife/units/uls/student-conduct/UB%20Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%202019-2020%20(PDF).pdf

Appendix B: Petition for Waiver/Transfer of Graduate Course –
https://grad.buffalo.edu/content/dam/grad/forms/pet-transfer.pdf

Appendix C: Independent Study proposal form

UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

Rehabilitation Science Ph.D. Program

RSC 599 - INDEPENDENT STUDY

Complete three (3) copies of this proposal – one copy for faculty advisor, one copy for PhD Program Director, and one copy for student.

Purpose of the Independent Study:

Learning Objectives:

In what way are current course offerings at UB inadequate in meeting these objectives:

Methods for carrying out Independent Study:

Number of Credits:

Time Schedule for meeting Objectives:

Role of Faculty Advisor:

How will grading and evaluation be accomplished? Include a description of the final report of the study:

Signature of Student: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Faculty Advisor: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Ph.D. Program Director: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D: Dissertation Proposal Presentation Approval Form

Rehab Science Ph.D. Dissertation Proposal Presentation

Approval Form

Student's Name: _____

Title of Dissertation Proposal Presentation:

_____

Date of Dissertation Proposal Presentation: _____

_____ Successful presentation

_____ Unsuccessful presentation

_____ Other Describe:

Dissertation Committee:

Major Advisor:

Committee member 1:

Committee member 2:

Committee member 3:

Committee member 4:

Committee member 5:

Ph.D. Program Director:

Proposed semester of completion:

Appendix E: Final Dissertation Presentation Approval Form

Rehab Science Ph.D. Final Dissertation Presentation

Approval Form

Student's Name: _____

Title of Dissertation Proposal Presentation:

_____

Date of Final Dissertation Presentation: _____

_____ Successful presentation

_____ Unsuccessful presentation

_____ Other Describe:

Dissertation Committee: *Please sign and date*

Major Advisor:

Committee member 1:

Committee member 2:

Committee member 3:

Committee member 4:

Committee member 5:

Ph.D. Program Director:

Qualifying Exam form

Student's Name: _____

Date of Exam : _____

Course	Tester	Pass Date	Retake Date
RSC522			
RSC602			
RSC603			
RSC604			
STA528			
STA529			
Part 2, lit review			

RS PhD program signature _____ Date_____

Appendix F: Student Advisement Form

Student Advisement Form for the PhD Program in Rehabilitation Science

Student Name:
Student ID:
Advisor(s):

Entering Student Guidance

- Upon entering the program, each Ph.D. student will have an initial advisor(s) who is the mentor identified in the student's application.
- By the end of the first semester in the Ph.D. program, the student (with their advisor(s)) will complete their academic plan (this form).

The Ph.D. Program in Rehabilitation Science requires 72 credits, up to **12 credits** of dissertation credits can go towards the 72 credit requirement

Transfer credits: Up to 36 relevant graduate credits may be transferred from previous coursework (if applicable)

Transfer graduate course names and the date these courses were approved by the Graduate School: _____

Required Coursework:

I. Statistics/Design

Course #	Credits	Course Title	Semester Taken
RSC 522	3	Research Design and Methodology for Clinical Problems	
STA 527	4	Introduction to Medical Statistics	
STA 528	4	Statistical Analysis II	
STA 529	4	Statistical Analysis III	
OR			
NUS 697	3	Advanced Qualitative Research Methods	
OR			
NUS 710	3	Interpreting Phenomenology	

II. Required RS courses *(If the student has taken any of these required courses, or their equivalent, the course can be waived by the director of the Ph.D. Program)*:

Course #	Credits	Course Title	Semester Taken
RSC 600	1	Research in RS (1)	
RSC 600	1	Research in RS (2)	
RSC 600	1	Research in RS (3)	
RSC 600	1	Research in RS (4)	
RSC 602	3	Research Ethics for the Health Sciences	
RSC 603	3	Theories and Mechanisms of Change in RS	
RSC 604	3	Disability and Rehabilitation	

III. Public Health Requirement :

Course #	Credits	Course Title	Semester Taken
CHB 550	3	Public Health and Population Well-Being	

