



KINESIOLOGY M.A., M.S., PhD. HANDBOOK

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WELCOME

Welcome to the School of Kinesiology (KIN) at the University of Minnesota! **The goal of graduate education** in the School of Kinesiology is to instill in each student an understanding of and capacity for discovery, scholarship, independent judgment, academic rigor, and intellectual honesty. It is the joint responsibility of faculty and graduate students to work together to develop relationships that encourage freedom of inquiry, demonstrate personal and professional integrity, and foster mutual respect.

School of Kinesiology Graduate Studies Mission Statement

With adherence to the **Kinesiology** departmental and College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) missions:

The School of Kinesiology advances interdisciplinary knowledge about physical activity and human movement in order to promote lifelong health and well-being in local, national, and global communities. Our innovative research, high-quality teaching, and collaborative outreach focus on the science and management of physical activity and human movement within contexts such as exercise, health care, and sport.

This handbook is designed to provide M.S., M.A., and Ph.D. students with a readily available source of information about their program, procedures, and graduate student resources. The University offers many comprehensive and useful resources to help students navigate through the graduate education system. You can use the handbook as an advising tool, referring to it when you need the “nuts and bolts” of degree requirements. We ask that you familiarize yourself with the contents of the handbook and that you keep it and refer to it as a quick reference guide. You will also routinely need to refer to these web pages:

- [Graduate Student Services and Progress \(GSSP\)](#), provides information on degree completion processes, policies, forms
- [One Stop Student Services](#), includes registration, financial services, academic calendars and more
- [Kinesiology Resources for Current Students](#), **Kinesiology**-specific forms and information

As other questions arise, be sure to contact the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC), Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), your faculty adviser, other faculty or staff. Faculty members serve as students’ main source of guidance on course selection and other academic or professional matters.

**Welcome to the School of Kinesiology.
We look forward to working with you during your time here!**



ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Governance

The **School Director** is responsible for leadership of the department and management of resources. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) chairs the Graduate Education Committee and coordinates the administration of the department's graduate programs. **They** communicate and enforce University of Minnesota policies and opportunities.

Graduate Education Committee

The Graduate Education Committee includes five additional KIN faculty members and one student representative. The committee addresses policy and programmatic concerns, considers fellowship support for prospective and current students, and supports/initiates professional development and social activities. The committee meets monthly during the academic year.

Contact information

Contact information for all KIN faculty and staff is **available on** the KIN [website](#).

General info, policies & procedures related to successful graduate degree completion You can find a listing of policies governing graduate education at the University of Minnesota [here](#).

Major and emphasis areas

All KIN M.S. /Ph.D. students are enrolled in the Major: Kinesiology

All Sport Management M.A. students are enrolled in the Major: Sport Management

Emphasis areas within Kinesiology major are selected by students when applying to the program. A student can only be matriculated in one emphasis area at a time. The emphasis areas are as follows:

- **Biomechanics and neuromotor control**
- Exercise physiology
- Perceptual-motor control and learning
- Physical activity and health promotion
- Sport and exercise psychology
- Sport sociology
- Sport management (for KIN Ph.D. major only)

Students may focus on a specialization within each of these emphasis areas. Students wishing to change emphasis areas at the U of M must first consult with the faculty advisor and then notify the [DGS office](#).

Supplementary KIN information:

- Students submit an annual progress report. All graduate students are required to submit an *annual progress report* (APR) to the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) by a deadline specified in April of each year. The GPC emails the instructions to students in March. Students are responsible for completing the report and submitting it prior to the deadline.
- Students remain in good standing if they:



1. make timely progress toward degree completion as required by the program and the U of M policy;
 2. maintain a GPA at or above the minimum set by the program and the U of M policy; and
 3. pass all appropriate examinations within the time frame specified by the program.
- Students should come to agreement in writing with faculty members on the substance and requirements for all individualized courses (directed study, readings, and problems courses). Students should use the appropriate forms found on the [website](#).
 - Students should come to agreement in writing with faculty members on the requirements and deadlines for all “incomplete” grades. Students should refer to the policy on Incomplete Grades and use the “Incomplete Grade Contract Form” on the [forms and policies](#) page.
 - Students should complete the necessary requirements and submit all necessary forms for degree completion within the timelines stipulated on the Graduate School web site and the Handbook.

When degree requirements and expectations are not met, the DGS will call a joint meeting with the student and the adviser(s) to discuss degree progress and establish clear steps and guidelines for the student. The DGS will follow up with a letter outlining the steps agreed upon in the meeting and indicate a date(s) by which the student is expected to have demonstrated appropriate progress. Consistent failure on the part of the student to meet requirements and expectations will result in a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School that the student’s status as a graduate student be terminated.

Scholastic Dishonesty / Plagiarism

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code, available on the [Office For Community Standards \(OCS\) website](#) defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging , or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Plagiarism is defined as representing the words, creative work, or ideas of another person as one’s own without providing proper documentation of source. Examples include, but are not limited to: • Copying information word for word from a source without using quotation marks and giving proper acknowledgement by way of footnote, endnote, or in-text citation;

- Representing the words, ideas, or data of another person as one’s own without providing proper attribution to the author through quotation, reference, in-text citation, or footnote; • Producing, without proper attribution, any form of work originated by another person such as a musical phrase, a proof, a speech, an image, experimental data, laboratory report, graphic design, or computer code;



- Paraphrasing, without sufficient acknowledgment, ideas taken from another person that the reader might reasonably mistake as the author's; and
- Borrowing various words, ideas, phrases, or data from original sources and blending them with one's own without acknowledging the sources.

It is the responsibility of all students to understand the standards and methods of proper attribution and to clarify with each instructor the standards, expectations, and reference techniques appropriate to the subject area and class requirements, including group work and internet use. Students are encouraged to seek out information about these methods from instructors and other resources and to apply this information in all submissions of academic work.

If you are confronted with allegations of misconduct, the University has a process in place to resolve the issue. Review the Discipline Process outlined under the Student Information section of the OCS website for detailed information. You can also obtain the assistance of an ombudsman through the [Student Conflict Resolution Center](#) to help you through the process. Note: OCS does not assist with academic performance issues. Review the Conflict resolution/Grievance Process for more information about resolving those disputes.

Conflict Resolution / Grievance Process

If you have a dispute, the first step of any resolution should be at the unit level, between the parties involved or the parties and an appropriate third party (e.g., other faculty, graduate program coordinator, or student services adviser). Students may wish to contact the [Student Conflict Resolution Center](#) or similar support services for advice and possible mediation. If no informal resolution is reached at the lowest unit level, a student may seek informal resolution at the collegiate level with the other party and higher level administrators. If the issue is not resolved informally, the student may seek formal resolution. Information about filing a formal grievance is found on the [Office for Community Standards website](#).

Sexual Harassment Policy

"Sexual Harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. **All University members are prohibited from engaging in, or assisting or abetting another's engagement in, sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and related retaliation (collectively "prohibited conduct").** For additional information, please consult the [Board of Regents Policy](#).

