

HANDBOOK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR MASTERS PROGRAM IN EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGY: THESIS TRACK

**Division of Exercise Physiology
School of Medicine**



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Program Overview	3
A1. Goals and Objectives of the Program	3
B. Masters thesis track committee.....	4
B.1 Chair of a Masters of Science thesis track committee	4
B.2 Faculty members of Masters of Science thesis track committee	4
C. Progression through the Masters Program – thesis track.....	4
C.1 First semester	5
C.2 Second semester.....	5
C.3 Summer of year 1 through graduation	5
D. Courses and sequence for taking courses in the curriculum.....	5
D.1 Typical course sequence	5
E. General sequence for Progression in thesis track.....	6
F. Grades and academic standards	6
G. Thesis documents	
G.1 Research proposal guidelines	7
G.2. Research thesis guidelines	7
H. Defense of thesis	7
I. General graduate student training and participation	7
I.1 Oversight of graduate work by the Chair of the student's thesis committee	7
J. Participation in departmental seminars and research presentations	8
K. Writing and submitting research data for publication	9
L. Funding for research and stipends	9
M. Professional conduct in a professional school	10
N. Ethical conduct in research	11
O. Faculty evaluation of student performance.....	11
Appendix 1: Plan of Study	13

A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Division of Exercise Physiology offers a Masters of Science degree in Exercise Physiology. Two tracks exist (i) a clinical (non-thesis) program and (ii) a thesis program. This document pertains only to the thesis track. The thesis track program is intended to give exceptional students knowledge in basic medical and scientific areas to prepare them for entry into advanced research intensive or professional careers (e.g., Ph.D., MD/Ph.D.; PT, OT, dentistry, pharmacy, etc). Students in the thesis track will typically take two academic years to complete the course work and research thesis.

Graduate work involves a program of study and research individually designed to utilize the abilities and strengths of the faculty and accommodate the needs of the student within an area of specific interest. Although there are common goals, expectations, and courses that will be universal for all masters' graduate students, the exact content of a program of study may differ from one student to another.

The content of this handbook represent the current policies and procedures that have been approved by the graduate faculty of the Division of Exercise Physiology. Nevertheless, this handbook is to be viewed as a "living document" so that after appropriate debate and approval by the graduate faculty, the content of this handbook may be periodically revised. In addition to the information contained in this handbook, the student is urged to consult the current Graduate School Catalog for additional information regarding the requirements of the Graduate Council at West Virginia University.

AI. Goals and Objectives of the Program

The M.S. thesis track program provides students training to develop their research skills that will lead to a career in clinical health research, clinical care, or additional research-intensive training (e.g., Ph.D.).

The objectives of the program are:

- (1) Provide integrative basic and applied scientific education to graduates from an accredited undergraduate institution.
- (2) Provide the opportunity to obtain training in scientific principles of research that are applied to a health or disease problem.
- (3) Develop integrative and critical thinking skills to allow application of scientific knowledge for scientific applications
- (4) Enhance competitiveness for admission to a health professional (e.g., medicine, physical therapy, occupational therapy, doctor of chiropractor, nursing, physician assistant and/or Ph.D. program
- (6) Enhance skills for job placement in a clinical or rehabilitation setting or for additional graduate education including preparations in data presentation and analysis and writing and discussing data outcome and interpretation of data.

B. Masters of Science-thesis track committees

The committee will consist of a minimum of three faculty members including the primary thesis advisor.

B.1 Chair of a Masters of Science-thesis track committee

To be a primary thesis advisor and to chair a thesis committee for a master's student in Exercise Physiology the faculty must fulfill the following criterion:

- Have obtained the rank Assistant Professor or above (clinical, research or tenure track)
- Have obtained regular graduate faculty status as at West Virginia University School of Medicine (e.g., has an earned doctorate, a minimum of two years of research experience following the awarding of the degree.
- Have a planned and approved research project
- Have secured the funding to conduct the study (supplies, payment of subjects etc.).

B.2 Faculty members of Masters of Science-thesis track committee

- To participate on a masters committee, the faculty member must have a minimum of a Masters degree, be an Assistant Professor or above and be willing to contribute to the overall development of the graduate student's academic progress. Adjunct members of the thesis committee may be at the rank of Instructor. Committee members require approval from the Chair and Dean.