IV. Research Electives: *Coursework can be either within or outside of Department of Rehabilitation Science. Also includes grant writing course, research-specific courses and independent study courses.*

Course #	Credits	Course Title	Semester Taken

Other Requirements:

- Formal Teaching Experience: *Previous teaching experience can be used to meet this requirement (such approval must come from the Ph.D. Program Director or Chair of The Department of Rehabilitation Science).*

Course #	Credits	Course Title	Semester Taken
LAI 699	3	Seminar in College Teaching	
RSC 598	1	Supervised Teaching	

Date teaching requirement completed: _____
Teaching supervisor: _____
Course taught//co-taught: _____

- Qualifying Exam: All Ph.D. students must pass a qualifying exam. Questions will be prepared by the faculty from all of the core courses, including the foundational Rehab Science courses, Statistics, Research Design and Methods, and the student's major area of research. It is expected that this exam will be taken during the summer after the 2nd year of study.

  Date of Exam: _____
  Outcome: _____

- Dissertation: All Ph.D. students must complete a doctoral dissertation. The student will propose this work at a public dissertation proposal meeting. The dissertation committee must be comprised of a minimum of three faculty members, who must have an earned Ph.D. or equivalent, and two of whom are faculty within the Rehab Science Dept. If the Chair is from outside of the Department of Rehabilitation Science, then the remaining two committee members (or the majority of the committee, if there are more than 3 members), must have their primary appointments in the Department of Rehabilitation Science. All committee members must be present at the defense of the dissertation, and the defense must be announced at least two weeks in advance. No dissertation

defenses will be scheduled during intersession, except under extraordinary circumstances, and with the permission of the Ph.D. Program Director and/or the RS Departmental Chair. Note that it is acceptable for such defenses to be held during academic summer sessions. The dissertation must be appropriately formatted, and given to all committee members two weeks prior to the defense. The presentation should start on time, last no more than 45 minutes, followed by questions by non-committee members, and followed by a closed session where committee members ask the students their questions.

Title of dissertation:
Dissertation committee members:
Chair:
Committee Member:
Committee Member:
Committee Member:

Date of dissertation proposal defense:
Date of dissertation defense:
Date dissertation and M-form were submitted to the Graduate School:

Recommended Experience:

- Grant Proposal: Each Ph.D. student should write a grant proposal, with the support and mentorship of their advisor, to assist with dissertation project funding. The grant proposal should be submitted to his/her Committee, and may be presented to the faculty and graduate students of the Rehabilitation Science Department through the Works in Progress seminar. This small grant proposal may be submitted to any agency deemed appropriate by the advisor.

  Date proposal completed:
  Supervisor of grant proposal:
  Grant proposal title:
  Agency/Foundation proposal was designed for:
  Was this proposal submitted to agency/foundation?

Summary of coursework by semester: (Add previous semesters if needed)

Fall 2025

Course #	Credits	Course Title	Grade

Spring 2026

Course #	Credits	Course Title	Grade

Summer 2026

Course #	Credits	Course Title	Grade

Fall 2026

Course #	Credits	Course Title	Grade

Spring 2027

Course #	Credits	Course Title	Grade

Add more semesters as needed.

Awards, Publications, Grant Funding Received: *Please list any awards, publications or grant funding received.*

Date last revised/reviewed with student:

Signature of Advisor:

Signature of Student:

Submit electronic copies to the Ph.D. program director, and Emily Westphal(ERL2@buffalo.edu).

Appendix G: The Structure of the Dissertation

Please see the graduate school page for guidance on formatting the dissertation.
https://www.buffalo.edu/grad/succeed/graduate/electronic-submission.html

The structure of the dissertation is decided and approved by the Dissertation Committee. The Dissertation document can be structured as one continuous document or can be structured as a series of research articles, ready for publication.

CONTINUOUS DOCUMENT (Monograph) FORMAT

The dissertation proposal is Chapters 1, 2, and 3, written in future tense, of the dissertation as outlined below. For the final dissertation, revise these Chapters reflecting what was actually accomplished and write in past tense.