Access to Educational Records

In accordance with University of Minnesota Board of Regents' policies on access to student records, information about a student may not be released to a third party without the student's permission. Exceptions under the law include state and federal educational and financial aid institutions. Some student information – name, address, email, telephone number, dates of enrollment and enrollment status (full-time, part-time, not enrolled, withdrawn, and date of withdrawal), college and class, major, adviser, academic awards and honors received, and degrees earned – is considered public or directory information. Students may prevent the release of public information by notifying the records office on their campus. Students have the right to review their educational records and to challenge the contents of those records.



Paid Parental Leave Policy

Any graduate student in a 50% or greater appointment wishing to request parental leave should contact their fellowship or assistantship supervisor at the beginning of the semester when the leave will occur. The supervisor will work with the department chair to identify a replacement for the assistantship responsibilities for the duration of the parental leave; the replacement's appointment should be communicated to the department HR office as soon as possible. The supervisor will work with the graduate student and their replacement to prepare for the leave prior to the start of the parental leave period. The graduate student should contact the department HR office to file the appropriate paperwork including a date for their return to work; paid parental leaves are up to six weeks in duration. Any changes should be reported immediately to the supervisor and department HR.

Other administrative support resources:

- Computer, Internet and email **helpline**: 612-301-HELP
- Safety/Escort services: 612-624-WALK
- [Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#)
- [Parking and transportation services](#)



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Graduate assistantships, fellowships, and loans are the most common forms of graduate student support. Advisers serve as the primary resource for available graduate assistantships. If accepted for admission, and if opportunities are available, students are offered support **on a competitive basis** within a few months following the priority admission deadline of Dec. 1 (usually in late January to early March). Students may wish to research funding opportunities from other faculty or departments depending on their interests and needs.

Graduate assistantships

Approximately 45 students per year receive a graduate assistantship through KIN (generally 25-50% support / note: 50% is considered a 'full-time' assistantship, representing about 20 hours of work per week). Faculty members make every attempt to fully fund full-time doctoral students (via a 50% appointment) and provide them with a broad range of experiences. In addition to providing a stipend, benefits include tuition and subsidized health insurance prorated based on the percentage of appointment. For benefit details see the [Graduate Assistant Employment website](#). Graduate assistants are reviewed annually on their job performance and continued funding is dependent on **performance as well as** continued academic progress. Graduate assistantship funding in the School is limited to 2 academic years for master's students and 3-4 academic years for doctoral students.

English-language proficiency requirements for teaching assistants

All non-native teaching assistants must demonstrate proficiency in spoken English appropriate to the demands of their teaching assistantship. Initial eligibility for teaching assistantships will be determined by the speaking subscore of 27 or higher on the Internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Those with a score lower than 27 must take the campus-based Spoken English Test for Teaching Assistants (SETTA). The SETTA can only be taken once a year, so new students must take this test upon arrival to campus. The SETTA provides English Language Proficiency (ELP) ratings that determine the level of TA duties and responsibilities. Detailed information can be found on the [Center for Educational Innovation website](#).

Possible graduate assistantships include:

- **Teaching Assistantships (TA):** Many TAs supervise student teachers in the initial licensure programs. These positions usually require experience teaching in a U.S. public school.
- **Research Assistantships:** Most faculty members have ongoing research projects that include graduate student researchers. Speak with your adviser and/or other faculty in your area regarding prospective research projects.
- **Graduate Instructors:** Ph.D. students may teach undergraduate courses. Only advanced Ph.D. students (preferably ABD) are permitted to teach graduate courses that other Ph.D. students take.
- **Administrative Assistantships:** Some administrative assistantships are available including Administrative Fellows working with the Director of Undergraduate or Graduate Studies.



Travel award (for MS, MA and PhD)

The KIN Graduate Education Committee supports students presenting at professional conferences. You may apply for travel award each year (deadlines vary), and support is in the form of a reimbursement after travel is complete. Students must be presenting at conferences as the first author to receive funding or attending conferences/workshops/seminars in-person or online as a professional development opportunity.

Students who receive funding are strongly encouraged to participate in all aspects of the conference/workshop/seminar (i.e. attending other sessions, networking events, etc.). Awards will be up to \$500 per master's student and up to \$1000 per doctoral student (actual awards are based on available funds). As a condition of the award, the Graduate Education Committee asks that all recipients hand out program brochures and other promotion materials at the conference if held in person.

An email with the *RFP Graduate Student Professional Development Form* is sent each year as soon as the available funding is confirmed to all graduate students. To request the form be emailed to you, please email the Graduate Program Coordinator. Students are also encouraged to pursue college and university-wide travel support opportunities.

Scholarships offered by the department

The department **has** endowed funds which may be used to support graduate students. These funds are used both as recruitment incentives and to offer scholarships to current students on a competitive basis. The department is responsible for announcing the funds each year.

Graduate School Fellowships

The Graduate School offers a variety of fellowships available to currently enrolled students. The KIN Graduate Program Coordinator informs students about these fellowships as the Graduate School notifies programs. Students will be sent instructions for those fellowships that are competitive and require program nomination. The Graduate School maintains a listing [of fellowship opportunities, dates and deadlines here.](#)

Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship (DDF)

Each spring the Graduate School holds a competition to award Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships. This program gives outstanding final-year Ph.D. candidates an opportunity to complete the dissertation within the upcoming academic year by devoting full-time effort to the dissertation. Candidates **must be nominated by their graduate program**. In fall, KIN announces the process to compete for the DDF nominations (typically 1-4 students are nominated each year). Students submit materials by the deadline, and the Graduate Education Committee considers nominations at their December or January meeting. The adviser and DGS work with nominee(s) to prepare nomination materials, **which are** due to the Graduate School Fellowship office in early March. [Learn more about the DDF here.](#)

College of Education and Human Development Scholarships and Awards

The College of Education and Human Development lists many fellowships and scholarships [here.](#)

We also strongly encourage students to check the [student funding page](#). It lists all kinds of funding opportunities (departmental, college-wide, and university-wide).

ADVISING

The adviser acts as the student's guide and advocate **throughout the course of the graduate program**. Upon admission to an M.A., M.S. or Ph.D. degree program, students are initially assigned a faculty adviser or co-advisers. Once students identify a research focus, they may wish to change advisers in order to work with a faculty member with compatible research interests. This is not uncommon as research interests do shift; however, students need to communicate clearly with all parties.

Each graduate program in the University system has an assigned Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). In the School of Kinesiology, the DGS is an appointed position held by a tenured/tenure-track faculty member for a three-year term. The DGS works with the department chair to monitor, guide and improve all facets of the Kinesiology graduate programs. The DGS is responsible for supervising, interpreting, and enforcing the regulations and policies of graduate education as established by the College of Education and Human Development and the Graduate School in consultation with the School's Graduate Education Committee (GEC). The current School of Kinesiology DGS is Professor **Zan Gao**, who is assisted by **Sara Cannon**, Graduate Program Coordinator.

Students may initiate an adviser change by notifying the present adviser of the intent to change, securing the agreement of the new faculty adviser, and emailing the Graduate Program Coordinator. When you send a change of adviser email, please copy both your current and new adviser to signify approval. **Alternatively, you may** meet with your present adviser and your proposed adviser and secure their agreement for the adviser change by having them sign the Change of Adviser form.