C. Progression through the Masters Program – thesis track

C.1 First semester

1. The student will have identified research areas of interest in their masters' application. The Chair of Exercise Physiology will appoint a chair for the Master thesis committee for each student admitted to the masters thesis track.
2. When selecting the chair of the student's thesis committee, every attempt will be made to match the student's research interest with the research interest of the interest of faculty meeting the criterion established to chair a thesis committee.
3. The primary advisor will act as the academic and research advisor for the student to prescribe courses in the curriculum and courses that will benefit the student's progress and preparation for research. This faculty advisor will also become the Chair of the Student's thesis committee and will be identified as such from this point onward.
4. The Chair of the Student's thesis committee will meet with the student and discuss the primary research project with the student. The Chair of the Student's thesis committee will assign a reading list for the student and plan the student's research experiences.
5. During the first semester of enrollment (e.g., Fall, year 1), the student will normally engage in research to learn the techniques and direction of the research laboratory. During this time, the student will work with his/her Chair of the thesis committee to identify a research question, and write a draft of the research aim, hypothesis and begin the literature review for their research project. This will progress in to the second semester.

C.2 Second semester

1. Before the end of the second semester of enrollment, the Chair of the Student's thesis advisor will choose a thesis committee for the student and gain approval from the other qualified faculty to serve as members of the student's committee. The committee must be approved by the Chair of the Division and at the level of the Dean of the Graduate Program.
2. The student will have a formal meeting with the Chair and members of the student's thesis committee during the second semester, and report to the committee progress made in research to that point.
3. The student will engage in research during the remainder of the second semester under the supervision of the Chair of the Student's thesis committee.
4. By the end of the second semester, the student should submit to the Chair of the Student's thesis committee and the other members of the thesis committee, a draft of the research project including Aims, hypothesis, Background literature review and significance, and Methods.

C. 3 Summer of semester 1 – through graduation

1. The student will present to the committee the research proposal and defend the proposal to the committee before the end of the summer semester of year 1. This will include preparing a thesis proposal in written form, a formal presentation to the committee, and an oral defense of the written document.
2. After successfully defending the thesis proposal, and gaining approval by the thesis committee to proceed, the student will complete: (a) all course work (b) the research project included in the Masters thesis with all data, analysis and discussion.
3. The student should prepare a minimum of one manuscript for publication from the thesis work.

D. Courses and sequence for taking courses in the curriculum

D.1 Sample course sequences (46 credits)

MASTERS OF SCIENCE COURSES – THESIS TRACK				
COURSE	COURSE TITLE	COURSE TITLE		HOURS
		Year 1	Year 2	
PSIO 743	Mechanisms of Body Function	Fall		4
AGBI514	Animal Biotechnology (or equivalent)	Fall		4
EXPH 697	Research	Fall		2
EXPH 567	Exercise Physiology 2	Spring		4
EXPH 697	Research	Spring		3
EXPH 799	Graduate colloquium	Spring		1
EXPH 693	Research methods**	Spring		4
EXPH 697	Research	Summer		3
STAT 511	Statistical Methods	Summer		3
EXPH 799	Graduate colloquium		Fall	1
EXPH 798	Thesis		Fall	1
	Electives *		Fall	3-6
EXPH 697	Research		Fall	3-7
EXPH 799	Graduate colloquium		Spring	1
EXPH 798	Thesis		Spring	1
EXPH 697	Research		Spring	7

* Elective courses may be appropriate graduate level courses as recommendation by the Chair of the student's thesis committee and with approval of the members of the thesis committee. For example these might be CCMD793E (Advanced Muscle physiology); independent study; new courses developed for EXPH at a 700 level such as" Advanced Training methods for diabetes or Cell signaling in diabetes & obesity & exercise; or graduate level biochemistry or nutrition courses

Recommended Electives

AG610	General Biochemistry (Fall) 4 credits
EXPH 786	Musculoskeletal Biology
EXPH 791	Cardiovascular Physiology
HN&F 619	Nutrition in the Prevention of Human Diseases (Spring) - 3 credits
EXPH 693F	Applied Biomechanics, Spring (3 credits)
EXPH 693G	Advanced Neuromechanics, Fall (4 credits)
EXPH 791C	Advance Cardiovascular Physiology, Fall (3 credits)
EXPH 786	Musculoskeletal Biology, Spring (3 credits)

E. GENERAL SEQUENCE FOR PROGRESSION THROUGH MASTERS THESIS TRACK

Academic Year 1:

May – Thesis advisor is assigned at point of acceptance to the masters program

August-December– learn research methods, develop research ideas, collect pilot data

February-April – Meet with thesis committee. Submit committee approval form. Committee review's student's progress. Complete and submit plan of study.