Preliminary Pages

- Includes the Title page, Acknowledgement page, Table of Contents, List of Tables and Figures, Abstract.

Chapter 1: Overview of the Study

- Briefly introduce the area of study.

- **Background of the Problem**
  - Provide an overview of the broad problems which lead up to this particular dissertation, and provide an argument for doing this particular study.
- **Statement of the Problem**
  - The purpose of the statement of the problem is to focus on what is not known or what is problematic.
- **Purpose of the Study**
  - Describes what the study will do, should mirror the statement of the problem.
  - Research questions and hypotheses.
  - Introduce Theory.
- **Importance of the Study**
  - Describe what contribution your study will make to the broad literature or set of problems when it is finished.
- **Limitations and Delimitations** (can also be included in Ch. 3)
  - Limitations refer to limitations on the study, which are beyond the control of the researcher and generally address issues of internal validity.
  - Delimitations refer to the generalizability of the study and issues of external validity.
- **Definition of Terms**
  - Provide operational definitions of the key terms in alphabetical order. Source definitions.
- **Organization of the Study**

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- Briefly introduce the major topics you will review in the chapter.

Build the case for your study supported by research.

- **Body: Synthesis of the Literature**
  - Present a conceptual framework for your study
  - Organize the body according to topic, using subheadings.
  - Critically evaluate the literature instead of summarizing.

- Highlight important unanswered questions.
- Identify methodological problems with past studies, and areas of controversy in the literature.
- Discuss the significance of past research and how it relates to your own study.

· Presentation of Theories

· **Summary**
- Review the main points in the chapter.
- Reiterate the general controversies, questions, or problems in the research that support the need for your study.
- State research aims and research questions or hypotheses

Chapter 3: Methodology

- Restate Purpose of the Study.
- Restate the research questions (and hypotheses, if applicable).
- State the research design – be specific (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, etc. and level of research

· **Sample and Population**
- Include type of sampling used, criteria for selection, process of selection, the sample selected, sampling issues, and the population from which the population was drawn.

· **Instrumentation**
- Describe the instrumentation and conceptual or theoretical framework for the instrument content used in the study.
- Include a brief description of the relationship of the research questions to your instrumentation.
- Include the process of development (if applicable) and reliability and validity of the instruments used, as well as field testing (if applicable).

· **Data Collection**
- Include in draft the description of the procedures and methods used to collect the data (e.g. how the instruments were administered).

· **Data Analysis**
- Organize by research question and describe the statistical techniques or programs used to analyze the data.
- Describe any problems with the data analysis.

Chapter 4: Results

- Restate Focus of Study.

· **Reporting of Results**
- Explain results by research question. Include tables and figures using APA format.

· **Summary**
- Articulate how the results support your findings.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

- Briefly summarize the background and purpose of the study and research questions

Discussion of Findings.
- Discuss your findings in relation to your problem statement and purpose. How do your findings fill in the gaps presented to your lit review? Discuss the unique contribution of your research to the field. Make sure that your final discussion is supported completely by your results.

Limitations (Discuss limitations not previously discussed.)

Implications for Practice/Recommendations

- Address how your study informs the practice of professionals in providing care for persons with disabilities.

Future Research

- Discuss future research that is needed as a result of the findings in your study.

Conclusions

Note: Your results in this discussion can be in the form of a series of research articles as approved by your research advisor.

References

Appendices

Include informed consent form and all data forms and/or questionnaires and any other related documents as approved by your mentor.

Note: The structure of Chapters 4 and 5 are up to discretion of the dissertation committee.

ARTICLE SERIES FORMAT

The dissertation proposal is Chapter 1, written in future tense, and the preliminary studies of the dissertation as outlined below. For the final dissertation, revise Chapter 1 reflecting what was actually accomplished and write in past tense.

Preliminary Pages

- Includes the Title page, Acknowledgement page, Table of Contents, List of Tables and Figures, Abstract.

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter sets the stage for the entire dissertation. It outlines the problem addressed in the series of articles and how they are designed to address the problem.