If a conflict develops between a student and his/her adviser, the student should first discuss the problem with the adviser. The DGS may also be consulted as needed. Additional support can be found through the [Student Conflict Resolution Center](#). This service offers informal and formal conflict resolution services to resolve students' university-based problems and concerns. An ombudsman provides confidential, neutral and informal options.

Faculty Adviser responsibilities:

- Admit and agree to advise students you are willing to work with and assist throughout the course of their graduate studies.
- Suggest courses appropriate to the student's academic and career objectives and work with him/her to develop a program of study, making sure to include all required coursework and experiences.
- Recommend potential examining committee members to the student.
- Review and approve the Graduate Progress and Audit System (GPAS) before the student submits it for approval to assure completeness and accuracy.
- Prepare the Preliminary Written Examination by consulting with committee members to solicit questions and coordinating the exam with the student, following the procedures.
- Advise students about research plans and your expectations regarding process and timeline. Review research projects and theses in a timely fashion.
- Indicate appropriate style manual and style to follow when preparing research problems or theses. Advise and inform students of the process for the Preliminary Oral Examination.
- Keep up-to-date on guidelines and policies.



- Respond to student queries in a timely fashion and be available for meetings and consultation. Approve changes to degree plans (now GPAS) via petition.
- Sign off on all required graduate education paperwork.

REGISTRATION

Registration requirements

All Graduate School students are required to register every fall and spring term to maintain their active status. Active status is necessary to register for courses, take exams, file for graduation, or otherwise participate in the University community as a Graduate School student.

[GRAD 999](#) was created as a registration option for students seeking to maintain active status without registering for courses or thesis credits, and is only for graduate students who must register solely to meet the registration requirement. **Starting fall 2019, students who are registered for GRAD 999 will be charged an Academic Record Fee (\$100 for new students; \$75 for returning students).** Students should not register for GRAD 999 if they hold an assistantship.

KIN allows students to register for GRAD 999 for a maximum of two terms. Registration for GRAD 999 should be used only when circumstances warrant it, and has to be approved by the DGS prior to registration. If students consider **registering** for GRAD 999, they need to contact the Graduate Program Coordinator and file for approval from the DGS. It must not be used as a mechanism for maintaining active status without making progress toward completing the degree. The use of GRAD 999 will be evaluated each year during the student's Annual Progress Report. Students who exceed the number of Grad 999 registrations allowed may be required to apply for readmission to the program.

Students who have two registrations of GRAD 999 should register for other courses. For more information on other registration categories (KIN 8444) and/or readmission instructions [see the web pages here](#).

Pre-thesis credits

Pre-thesis credits, KIN 8666, or Doctoral Pre-Thesis, are credits available for doctoral students who have not yet passed their preliminary oral examination but need to be registered to maintain full time status. Doctoral pre-thesis credits are not graded. Registration for doctoral pre-thesis credits cannot be used to meet any Graduate School degree requirements other than to maintain active status.

The number of credits of KIN 8666 for which a doctoral student may register in any fall, spring or summer term is limited to 6 credits. Registrations of 8666 are limited to two instances and 12 credits without departmental permission. With departmental consent, students may register for 8666 up to four times, for a total accumulation of 24 credits. **Pre-thesis credits should never be used by graduate assistants to maintain full-time status in order to qualify for tuition reimbursement.**

Note: If the Preliminary Oral Examination takes place during the first two weeks of the semester, and the doctoral student receives a pass or pass with reservation within that 14-day time frame, the student will be allowed to register for KIN 8888 after dropping placeholder credits (generally KIN 8666, Pre-Thesis credits). This drop/add function for adding dissertation credits is only possible up to the 14th day after the start of the semester. Students who take and pass their preliminary oral exam after the 14th day after the start of the semester must wait until the following semester to register for KIN 8888.



Early Thesis Credit Registration

KIN doctoral students are not allowed to register for doctoral thesis credits (KIN 8888) prior to successfully passing the preliminary oral exam. Preliminary examinations must be passed and the thesis proposal must be approved in order to progress to Ph.D. candidate status. Doctoral students must take a minimum of 24 thesis credits. Thesis credits are not graded.

Registration Exception

Should students need to request a change to their registration after a deadline (e.g. add, drop, etc.), they may do so by submitting a *Graduate Registration Exception Request form*- under "Registration" drop-down on [OneStop](#).

Leave of Absence and Reinstatement

Students may need to interrupt their enrollment for reasons they cannot control. A formal leave of absence provides students the opportunity to return to the University under the rules and policies in effect when they left and without affecting their time to degree. It also allows the University the opportunity to counsel students about actions they must take to be reinstated upon the expiration of the leave. An approved leave of absence may not exceed two academic years, and the time on leave will not be counted toward the time to degree.

You must apply for the leave as well as request a reinstatement when you're ready to return. The policy and links to forms are found [here](#). A signature from your departmental Director of Graduate Studies is required, after consultation with your faculty adviser.

MASTER INFORMATION

Steps toward successful Master degree completion

The path to a M.S. or M.A. requires close communication with your adviser and committee members. The following steps are intended to support you by giving you input on the dissertation study design from your entire committee and to protect you so that you know your committee members are in agreement with your plan. **Here is a link to the Masters Degree checklist.**

Master students should complete the following steps in order:

1. Consult with adviser regarding course selection; refer to KIN graduate program catalog and register for courses every fall and spring to maintain active status in the program.
2. (Optional) Complete the KIN [Course Planning Form](#); this maps your coursework by requirement area. Students are expected to complete the Planning Form after they have completed most of the required coursework. For full time students, this amounts to the second year of the program (3rd/4th semester).
3. Submit your GPAS exceptions, if necessary, as early as possible. You may find the instructions [here](#).
4. Submit your Graduate Planning & Audit System (GPAS), required by the Graduate School. Students are expected to file the GPAS after registering for their last semester of coursework. You may find the instructions [here](#).
5. Determine final examining committee in consultation with your adviser by checking the [Faculty Role List](#). Ask faculty members if they are willing to serve on your final examining committee, and [electronically assign committee](#).
6. Work closely with your adviser to prepare a draft of your thesis proposal and meet with your final examining committee to propose your thesis.
7. If applicable, file a Human Subjects form **with the** Institutional Review Board (IRB) to request approval to conduct dissertation research. Once IRB approval is received, begin data collection. Beginning data collection prior to IRB approval is not permitted, even in cases where the study is exempt from full review.
8. Write your dissertation.
9. Schedule Final Oral Examination (defense) with adviser and committee.
10. Submit the Graduate Application for Degree (MyU.umn.edu > Academics > Degree Progress tab) no later than the first day of the month you intend to graduate.
11. Submit completed thesis to readers/reviewers at least two weeks prior to your defense date.



12. Submit *Reviewer's Report form* (in [Degree Completion Steps](#)) online at least two weeks prior to defense.
13. Hold thesis Defense/Final Examination and submit *Final Exam Report form* (in Degree Completion Steps) online.
14. Submit dissertation, and all supporting paperwork (in Degree Completion Steps), to the Graduate School by the last business day of the anticipated month of graduation.

Appointments to Graduate Examination Committees

This [policy](#) governs appointments to the following graduate examination committees: Master's Final Examination Committees, Doctoral Preliminary Oral Examination Committees, and Doctoral Final Oral Examination Committees.