June-July – Student provides written proposal, a minimum of 2 weeks before an oral defense of proposal. The proposal will be advertised and departmental/divisional faculty and students invited.

July-August 1 – Student begins thesis work

Academic Year 2:

Prepare abstracts from data for MARC (**October**) and/or ACSM, Experimental Biology (**November**)

April-May – student defends thesis, submits manuscripts with mentor for publication. Goal for one publication in a peer reviewed journal.

Although it is expected that most students will complete their work by the end of the Spring Semester (two academic years), on a case-by-case basis, student's may continue their work between May-August with the approval of the thesis committee.

NOTES

Divisional funding is not guaranteed for any thesis track student. The number of students funded will be budget dependent. Students selected for funding may receive funding for up to two academic years, dependent upon satisfactory progress (maintaining GPA of 3.0 or greater; satisfactory progress in research as determined by the thesis committee). Funding for the first year does not imply automatic funding for a second year. Many students will be on teaching GA's and some will not receive funding at all. Faculty advisors are however encouraged to seek funding for their graduate students.

Admissions and curriculum requirements are subject to change without prior notice.

F. Grades and Academic Standards

E.1 Graduate students who fail to achieve an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of "B" (i.e., a, GPA of 3.0 or better) thereby indicating a failure to obtain academic good standing, will be placed on academic probation and permitted a maximum of one additional semester to achieve good academic standing. Students who do not meet these requirements will be dismissed from the graduate program.

E.2 Graduate students must obtain a grade of 3.0 ("B") or better in all Exercise Physiology courses. Any student who fails to achieve a "B" in any one of these courses must repeat that course even if his/her cumulative GPA is 3.0 or better. Achieving less than a grade of B in a second attempt as a second attempt will result in the student's dismissal without opportunity for retaking the course for a third time.

E.3 The graduate policy for Exercise Physiology is that for graduation, students can obtain a maximum of one (1) "C" in a non-EXPH course. For example, if a student obtained a "C" in EITHER (not both) STAT 511 or PSIO 743 in the masters curriculum and the student's cumulative GPA was 3.0 or above, the student could still graduate. If the student obtained a letter grade of "C" in EXPH 567, he/she must retake the class even if their GPA is above 3.0. No letter grades of "D" will be issued.

G. Thesis documents

G.1 Research PROPOSAL guidelines

The research thesis will be a double spaced document submitted in a format that follows the following:

- Title
- Table of Contents
- Chapter 1: Specific Aims and hypothesis (~ 2 pages)
- Chapter 2: Background and Significance (~8-10 pages)
- Chapter 3: Preliminary data
- Chapter 3: Methods (~7-10 pages)
- Chapter 6. References

G2. Research thesis guidelines for final document

The research thesis will be a double spaced document submitted in a format that follows the following:

- Title
- Acknowledgments
- Table of Contents
- Chapter 1: Specific Aims and hypothesis (~ 2 pages)
- Chapter 2: Background and Significance (~8-10 pages)
- Chapter 3-5: Manuscripts written in Journal of Applied Physiology style of all data. (~30 pages). One chapter for each manuscript.
- Chapter 6. Discussion of the findings – where the results as expected, what problems were identified and overcome during the work, what would be the next logical series of experiments to follow? (~5 pages)
- Chapter 7. References
- Appendix – raw data and methods for assays etc.

H. Defense of Thesis

As part of the requirements for graduation, students will make an oral presentation of their research thesis at a “thesis defense”. All students and faculty will be invited to the first part of the oral defense of the thesis. The committee will retire with the student to another room for the second part of the oral defense and the committee will ask questions of the student regarding his/her work. The committee must approve the student’s written and oral presentation unanimously before the grade of pass is given the student.