This chapter outlines the entire work that your individual research articles will address. It includes the extended literature that can go in more depth without the page limitations of the research articles. This review outlines the conceptual framework for your work and provides a discussion of previous work related to the problem both conceptually and methodologically as well as how your work extends the knowledge of your research problem. This chapter ends with the overall aims and research questions of the dissertation work addressed by the research article series. References are presented at the end of this chapter as each article will have its own reference list.

- Briefly introduce the area of study.

- **Background of the Problem**

- Provide an overview of the broad problems that lead up to this particular dissertation, and provide an argument for doing this series of studies.

· **Statement of the Problem**
- The purpose of the statement of the problem is to focus on what is not known (knowledge gap) or what is problematic.

· **Synthesis of the Literature**
Discuss the relevant literature to justify your study, to present the theoretical or conceptual framework, and to justify your choice of methods.

Purpose of the Study Series
- Describes what the studies will do. Should mirror the statement of the problem.
- Overall research aims, questions and hypotheses.

· **Importance**
- Describe what contribution your study will make to the broad literature or set of broad research questions when it is finished.

· **Limitations and Delimitations**
- Limitations refer to limitations of the study, which are beyond the control of the researcher and generally address issues of internal validity.
- Delimitations refer to the generalizability of the study and issues of external validity.

· **Definition of Terms**
- Provide operational definitions of the key terms in alphabetical order. Source definitions.

· **Organization of the Studies**
Briefly describe the series of studies and how each will answer your research questions. Full protocols will be included in each individual study.

Chapter 2 and subsequent chapters

These chapters are in article format according to the guidelines of the journal that you plan to submit your work to. Your preliminary work and all individual studies in the series can be included in these chapters.

Place the chapter number and article title at the beginning of each chapter. Conclude each article chapter with its reference list so that it is ready for submission to the journal following approval from your committee.

Final Chapter - Discussion of Findings from entire dissertation series

This chapter summarizes the findings of the articles presented and how they address the problem and research questions and aims outlined in chapter 1 Introduction.

Discussion of Findings.
- Discuss your findings in relation to your problem statement and purpose. How do your findings fill in the gaps presented to your lit review? Discuss the unique contribution of your research to the field. Make sure that your final discussion is supported completely by your results.

Limitations (Discuss limitations not previously discussed.)

Implications for Practice/Recommendations
- Address how your study informs the practice of professionals in providing care for persons with disabilities.

Future Research

- Discuss future research that is needed as a result of the findings in your study.

Appendices

Include informed consent form and all data forms and/or questionnaires and any other related documents as approved by your mentor.

Appendix H Faculty Mentoring – Information for Faculty Mentors

Mentoring Responsibilities in the UB RS PhD program
The role of mentor is to guide the student through the research process, including advisement about coursework, expectations and behavior, planning pilot and dissertation studies, general training in lab techniques, and helping the student shape their lit review.

1. What happens when meeting with mentee?
    Pre-dissertation:
        Course work – advising
        Research idea – goals, guiding lit review
        Research Plan – funding, subjects, methodology, data collection & analysis, timeline, other regulatory concerns (CITI)
        Pilot Study – funding, etc.
        General concerns about program/lab
        Timeline for completion
        Qualifying exam question- part 2 dissertation proposal preparation
    Dissertation:
        Detailed timeline

2. How often should you meet with your mentee?
    It is recommended to meet with your mentee as often as needed to accomplish their goals, but biweekly at a minimum, especially during the first 2 years. Frequency of meeting may be driven by your funding, your research needs or their academic and/or research goals.

3. Support mentee through all phases of research development, including public presentation of ideas, pilot data, etc.

4. Mentors are encouraged to fund their doctoral students on their current and future research grants.

References:

Mentoring: Elements of Effective Mentoring: http://www.buffalo.edu/provost/admin-units/faculty-affairs/mentoring/EffectiveMentoring.html

Maximizing Mentoring by Ammerman and Tseng:
https://buffalo.box.com/s/bdb3bm4prjh9t3d1f5kqtahmd18qrhlj