Selecting your committee

You should begin the process of selecting your committee in your third semester. The examining committee is composed of, at minimum, 3 members. One member of the examining committee must represent the supporting program or minor; the others are from the major field and include the adviser. Students who declare a minor will include a committee member representing the minor. The DGS for the minor field must approve the minor GPAS in MyU portal. Be sure to access the [graduate faculty role](#) list to be sure your committee members have been approved by the University to serve on graduate committees.

Students assign their committee members through an online process. The committee member assignment will be forwarded to your adviser and DGS for approval. Before initiating the assignment, first consult with your adviser(s) and then contact each member to confirm that he or she agrees to serve on your committee.

Occasionally an academic from outside the University may serve on a committee if the Graduate School agrees to confer temporary graduate faculty status to the individual. See the [Examining Committees section for more information](#).

Final oral examination

The final oral is conducted as a closed examination, attended by the student and all examining committee members, and usually lasts around 90 minutes. The adviser chairs the examination. Students typically give a formal summary of their project before questioning, including the purpose, framework, data analysis, major findings, and conclusions. Committee members and/or the student may participate remotely as long as conditions for remote participation in examination are met.

Students are responsible for scheduling the final oral examination with committee members at least two weeks prior to the exam. Students can contact GPC to reserve a room for final defense.

A majority vote of the committee is required to pass the examination. A student who fails the examination may be terminated from the graduate program or may be allowed, on unanimous recommendation of the examining committee, to retake the examination, providing the reexamination is conducted by the original examining committee.

If the student passes the exam, the committee chair must submit the final oral result online. If the committee passes the student but requires minor revisions to the paper, the committee chair can choose to wait to submit the result online. If substantial revisions are required, final oral result is withheld until revisions have been made. Upon approval of the revision, committee chair submits the final oral result online accordingly.

For Plan A, an electronic version of the thesis must be submitted to the Graduate School. The signature page and Deposit Agreement must also be submitted to the Graduate School. For Plan B, one copy of the project must be submitted to the adviser. (The Graduate School does not require a copy.)

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for research projects

Most Plan A master's students participate in research or projects that involve work with human subjects. Before a graduate student can begin any research or collect data, the research protocol must be submitted and approved by the Institutional Review Board (Use of Human Subjects in Research Committee) and the student must complete training. Information and forms are available on the IRB [website](#). The University of Minnesota and federal policies require that each project involving human subjects be reviewed with respect to: 1) the rights and welfare of the individual involved, 2) the appropriateness of the methods used to secure informed consent, and 3) the risks and potential benefits of the investigation.

Questions concerning exemptions or other aspects of human subjects research review should be addressed to the IRB (irb@umn.edu). The website provides detailed information about the process and the conditions for each of the possible levels of review. There are three form/level options: a "full committee review," an "expedited review," and an "exempted review." The full review may take the IRB four to six weeks to review and notify of their decision. The full-review option is appropriate for research designs that may involve a potential threat to the human subjects and thus may involve more deliberation. Follow the instructions provided on the IRB forms for obtaining required signatures.

Research may not be initiated until written notification of exemption is received. This includes recruiting subjects, advertising, mailing or distributing consent forms, and gathering data. Any requirements indicated in the Human Subjects Committee response must be addressed before commencement of the research project.

CITI Training

CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative) is a training program to ensure that every laboratory and individual involved in human subjects' research has the appropriate training. It provides an understanding of the rules, ethics, and practices that are required in order to conduct research with human subjects. The CITI Program has become the most widely used Web-based research ethics education program in the world. It has been widely adopted as a basic component of research ethics education for ALL members of the research team.

The CITI Program now includes "basic" courses in the Protection of Human Research Subjects for Biomedical as well as for Social / Behavioral Research. CITI also offers case-based and abbreviated "refresher" courses for those institutions that need a Web-based alternative for re-certification purposes. A multi-language site, targeting international researchers, was also made available. CITI



training cannot be fully transferred from one institution to another. “Refresher” courses on research ethics are necessary to take.

Please note: All graduate students need CITI training completed before serving as PI on any IRB proposal.

[Instructions for the Committee Chair - Masters](#)

[Reviewers’ Report Workflow Guide](#)

[Final Exam Workflow Guide](#)

MASTER COURSEWORK

The Kinesiology M.S. requires a minimum of 30 graduate-level semester credits including 14 credits in the major field (not including master's thesis or project credits) and 6 credits in one or more related fields outside the major. At least two-third of all course credits must be taken A-F. The Plan A degree, which culminates in a thesis, requires a minimum of 20 course credits and 10 master's thesis credits (KIN 8777). The Plan B degree, which culminates in a research project, requires a minimum of 26 course credits and 4 project credits (KIN 8995). Both Plan A and Plan B require a final oral exam. The Sport Management M.A. requires 36 semester credits. The Plan A degree requires 16 credits of core courses, 6 research credits, 4 elective credits, and 10 thesis credits (KIN 8777). The Plan B degree requires 16 credits of core courses, 6 research credits, 10 elective credits, and 4 project credits (KIN 8995). Both Plan A and Plan B require a final oral exam. Students may, but are not required to, pursue a minor outside of their program.

By the end of their program of study, both master's Plan A and Plan B students must demonstrate familiarity with the tools of research or scholarship in their major field, the ability to work independently, and the ability to present the results of their investigation effectively.

Coursework is required in these areas:

- **Required Kinesiology coursework:** 6 credits (3 credits of KIN 8980; 3 credits of KIN 5981)
- **Emphasis coursework:** a minimum of 10 credits determined in consult with adviser
- **Related field coursework (or minor):** a minimum of 4 credits (for Plan A) or 10 credits for (Plan B) related field coursework, at least 3 credits of which must be STATS course or a minimum of 9 credits for specific minor
- **Thesis Credits:** 10 credits (for Plan A)
- **Or Final Project:** 4 credits (for Plan B)

Required Kinesiology coursework

All Master's students are required to take KIN 8980, Graduate Research Seminar, and KIN 5981, Research Methodology. These courses cover ethics and the responsible conduct of research as well as quantitative and qualitative methods of research.

Emphasis coursework

Each emphasis area has a different set of course requirements. These credits reflect depth and breadth of the discipline; work with your adviser to determine most appropriate courses for your emphasis area.

Minor or supporting program

A traditional minor includes work in a single field related to the major, but taken outside the KIN department. The minor field must be declared when a student submits their degree program, and coursework must be approved by the DGS for the minor. In addition, the outside member on the student's committees (prelim and final) must represent the minor field.

A supporting program is less formal and more flexible than a minor. It should consist of a coherent pattern of courses that complement the major in a meaningful way. For supporting coursework, students may choose coursework from within KIN (outside their emphasis area), coursework outside

KIN, or a combination. Students should work closely with the faculty adviser on selecting courses for the supporting program requirement.

Transfer credits

Each student works closely with his or her adviser to determine which credits are suitable for transfer into our M.S. program. Suitable transfer credits are graduate-level, and must have been taught by a faculty member with a Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degree. Transfer coursework must have been completed no more than ten-years prior to the student's admission into their KIN graduate program. For coursework taken as a non-degree seeking student at the University of Minnesota, up to 8 credits may be applied to the program.