Students who are not successful in passing the oral thesis defense will be considered to have failed the oral defense of the thesis. The student’s thesis committee will provide the student a time line for remediation and re-examination. The student will have a total of three attempts to successfully complete the oral defense of the thesis. In the event that the student does not pass the oral examination on the third and final attempt, the student will be moved to the clinical (non-thesis track) in Exercise Physiology and then must then complete the requirements for graduation in this track. The student should not expect to be provided a stipend under the circumstances that the student is not successful in the first attempt to defend the thesis.

I. GENERAL GRADUATE STUDENT TRAINING AND PARTICIPATION

I.1 Oversight of graduate work by the Chair of the student’s thesis committee

- I1.1** The Chair of the student’s thesis committee will maintain oversight of course selection and related student activities, however, the entire thesis committee will maintain the responsibility of evaluating all academic student progress including research activities.
- I1.2** Students will take courses as outlined in this Handbook. Students must enroll in required courses and appropriate graduate level courses as identified by his/her thesis committee.

- I.1.3** It is the students' responsibility to meet regularly with his/her Chair of the student's thesis committee, because this person is his/her Major Advisor through the remainder of his/her graduate training. However, it is expected that the Chair of the student's thesis committee will require the student to meet regularly with him/her. The Chair of the student's thesis committee should regularly review the student's progress, research problems/obstacles, writing, data etc. Usually students should arrange to meet with his/her major advisor at least weekly.
- I.1.4** Students should submit any written material in which they expect to receive feedback/constructive criticism initially to his/her Chair of the student's thesis committee (e.g., thesis drafts, abstracts etc.). Students should expect a timely return of his/her materials, and this will normally be within two weeks from the point of submitting the material to his/her advisor for reviews of papers, data, reviews etc. but this should be discussed with his/her Chair of the student's thesis committee. It is unprofessional for a graduate student to expect or demand a faculty make special accommodations for returning materials in a time period that is shorter than two weeks from the point of submission to the advisor or any committee member. Unless instructed otherwise, a student should submit all written material and discuss any data/concerns etc. to his/her Chair of the student's thesis committee prior to discussion/submission to other members of the thesis committee. Because the thesis committee members were selected on the basis of his/her expertise and ability to assist the student's progress in the research project, the student should next consult the members of his/her thesis committee to resolve problems, interpretation questions, research assistance etc, prior to consulting non-committee members.
- I.1.5** In consultation with the Chair of the student's thesis committee, students should arrange to meet with his/her complete thesis committee a twice annually (normally during the fall and spring semesters). More frequent meetings between the thesis committee and graduate student should be encouraged.
- I.1.6** Students should provide data, drafts of any written work, etc. well in advance of any meeting with his/her thesis committee. Although most members of the thesis committee will require delivery of chapters or data to be discussed at least two weeks prior to any meeting, it is the student's responsibility to inquire if the faculty member requires more time than this. Because a thesis encompasses a large body of information graduate faculty (including the student's thesis Chair) will usually require four or more weeks to thoroughly review a full thesis in draft or final form. Therefore, student should ask each of the committee members the amount of time that the faculty member will require to review the student's material. This will help the student determine the time needed to prepare materials prior to thesis committee meetings or meeting with the faculty member individually. Therefore, the student must plan accordingly and must not make assumptions about faculty time and availability.

J. Participation in Departmental Seminars and Research Presentations

- I.1** Graduate students in the Division of Exercise Physiology should become "well-rounded" scientists who have a breadth of knowledge that allows them to interact with persons who are not conducting research in his/her field. Furthermore, when ever possible, all graduate students should regularly attend departmental seminars and journal clubs. Students can benefit from preparing, giving presentations and responding to questions (even if the topic area is not in his/her research field). Students may be asked to present some of the research data that they have collected as part of one of the departmental research seminars.
- I.2** Graduate students will benefit from presenting his/her data at state, national and/or international meetings and interacting with faculty and graduate students from other institutions who are doing the same. When ever possible, graduate students who are in his/her second year of

enrollment are expected to present the data they have collected as part of his/her thesis at a minimum of one state/regional or national meeting. Students should remember that they are representing his/her laboratory, Division, School and University at these research meetings, so they should be well prepared, and his/her professional behavior and conduct should be appropriate.

- I.3 Graduate students are reminded that all data and laboratory manuals used in his/her research is the property of the Principal Investigator/ Chair of the student's thesis committee. This is usually the Principal Investigator in whose laboratory the student worked and collected the data. Therefore, the graduate student must obtain the approval of the laboratory Principal Investigator/ Chair of the student's thesis committee prior to any data submission for purposes of presentation or publications including abstracts generated from the research.

K. Writing and submitting research data for publication

- J.1 Graduate students are expected to submit at least one manuscript from their thesis for consideration for publication by a peer-reviewed journal. The student will write the manuscript with the oversight and input of the Chair of the student's thesis committee. The faculty member will submit the manuscript for review to an appropriate peer-reviewed journal.
- J.2 Research data collected, work completed, manuscripts generated in part or in full from the data, abstracts of the data, all laboratory notebooks and new products developed by a graduate student in conjunction with a faculty advisor, remains the intellectual property of the Chair of the student's thesis committee. Normally this is not an issue because manuscripts originating from the thesis work should be submitted prior to the student's graduation, so that the student is afforded due credit for the research efforts. Nevertheless, because granting agencies require the raw data record books be available in the principal investigators laboratory for grant review/inspection (e.g., a site visit), all original laboratory notebooks and compiled data (e.g., negatives from photographs, gels, electronically inputted data and images etc.) must remain in the possession of the faculty advisor in whose laboratory the student has worked (i.e., it is not the personal property of the graduate student). The principal investigator/ Chair of the student's thesis committee may allow the student to make copies of data and research books for the student's own records.

L. Funding for research and stipends

- L.1 Graduate students will typically receive a stipend from the Division of Exercise Physiology. Students may be assigned duties in the clinical exercise physiology laboratory, strength training instruction or research laboratory duties for up to but not exceeding 20 hours/week as part of his/her responsibilities for receiving a graduate stipend and fee waiver. These activities maybe outside of the student's own thesis/research responsibilities for graduation.
- L.2 Students who are admitted to the Masters program-thesis track will normally be funded by a divisional stipend throughout his/her two years of training (however, renewal of this stipend is dependent upon maintaining academic good standing, making suitable progress towards graduation, and the availability of adequate funding).
- L.3 Divisional funding for large graduate research projects is usually not feasible and Chairs of the student's thesis committee or students should not count on Division sources for large research expenditures. The Chair of the Division of Exercise Physiology may fund small research items and supplies pending faculty requests and suitable justification including evidence of attempts to secure independent funding if the Divisional budget permits such expenditures. Usually divisional funding will be for small and pilot projects that are likely to result in larger funding. Nevertheless, full thesis research projects **should be** funded through efforts of the graduate student and thesis Chair.

M. Professional conduct in a Professional School

- M.1** Graduate training and receiving a stipend during that training is a privilege, not a right. The graduate student should strive to obtain a cohesive working arrangement with other graduate students, faculty and departmental staff. Unprofessional behavior and attitudes by a graduate student will not be tolerated in the Division, Department, School or University, and may, at the recommendation of the student's thesis Chair, and after review by the graduate faculty at large and if approved by the Division Chair, result in termination of the Division stipend funding and/or dismissal of the graduate student from the graduate program in the Division of Exercise Physiology¹.
- M.2** The graduate student should recognize that he/she might have additional research tasks, research presentations, preparations and projects assigned to them as part of his/her graduate education process by the student's major advisor who is his/her thesis Chair (for example, assist in preparing an abstract/poster for presentation at a national meeting, etc.). Although the number and type of additional tasks may vary from student to student, all of the tasks are expected to be completed by the student in a timely manner. A graduate student, who believes that a task is inappropriate, can appeal an assignment in writing to the Division Chair who will review the assigned tasks².
- M.3** Graduate stipends are for 12 months and the graduate student is expected to be in the laboratory and conducting appropriate research/educational activities each day as part of his/her obligation to receiving the graduate stipend and being enrolled in the doctoral program.
- M.4** Students will normally be offered the following vacation days without substitution: 1 week at Thanksgiving, 2 weeks at Christmas and 1 week during spring break. The precise dates for these vacations will be determined according to the official university calendar and the Division Chair. The Chair of the Division does not normally permit other times and vacation dates unless there is an emergency, in which case the Division Chair must approve the student's absence from campus.