In the case of a transfer from a non-United States institution, graduate course credits to be transferred must have been earned in a program judged by the University graduate program to be comparable to a graduate degree program of a regionally accredited institution in the United States. Transfer of thesis/dissertation credits is not allowed. Graduate level courses taken before the award of the baccalaureate degree cannot be transferred.

Submitting the Graduate Planning & Audit System (GPAS)

Students work with advisers in planning their programs. Students are encouraged to use the course planning tool/forms found [here](#). With the approved coursework planning, students are then instructed to:

- Submit the Graduate Planning & Audit System (GPAS) via: MyU > Academics > Degree Progress tab

The Graduate Planning & Audit System (GPAS) audit automatically shows all graduate-level coursework you have taken at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Students are required to notify GPC of their approved transfer coursework. GPC is responsible for entering into the transfer coursework section of GPAS.

In most cases, students are required to submit the exceptions in GPAS as early as possible. Instructions are provided in the [Training Hub](#).

Students should submit their GPAS once they have registered for their last semester of coursework AND once they have all exceptions approved in the GPAS. After being submitted by the student, the Graduate Planning & Audit System (GPAS) is first reviewed and approved by the faculty adviser and then by the Graduate Program Coordinator together with DGS.



PH.D. INFORMATION

Steps toward successful Ph.D. degree completion

The path to a Ph.D. is challenging and requires close communication with your adviser and committee members. The following steps are intended to support you by giving you input on the dissertation study design from your entire committee and to protect you so that you know your committee members are in agreement with your plan.

Expectations for doctoral students

The School expects that our Ph.D. students will publish the results of their research in peer-reviewed venues (e.g., journals or edited books). The Ph.D. may serve either as a professional degree or as a prerequisite to an academic career, and the market for university and college assistant professors is extremely competitive. The importance of publishing cannot be overemphasized if your goal is to find a faculty position at a research university. For most faculty positions, candidates who are about to receive or have recently received a Ph.D. will need to have at least two or three high-quality papers published or “in press” in scholarly journals. Without a strong publication record it may be very difficult to obtain a tenure-track faculty position. Many new graduates apply for a post-doctoral position, which provides excellent experience and allows the academic to build a publication record. Post-doc positions are also highly competitive. Candidates for positions at teaching-oriented institutions may need fewer publications for their record, but most institutions expect that their faculty will maintain some level of independent research (typically around 1-2 publications per year) and will look for evidence of future research potential in the past record.

Graduate students, particularly doctoral students, are expected to have demonstrated an ability to write and submit articles for publication. Your faculty adviser is committed to enhancing your employability by helping you develop professional skills in writing papers and grant proposals; encouraging your participation in professional meetings; and establishing professional networks and making use of professional contacts.

The School of Kinesiology has high expectations for student scholarly written work. Student writing should reflect an appropriate level of composition skill, accepted professional writing style, and appropriate attribution. It is important to note that the standards for scholarly writing are determined by the discipline as well as the cultural context. At the University of Minnesota, you will be expected to follow the standards and conventions of scholarly writing that prevail in the U.S.

A high level of writing skill is expected of graduate students. While the program offers courses to assist students in research understanding and skills, students are responsible for attaining an appropriate level of writing skill. University resources are available for help in writing practice and improvement. The University of Minnesota offers a variety of writing courses and workshops through the Center for Educational Innovation. In addition, the Center for Writing provides face-to face or online individualized writing instruction by appointment.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for research projects

Most Plan A master’s students participate in research or projects that involve work with human subjects. Before a graduate student can begin any research or collect data, the research protocol must be submitted and approved by the Institutional Review Board (Use of Human Subjects in



Research Committee) and the student must complete training. Information and forms are available on the IRB [website](#). The University of Minnesota and federal policies require that each project involving human subjects be reviewed with respect to: 1) the rights and welfare of the individual involved, 2) the appropriateness of the methods used to secure informed consent, and 3) the risks and potential benefits of the investigation.

Questions concerning exemptions or other aspects of human subjects research review should be addressed to the IRB (irb@umn.edu). The website provides detailed information about the process and the conditions for each of the possible levels of review. There are three form/level options: a “full committee review,” an “expedited review,” and an “exempted review.” The full review may take the IRB four to six weeks to review and notify of their decision. The full-review option is appropriate for research designs that may involve a potential threat to the human subjects and thus may involve more deliberation. Follow the instructions provided on the IRB forms for obtaining required signatures.

Research may not be initiated until written notification of exemption is received. This includes recruiting subjects, advertising, mailing or distributing consent forms, and gathering data. Any requirements indicated in the Human Subjects Committee response must be addressed before commencement of the research project.

CITI Training

CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative) is a training program to ensure that every laboratory and individual involved in human subjects’ research has the appropriate training. It provides an understanding of the rules, ethics, and practices that are required in order to conduct research with human subjects. The CITI Program has become the most widely used Web-based research ethics education program in the world. It has been widely adopted as a basic component of research ethics education for ALL members of the research team.

The CITI Program now includes “basic” courses in the Protection of Human Research Subjects for Biomedical as well as for Social / Behavioral Research. CITI also offers case-based and abbreviated “refresher” courses for those institutions that need a Web-based alternative for re-certification purposes. A multi-language site, targeting international researchers, was also made available. CITI training cannot be fully transferred from one institution to another. “Refresher” courses on research ethics are necessary to take.

Please note: All graduate students need CITI training completed before serving as PI on any IRB proposal.

PhD. students should complete the following steps in order (more details on specific steps follow):

1. Consult with your adviser regarding course selection; refer to the [Kinesiology graduate program catalog](#) and register for courses every fall and spring to maintain active status in the program.
2. (Optional) Complete the KIN Ph.D. [Course Planning Form](#); this maps your coursework by requirement area. Students are expected to complete the Planning Form after they have completed most of the required coursework. For full time students, this amounts to the second year of the program (3rd/4th semester).



3. Submit your Graduate Planning & Audit System (GPAS), required by the Graduate School, and assign your preliminary examination committee at least one term prior to your preliminary examinations. Students are expected to file the GPAS after registering for their last semester of coursework.
4. Once finished with the majority of program coursework, take preliminary examinations (written and oral). Full time students typically complete preliminary examinations later in their third year. The specific guidelines for preliminary exams are [here](#).
5. Determine final examining committee in consult with adviser. Ask faculty members if they are willing to serve on your final examining committee, and electronically assign committee.
6. Work closely with your adviser to prepare a draft of your thesis proposal and meet with your final examining committee (reviewers only) to propose your thesis.
7. If applicable, file a Human Subjects forms with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to request approval to conduct dissertation research. Once IRB approval is received, begin data collection. Beginning data collection prior to IRB approval is not permitted, even in cases where the study is exempt from full review.
8. Write your dissertation.
9. Electronically request the Graduation Packet no later than the term before the final exam (defense).
10. Schedule Final Oral Examination (defense) with adviser and committee. Once a date is set, electronically schedule with Graduate School and notify KIN Graduate Program Coordinator.
11. Submit the Graduate Application for Degree (MyU.umn.edu > Academics > Degree Progress tab) no later than the first day of the month you intend to graduate.
12. Submit completed thesis to readers/reviewers at least two weeks prior to your defense date.
13. Submit *Reviewer's Report form* (in Graduation Packet) online at least two weeks prior to defense – the Graduate School will then release your online access to the *Final Exam Report form*.
14. Hold thesis Defense/Final Examination and submit *Final Exam Report form* online.
15. Submit dissertation, and all supporting paperwork, to the Graduate School by the last business day of the anticipated month of graduation.