N. Ethical conduct in research^a

All students enrolled in the graduate program will conduct research with graduate faculty as part of the process towards becoming independent researchers. All research must be approached in an ethical and professional manner. Some research may be with humans and other research may be conducted using animal models for human problems or diseases. In addition, graduate students will work in the Human Performance Laboratory and occasionally in other clinical settings where professional and ethical conduct is paramount to the success of the student. Whether basic research, applied research, or clinical settings of research and/or clinical treatment of subjects or clients through exercise or other mediums all graduate students and faculty must follow the established and accepted procedures for ethical conduct. In addition to the Ethical conduct issues standard throughout West Virginia University School of Medicine, The Graduate Faculty of the Division of Exercise Physiology have adopted the Nuremberg Code of Ethical conduct in research and the Work Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki. Both documents describe appropriate and ethical conduct when conducting human and animal research. Since both types of models are used in our Division, every student and faculty should become familiar with both of the following decampments and conduct his/her actions according to these documents. Although especially the Helsinki Declaration frequently addresses physicians' responsibilities to patients and research on patients, the faculty and graduate students should direct his/her actions of ethical conduct so that it is indistinguishable from the physician's conduct with his/her

¹ The student may appeal a dismissal from the graduate program for non-academic reasons according to approved channels of due process through the Graduate Office of the Health Science Center and West Virginia University.

² The normal due process for appeals is available to the student according to the procedures of operation for West Virginia University.

^a Taken from the National Institutes of Health Policies (Effective May, 2000)

patients as described below. All graduate students and faculty will obtain Human Institutional Review board (IRB) approval prior to collecting any data on human subjects. The rules and regulations outlined by the Institutional IRB committee will be followed in every detail. Furthermore, students or faculty cannot add items for testing on human subjects without filing the correct addendums or filing a new IRB, as determined by the policies and procedures of the IRB. Similarly, graduate students and faculty must not conduct research on animal models until proper review and approval from the Institutional Animal Use Committee (ACUC) has been granted. There are no exceptions to the rules as outlined by the IRB and ACUC. Failure of graduate students to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner and/or disregard for rules outlined by the IRB or ACUC or failing to follow established ethical practices when working with human subjects or animals will result in an inquiry from a committee established by the Chair of the Division of Exercise Physiology, and this committee may recommend dismissal from the graduate program if the student has been found guilty of failing to follow the codes of ethical conduct as described below. The infractions will be reported to the appropriate committees (e.g., IRB or ACUC) and will also be independently handled at the institutional level. The Division Chair will review and pursue the appropriate course of action for graduate faculty who choose to ignore the ethical codes for research conduct as described below. These codes for ethical conduct in research (which is described in both documents duplicated below) have been adopted by the National Institutes of Health and are considered a standard ethical code for research. It is expected that all graduate students and faculty in the Division of Exercise Physiology will follow the following research code of conduct as identified as standards at West Virginia University.

Additional Reading

- Study of Ethical Problems in Medicine and Biomedical and Behavioral Research.
- Veatch, Robert M. "Human Experimentation Committees: Professional or Representative?" Hastings Center Report 5 (No. 5, October 1975): 31-40.

O. FACULTY EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

- O.1** Students should complete an activity report each semester. Research supervisors (e.g., for research rotations) will be required to sign the student activity report, discuss with the student the progress and identify any deficiencies in the student's progress. This report will become part of the student's academic record and it will be kept in the departmental office following review of all information.
- O.2** The student's thesis Chair should work with the student to develop a plan to help the student overcome any deficiencies. The student's thesis chair should meet with the graduate student to discuss his/her expectations of the graduate student and also to provide the student feedback concerning the student's academic and/or research performance and professional conduct. The student's thesis Chair should report improvement or lack of improvement in any identified deficiencies during the graduate faculty meeting to review annual student evaluation.
- O.3** The student's thesis Chair will maintain a yearly evaluation of student progress that may be submitted to the Graduate School as requested. Unsatisfactory progress in research and/or other activities that have been requested by the student's thesis Chair and/or failure to meet Divisional, Departmental or University expectations for conduct and behavior and/or failure to meet Division, Departmental or University academic requirements may result in one of the following actions:
 - O.3.1.** The student may be placed on academic probation and given the opportunity to improve his/her academic performance by the end of one semester.
 - O.3.2** The student may be given additional research, teaching and/or other academic activities (e.g., primary literature reviews) that will facilitate improvement of the area of identified deficit.