PH.D. COURSEWORK

The Ph.D. is not a coursework degree. Although coursework is certainly required, the Ph.D. program is designed to help students develop as research scholars by assisting them in initiating a research program that will contribute to the scholarly community. Development as a researcher can occur through research and teaching assistantships, professional collaboration with faculty and other graduate students, and intensive exploration of the field through independent reading and writing beyond that which is required for coursework.

Ph.D. students are expected to demonstrate independence as scholars. To meet that expectation, it is necessary for students to integrate and communicate concepts effectively both orally and in writing. This expectation is also achieved by becoming an active participant in the research community, e.g., engaging in public presentation of research projects, maintaining membership in professional organizations, attending academic conferences, and publishing.

Degree Program Planning

A minimum of 60 semester credits is required for the Ph.D. program in Kinesiology, which includes the 24 thesis credits. These credits can be satisfied only with graduate-level courses taken as a graduate student at the University of Minnesota (these may include up to 12 credits taken at the University of Minnesota as a non-degree-seeking student prior to official admission to the Graduate School).

Coursework is required in these areas:

- **Required Kinesiology coursework:** 12 credits (3 credits of KIN 8980; 9 credits of KIN 8995)
- **Emphasis coursework:** a minimum of 12 credits determined in consult with adviser
- **Research skills coursework:** a minimum of 6 credits determined in consult with adviser
- **Supporting coursework (or minor):** a minimum of 6 credits for supporting coursework or a minimum of 12 credits for specific minor
- **Thesis Credits:** 24 required

Emphasis coursework

These credits reflect depth and breadth of the discipline; work with your adviser to determine most appropriate courses for your emphasis area.

Research skills

The research skills requirement includes at least two courses selected from the list provided for each emphasis area. Students wanting to take a course not found on the list should first consult their faculty adviser for approval. Once approval is granted, the student should then forward that approval email to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Minor or supporting program

A traditional minor includes work in a single field related to the major, but taken outside the KIN department. The minor field must be declared when a student submits their degree program, and coursework must be approved by the DGS for the minor. In addition, the outside member on the student's committees (prelim and final) must represent the minor field. Some examples of minors completed by students in KIN are:

- Public Health

- Psychology
- Sociology
- CPMS
- NSC
- Human Factors
- EPSY

A supporting program is less formal and more flexible than a minor. It should consist of a coherent pattern of courses that complement the major in a meaningful way. For supporting coursework, students may choose coursework from within KIN (outside their emphasis area), coursework outside KIN, or a combination. Students should work closely with the faculty adviser on selecting courses for the supporting program requirement.

Transfer credits

Each student works closely with his or her adviser to determine which credits are suitable for transfer into our Ph.D. program. Suitable transfer credits are graduate-level, and must have been taught by a faculty member with a Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degree. Transfer coursework must have been completed no more than ten-years prior to the student's admission into their KIN graduate program. For coursework taken as a non-degree seeking student at the University of Minnesota, up to 12 credits may be applied to the program.

In the case of a transfer from a non-United States institution, graduate course credits to be transferred must have been earned in a program judged by the University graduate program to be comparable to a graduate degree program of a regionally accredited institution in the United States. Transfer of thesis/dissertation credits is not allowed. Graduate level courses taken before the award of the baccalaureate degree cannot be transferred.

Pre-thesis and thesis credits

Pre-thesis credits. KIN 8666, or Doctoral Pre-Thesis, are credits available for doctoral students who have not yet passed their preliminary oral examination but need to be registered in the Graduate School to meet requirements of agencies or departments outside the Graduate School. Doctoral pre thesis credits are not graded. Registration for doctoral pre-thesis credits cannot be used to meet any Graduate School degree requirements other than to maintain active status.

The number of credits of KIN 8666 for which a doctoral student may register in any fall, spring or summer term is limited to 6 credits. Registrations of 8666 are limited to two instances and 12 credits without departmental permission. With departmental consent, students may register for 8666 up to four times, for a total accumulation of 24 credits. Doctoral students admitted before summer 2007 will be permitted to register for 8666 up to 4 times totaling 60 credits. **Pre-thesis credits should never be used by graduate assistants to maintain full-time status in order to qualify for tuition reimbursement.**

Thesis credits: Doctoral students must take a minimum of 24 semester thesis credits (KIN 8888). Students may not register for thesis credits until the semester after they have passed their preliminary oral examination. Thesis credits are not graded.



Submitting the Graduate Planning & Audit System (GPAS)

Students work with advisers in planning their programs. Students are encouraged to use the course planning tool/forms found [here](#). With the approved coursework planning, students are then instructed to:

- Submit the Graduate Planning & Audit System (GPAS) via: MyU > Academics > Degree Progress tab

The Graduate Planning & Audit System (GPAS) audit automatically shows all graduate-level coursework you have taken at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Students are required to notify GPC of their approved transfer coursework. GPC is responsible for entering into the transfer coursework section of GPAS.

In most cases, students are required to submit the exceptions in GPAS as early as possible. Instructions are provided in the [Training Hub](#).

Students should submit their GPAS once they have registered for their last semester of coursework AND once they have all exceptions approved in the GPAS. After being submitted by the student, the Graduate Planning & Audit System (GPAS) is first reviewed and approved by the faculty adviser and then by the Graduate Program Coordinator together with DGS.



PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS

Preliminary written examination

All doctoral students are required to pass a written examination, which covers coursework completed within the emphasis area. Students nearing the end of their coursework should meet with the adviser(s) to discuss the preliminary written examination process for his/her emphasis, as requirements vary. More detailed information on preliminary written guidelines can be found [here](#).

Note: Not all committee members are required to provide questions for the preliminary written exam. However, all members of the committee who are Kinesiology faculty and/or representing the major field must provide and grade questions. Often the supporting program committee member will not be asked to participate in the written exam.

When the student's answers are received, the adviser copies them and distributes them to the graders along with a copy of these procedural guidelines. The graders must choose one of the following three evaluations for each question on the exam if questions were submitted independently by committee members, or provide an evaluation of the overall exam if the broader, more integrated exam was administered. Committee members then submit their written evaluations to the adviser for compilation.

- **Pass:** Acceptable answer(s); responded to all portions of the question(s) adequately and accurately as would be expected of a typical Ph.D. student in these degree programs
- **Pass with Reservations:** Marginally acceptable response(s), some inaccuracies or inadequacies that must be corrected in a manner specified by the student's adviser
- **Fail:** Did not respond to all parts of the question(s); answers were incomplete, inadequate, or inaccurate In addition to evaluating each question or the overall exam using the above choices, graders will provide written comments about their evaluation to the adviser.

The adviser summarizes these evaluations and shares the results and comments with the student.

In order for the student to pass the examination, the majority of graders must indicate that the student has passed. If more than one grader gives a Pass with Reservations grade for the examination, the adviser follows the procedures for Pass with Reservations as outlined below. If more than one grader gives a Fail grade, the student does not pass the exam and the adviser follows the procedures for Retake procedures as outlined below. The adviser shares the results with the student both verbally and in writing, and provides the summary written evaluations and a completed "Ph.D. in Kinesiology Internal Form for Reporting Preliminary Written Examination Results to DGS." The GPC then reports the results to the Graduate School. Outside members are allowed to decline submitting questions for the exam. In cases where the outside committee member declines to submit questions for the exam, a vote of the majority of the remaining members of the committee will be needed to pass the exam.

Pass with Reservations: If the student passes the examination with reservations, the graders are permitted one week to convey their reservations to the student in writing and inform the student of the steps required to remove them. The graders have the discretion to determine what is required for reservations to be removed. The adviser sends this notification to the DGS along with a copy of the student's exam, exam questions, and grading forms indicating grades and comments from each grader.



The GPC reports a "pass with reservations" to the Graduate School. The student has up to three months following the date of the letter to satisfy reservations.

When the student has satisfied the graders' reservations, the adviser sends written notification to the student and DGS that the reservations have been removed and that the student may proceed toward the degree. The adviser provides the summary written evaluations and a completed "Ph.D. in Kinesiology Internal Form for Reporting Preliminary Written Examination Results to DGS" and submits to the DGS for his/her signature. The GPC reports the "pass" to the Graduate School. The preliminary oral examination may not be scheduled until the prelim written results have been reported to the Graduate School. If the student is unable to satisfy the committee's reservations, his or her doctoral candidacy and graduate status may be terminated by the program, or the student may be required to retake the examination, as specified below.

Retake: If the student does not pass the Preliminary Written Examination, the exam must be retaken in its entirety with a new set of questions and within six months after the date that the student receives the graders' written feedback on the exam. The retake again must be scheduled with, compiled by, and administered by the adviser and evaluated by the original committee, unless the adviser agrees to a proposed committee substitution. Only one retake is permitted. If the student does not pass the retake exam, his or her doctoral candidacy and graduate status may be terminated by the program.

Once the preliminary written exam is completed, the student's adviser reports the results to the student and to the Graduate Program Coordinator via the [internal form](#). The Graduate Program Coordinator must then report the exam results via the electronic form: *Record Preliminary Written Exam Results*. The electronic form must be submitted with a result of "pass" before the Graduate School will release the Preliminary Oral Exam form.

Preliminary oral examination

Students take the preliminary oral examination after completing most (or all) coursework and passing the preliminary written examination, but before writing the dissertation. The preliminary oral is a closed examination between the student and a minimum of four committee members, which should include:

- At least three members, including the adviser, must be from the student's major field
- At least one member must represent a field outside the major
- If a student has declared a minor, at least one member must represent the minor field
- Members cannot satisfy the requirement with respect to more than one field

Assigning members and scheduling the preliminary oral examination

The student is responsible for assigning their preliminary oral examination committee at least one month prior to the exam by completing the electronic form: [Assign/Update Preliminary Oral Examination Committee](#). The student is responsible for scheduling the preliminary oral examination with the committee members and with the Graduate School at least one week before the exam; students complete the electronic form: [Preliminary Oral Examination Scheduling](#). Please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator or other KIN staff to schedule a room for your exam. Your exam is scheduled for two hours. Students should not expect to schedule preliminary oral exams during the summer. If the date of your Preliminary Oral Exam changes after you have electronically scheduled with the Graduate School, please email GSSP with the new date of your exam (gssp@umn.edu).



Students occasionally request that someone from outside the UMN serve on their committee, in particular if the person has expertise associated with their specific area of study/research. To do this, the student must first obtain approval from their adviser and then fill out the [online request form](#). The expert's CV and adviser's nomination letter (statements on why you'd like to have this person on your committee) should be submitted electronically to the Graduate Program Coordinator (for DGS approval). Once the DGS approves, then the Graduate Program Coordinator files the information with the college who provides the Graduate Program Coordinator with the EmplID. Students need the EmplID to electronically assign the person in the Workflow Gen system.

In situations where a committee member does not appear for a final oral examination (a rare occurrence), the adviser/student must find another faculty member with graduate education status to attend the exam as an emergency substitute. This situation does not require approval from Graduate Student Services and Progress, the Graduate School, or the CEHD college coordinator. The exam may be held with the substitute committee member participating. The final oral report form must then be amended to reflect the substitute committee member. After the exam, the student must initiate another committee appointment workflow to appoint the substitute committee member to his/her preliminary oral exam committee.

Determining content of the preliminary oral examination

Immediately before the preliminary oral examination, the committee chair stipulates the objectives of the examination and, in consultation with other members of the committee, determines how the examination is to be conducted. In most cases, committee members begin the exam by focusing on the content of the written prelims and then branch out to pose other questions related to the major and minor. Questions related to the supporting program may also emerge during the preliminary oral examination, but students are not expected to have significant competency in the field like those who include a traditional minor in their programs.

Scoring the preliminary oral examination

Immediately after the examination, the candidate is excused from the room and a written secret ballot is taken before discussing the examination. Following the discussion, a final vote is taken, and the participants sign the report form, which is submitted to the Graduate School Student Services and Progress office (333 Bruininks Hall) no later than the first workday after the examination. More detailed information about the examination and the possible outcomes can be found in the [Doctoral Degree: Performance Standards and Progress Policy](#).

Successful completion of preliminary oral examination

Once a student passes the preliminary oral examination, s/he becomes an official candidate for the doctoral degree. The preliminary examination committee officially dissolves after the written and oral examinations have been successfully completed. A final oral examination committee is formed in conjunction with the thesis proposal/defense; those members are often the same as the preliminary examination committee.



FINAL EXAMINATION & DISSERTATION

Dissertation and the final oral examining committee

The thesis must demonstrate originality and ability for independent investigation, and the results of the research must constitute a meaningful contribution to knowledge in the field. The thesis must exhibit the student's mastery of the literature of the subject and familiarity with the sources. The subject matter must be presented with a satisfactory degree of literary skill. The student works closely with the adviser(s) and committee members to develop a dissertation topic and design the research.

Final examining committee

The student works with the adviser(s) to determine members of the final oral examining committee, which, like the preliminary examining committee, must include three faculty members from within the major field and one from outside the major, representing the minor or supporting program.

Students occasionally request that someone from outside the UMN serve on their committee, in particular if the person has expertise associated with their specific area of study/research. To do this, the student must first obtain approval from their adviser. The expert's CV and adviser's nomination letter (statements on why you'd like to have this person on your committee) should be submitted electronically to the Graduate Program Coordinator (for DGS approval). Once the DGS approves, then the Graduate Program Coordinator files the information with the college who provides the Graduate Program Coordinator with the EmplID. Students need the EmplID to electronically assign the person in the Workflow Gen system.

Assign/Update Final Oral Examining Committee

Students electronically assign the Final Oral Examining Committee once the committee has been named – before holding the thesis proposal meeting. To assign, complete the electronic form: [Assign/Update Final Oral Examining Committee](#). If a committee member needs to be updated prior to the final defense, submit the new information electronically using the same form.

Thesis proposal meeting (Prospectus meeting)

After adviser approval of the thesis title and proposal, the student distributes the proposal to the Thesis Panel members (readers) and schedules a meeting to discuss the proposal. Together, the student and Thesis Panel agree on the final proposal, content, and scope of the dissertation. The committee member serving as Chair must show this role in the [Graduate Education Faculty Role List](#) and cannot be the student's adviser.