- O.3.3** The student may lose tuition fee waivers and stipend support from the Division, but be allowed to continue to study and work in the graduate program (This results in the 20 hours of week of time that would otherwise be spent working on a graduate assistantship be directed to improving student performance).
- O.3.4.** The student may be denied permission for subsequent enrollment in graduate courses and denied access to research facilities until the deficit and/or problem is corrected.
- O.3.5** The student may be dismissed from the graduate program³

³ The student may appeal a dismissal from the graduate program for academic reasons according to approved procedures and channels of due process through the Graduate Office of the Health Science Center and West Virginia University.

PLAN OF STUDY – MASTERS AND DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT (If you need additional space, please fill out another form as needed)

Student Name: _____ WVUID#: _____

Graduate Program: _____ Date: _____

Degree: ☐ MHS ☐ MPH ☐ MS ☐ MSN ☐ DNP ☐ PHD

Please select: ☐ Thesis ☐ Dissertation ☐ Paper ☐ Practicum ☐ Course Work Only

PLAN OF STUDY COURSES:

If your program utilizes the PLANS feature of DegreeWorks, do not complete the tables below and please check here: ☐

Course #	Course Title	Hrs.	Grade	Semester

COURSES THAT ARE REPEATED EACH TERM (E.G. JOURNAL CLUB, RESEARCH, SEMINAR).

Course #	Course Title	Number of Repeats Required

(Continued on next page)

TRANSFER COURSES FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS:

Courses transferred from another institution must be approved prior to inclusion in the Plan of Study. The **Application for Transfer of Graduate Credit to West Virginia University** form must be completed to obtain this approval.

Course#	Course Title	Institution	Hrs.	Grade	Semester

Obtain signatures of advisory committee, if applicable. Consult the Plan of Study Guidelines for applicability.

Signatures of Graduate Student Advisory Committee:

Names of Committee Members (typed)

(Chair)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

_____ Signature of Student	_____ Printed/typed Name	_____ Date
Approved By:		
_____ Signature of Advisor (if not Committee Chair)	_____ Printed/typed Name	_____ Date
_____ Signature of Graduate Program Director	_____ Printed/typed Name	_____ Date
_____ Signature of Dean of School or Designate (if required)	_____ Printed/typed Name	_____ Date
_____ Signature of Assist VP for Graduate Education	_____ Printed/typed Name	_____ Date

Note: Once committee and/or program director signatures (if applicable) have been obtained, please make one copy of this form for the student's personal records, one copy for student's mentor (where applicable), and one copy for the program director prior to submitting to the Office of Research and Graduate Education. A final copy will be placed in the student's file in their graduate program's office and in the Office of Research and Graduate Education once all signatures have been obtained.

Rev. 10/2015

PLAN OF STUDY GUIDELINES

The Plan of Study consists of the minimum coursework required by the student's advisory committee to meet the course requirements of the degree program. Additional courses beyond the agreed upon minimum need to be approved by the student's advisor before registration.

The Plan of Study form should be submitted as follows:

1. The student, advisor, and advisory committee approve the Plan of Study.
 - a. MSN students: after advisor is assigned (after 3rd semester);
 - b. MS students: after 18 semester hours;
 - c. PhD students: after 30 hours.
2. This form must be typewritten and completed in full.
3. It must be signed by the student and his/her committee and submitted to the Health Sciences Graduate Program Office for final approval. See table below for signatures required by program.
4. When approved by the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee and the Health Sciences Graduate Programs Office, it becomes a binding agreement for the student, committee, and the Health Sciences Graduate Programs Office.
5. Request for a change in the Plan of Study must be submitted in writing:
 - a. For minor changes in the approved program, a letter of request must be submitted to the Health Sciences Graduate Programs Office after written concurrence has been obtained from a majority of the graduate committee and student.
 - b. For major changes in approved program, a revised Plan of Study must be submitted to the graduate committee for its approval and submitted to the Health Sciences Graduate Programs Office for approval.
6. Return completed form to Health Sciences Graduate Programs Office, 2271 Health Sciences South, PO Box 9024, Morgantown, WV 26505-9024

The original approved Plan of Study form will be returned to the department.

Rev. 10/2015

Signatures Required

Degree/Program	Masters/Doctorate	Signatures Required	Committee Signatures (Y/N)
MHS			
MPH			
MS			
MSN			
DNP			Y
PHD			Y