Dissertation or thesis proposal

The thesis proposal generally includes the following content:

- Title—summarizes the main idea of the study in no more than 15 words.
- Introduction—includes a statement of the problem, background and rationale. Description of the theoretical framework that informs the study may also be included in this section. • Research Questions—includes a statement of specific research questions or hypotheses. • Methodology—this section includes a description of the proposed (1) subjects/study participants and site/context for the research, (2) research methodology(ies) as well as methods, materials or instruments to be used for data collection, and (3) detailed procedures for data analysis. • Preparation and qualifications for conducting the research—this includes a



description of the student's qualifications for dealing with both the content and methodology of the study. It should include relevant coursework, independent reading, experiential background, and involvement with previous studies.

- References—lists the references for sources cited in the proposal, following a consistent style such as [APA](#).

Alternative to the traditional dissertation

Although most students at the University complete traditional dissertations (that is, a single and extensive quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods study that is described in detail in a five or six chapter dissertation), it is possible to propose an alternative. This may include a series of studies completed during the Ph.D. program and possibly published previously by the student. The studies must be around a coherent theme or topic and should show how the student's thinking has evolved over time as a result of the research experience. Only those students who have had experience conducting research and who have the opportunity to engage in a variety of research projects during their Ph.D. program should consider this alternative. Consult with your adviser and the DGS should you decide to submit an alternative to the dissertation.

Finally, the student should contact the Graduate School Student Services Office for information on accommodating an alternative thesis to the required thesis format (gssp@umn.edu).

Human subjects approval

Most students in KIN complete dissertations that involve work with students, teachers or other school or business personnel, i.e., human subjects. Students must complete and submit an application to the University's Internal Review Board (IRB) and receive approval prior to beginning data collection or contacting possible subjects. IRB approval may take several weeks or months, so students are advised to plan ahead and apply early in the research process. See the [Institutional Review Board home page](#) for current information and forms.

Ordering the Graduation Packet

Early in the term in which you plan to defend your dissertation – access your [Graduation Packet](#) online. This includes information necessary for completing the degree.

Preparing the dissertation and scheduling the final defense

The student works closely with the adviser(s) throughout the dissertation process, submitting drafts for review and feedback along the way. The other readers on the committee may also work with the student throughout the preparation of the thesis, though this depends upon the committee. Students should plan to schedule the final defense with their adviser and committee members well in advance of their proposed defense date (approximately 2-3 months). Once a date/time is set, reserve a room with the Graduate Program Coordinator or other KIN staff member. In addition, you will need to electronically schedule your defense date with the Graduate School so they can begin the clearance process; see [Final Oral Examination Scheduling](#). Students should not plan to hold their final defense during the summer. If the date of your Final Oral Exam changes after you have electronically scheduled with the Graduate School, please email GSSP with the new date of your exam (gssp@umn.edu).

Once the dissertation is complete, a draft is submitted to all readers, who certify that the thesis is ready for defense by signing the Thesis Reviewer's Report form (included in the Graduation Packet) online. This signed form by each committee member is submitted online to the Graduate Student Services and Progress Office (GSSP) who will then release the access to the Final Oral Report form.

To permit readers sufficient time to read the thesis and decide whether it is ready for defense, students must notify their advisers and committee members at least two weeks in advance that the thesis will be delivered on a particular date. All members of the examining committee must then have at least two weeks to read the thesis after it has been delivered.

Final oral examination

The first hour of the final oral is open to the public. The Ph.D. candidate presents an overview of the research (30-45 min), and then all in attendance may pose questions and engage in discussion on the research until the first hour has ended. The exam chair should act as facilitator.

When the hour is over, the chair of the exam announces a quick break so that the public may exit. The candidate then meets with the final oral examining committee for the next hour or two for additional questions and discussion. The examination is limited to the candidate's thesis subject and relevant areas. This final session between the candidate and the committee is closed. Once the chair has determined that the questions have been satisfied, the candidate is excused so that the committee may vote and discuss the exam. The entire exam may last longer than two hours (especially given that the first hour is open to the public), but may not exceed 3 hours total.

Emergency substitution procedures for final oral exams

- Do not begin the exam. Call/email the missing faculty member and determine if he/she will be able to attend the examination.
- If the missing faculty member cannot be reached, the adviser and/or chair should find an emergency substitute faculty member (with graduate faculty status) to attend the exam in the missing committee member's place. If a substitute faculty member cannot be found, then the exam must be rescheduled for a time when a full committee will be in attendance.
- This emergency committee substitution does not require GSSP, Graduate School, or CEHD dean's office (college coordinator) approval. Please do not call or email seeking approval of an emergency substitution the day of the exam. Examination forms should be amended to reflect the name of the new committee member and his/her signature. (Cross out the missing faculty member's name and write-in the new faculty member's name, if possible.)
- After the examination, the student should initiate the committee workflow to change the committee membership to reflect the new committee member. Please note in the workflow comments section that this is an emergency committee substitution and that the oral/final exam was already held. The committee workflow will then go through the usual review and approval levels (advisor, DGS or delegate, college coordinator or delegate).

Reporting the results of the final oral examination

Upon completion of the examination, a formal vote of the committee is taken. To be recommended for the award of the doctoral degree, candidates must receive a vote with no more than one dissenting member of the total examining committee. See the [Doctoral Degree: Completion policy](#) for more details.

If the student clearly passed (i.e., the student received no more than one dissenting vote and no recommendations were made by the committee for revisions) or failed the examination, the committee chair records the votes of all of the committee members using the Final Exam form



workflow immediately following the final vote. All committee members will receive an email that informs them of the vote that was recorded on their behalf.

If the committee recommends revisions to the dissertation, the student's adviser is responsible for ensuring that the student includes the appropriate modifications and required revisions in the final dissertation.

Preparation and submission of the copies of the thesis

A copy of the thesis must be submitted to the Graduate School. The student's adviser(s) must sign the thesis to confirm that it is complete and satisfactory in all respects and that all required revisions have been made. The Thesis Formatting and Submission instructions are available [here](#).

[Instructions for the Committee Chair - Doctoral](#)

[Reviewers' Report Workflow Guide](#)

[Final Exam Workflow Guide](#)



GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT

CEHD Commencement

CEHD's commencement ceremony is held once per year in May. All students are notified early in spring term about the process for signing up for commencement. Additional information is available [here](#).

Please note: participating in commencement does not mean that you are, or will be, cleared for graduation. Graduation (degree) clearance is a separate process.

Clearance for graduation

Degrees are awarded monthly. To qualify for graduation in a particular month, a student must apply to graduate in MyU no later than the first day of that month and must complete the final oral examination and submit the dissertation, and all supporting paperwork, by the last business day of the anticipated month of graduation. The Application for Degree form can be found under MyU.umn.edu > Academics > Degree Progress tab

Note: if students are graduating in the month of January, they must be registered for the spring semester in order for the Graduate School to record their graduation date. If the student has used his or her allocated GRAD 999 registrations, registering and paying tuition for 1 credit, such as KIN 8777, will be required for the semester.