

Public Administration and Policy

PhD Student Handbook

School of Public Service

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<https://www.odu.edu/business/departments/sps>

The handbook is a supplement to—not replacement for—information in the Old Dominion University Graduate Catalog and in the School of Public Service section of the catalog. If information in this handbook conflicts with information in the Graduate Catalog, students should abide by Graduate Catalog guidance except when PhD program requirements listed in this document exceed university minimum requirements; in those cases, the requirements listed in this handbook take precedence.

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Introduction

The Public Administration and Policy PhD Student Handbook was designed to assist doctoral students with planning their program of study and navigating requirements to successfully complete a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Public Administration and Policy at Old Dominion University (ODU).

Public Administration and Policy PhD Student Handbook and ODU Graduate Catalog

This handbook is a supplement—not replacement—for information in the Old Dominion University [Graduate Catalog](#) and in the [School of Public Service section of the Graduate Catalog](#). If information in this handbook conflicts with information in the Graduate Catalog, students should abide by Graduate Catalog guidance except where program requirements listed in this document exceed university minimum requirements; in those cases, the requirements listed in this handbook will take precedence. The Graduate Catalog contains a broad spectrum of policies that relate to graduate study at ODU, as well as minimum standards for all graduate programs within the university. Students should always consult the Graduate Catalog in addition to this handbook. If students have any questions or need clarifications, contact the [Graduate School PhD Graduate Program Director \(GPD\)](#).

No policy manual can hope to cover all possible situations or eventualities. It is possible that issues will arise for which there is no existing policy. Likewise, policies may need to be modified occasionally to meet new university requirements or conditions. In these cases, the faculty of the SPS will meet to discuss the matter and may issue new or modified policies that may or may not supplement this handbook at any time. The lack of a policy statement in this document, or the ODU Graduate Catalog, is not an explicit endorsement of any decision or behavior.

Old Dominion University and the School of Public Service

[Old Dominion University \(ODU\)](#) fosters dynamic on-campus and global online learning for undergraduate and graduate students that enriches their lives, promotes insightful and perceptive leadership, and motivates the pursuit of excellence in dedicated fields and professions. We collaborate with strategic partners to address challenges and propose solutions that impact the economy,

Applicants

Admitted Students

Students admitted to the PhD program should view the ODU [Admitted Graduate Guide](#) and SPS [PhD Student Info](#), as well as Status Alerts and Checklists in the [myODU portal](#), to ensure they complete all requisite actions before the first term commences. Required and optional tasks that students should complete include the following:

- ; accept your offer of admission through the [ODU Application Portal](#)
- ; learn your University Identification Number (UIN) (provided in your admission letter)
- ; activate your [MIDAS ID](#)
- ; activate your [ODU email](#)
- ; complete [New Graduate Student Orientation](#)
- ; sign into [myODU](#) to review Status Alerts and Checklists (left navigation bar)
- ; complete the Criminal History Questionnaire [myODU](#) (see Status Alerts > Holds)
- ; access and get familiar with [LEO Online](#) (access through [myODU](#))
- ; submit your Final Official Transcripts if you submitted unofficial transcripts with your admission application (see your previous educational institutions for instructions)

Student Orientation

Prior to their first semester, new students in the PhD program will be required to attend an SPS orientation session to discuss program requirements, course scheduling, advising requirements, and other pertinent information. Orientation sessions are announced at least two weeks in advance and typically last about 90 minutes.

Deferment

Students accepted into the program may begin their course work in the fall term following successful admission to the program. Students may choose to defer their admission for no more than two full semesters beyond the first fall semester of admission. Students choosing to defer admission must notify both the [PhD GPA](#) and the [Office of Graduate Admissions](#) of their decision to defer. Students offered financial assistance who choose to defer are not guaranteed funding in the future.

Prerequisites

Upon being admitted into the PhD program, students may be informed they are required to complete prerequisite courses. Such courses must be completed with a grade of B or better and will not count toward the 49 semester credit hours (87 hours of doctoral level course work and 12 hours of dissertation credit) required to complete the doctoral program. Prerequisites will be determined by the admissions committee based on a student's prior public administration coursework and professional experience. The prerequisites are as follows:

- f PADM 651 Introduction to Public Administration
- f PADM 671 Public Budgeting and Financial Management

Transfer Credits

Students may be able to transfer up to 6 credits earned outside of the PhD in Public Administration and Policy program to satisfy course credit requirements for the doctoral degree. Students may be eligible for the following:

- f transfer of credits earned as a non-degree graduate student at ODU, earned while pursuing a graduate certificate at ODU or earned through another program of study at ODU
- f transfer of credits earned at another accredited university that were not previously counted towards an earned degree
- f application of credits earned through Prior Learning Assessment credit

Contact the [PhD Program Manager](#) to discuss a potential transfer of credits. All transfer credits must be approved by the PhD GPA, SPS Director, and SCB Dean.

Nondegree Seeking Students

Prospective students

However, these students are not permitted to register for courses until all current (admitted) students are accommodated and are not permitted to register for any core Public Administration (PADM) courses (PADM 800, PADM 801, PADM 802, PADM 803, PADM 804, PADM 805, or PADM 806).

If a student is considering taking courses as a nondegree seeking student, they should note the limit for transfer credits earned as a nondegree student (see above section on Transfer Credits) and the SPS requirement that at least 23 of 37 course credits be applied to the program.

- f the quality and quantity of the student's work as a research or teaching assistant is deemed acceptable by the faculty member(s) to whom the student is assigned, PhD GPD
- f the student makes satisfactory progress toward completion of their dissertation (for students working on a dissertation)
- f the student does not hold other full- or part-time employment while receiving financial assistance, unless approved by the PhD GPD and SPS Chair

A student's assistantship or fellowship performance is evaluated once per year by the student's supervising faculty member and the PhD GPD. Any student whose work performance is deemed unsatisfactory may immediately be placed on a one semester probationary period by a majority vote of the SPS tenure-track faculty. If the student's performance is not rated to be satisfactory in all subsequent semesters, the student's funding will be discontinued, regardless of academic standing. In cases of egregious behavior, the faculty may discontinue a student's financial assistance immediately, regardless of previous ratings or performance.

Additional Requirements

Retention Standards

Students must maintain a minimum 3.00 grade point average (GPA) to remain in good standing in the Graduate School and PhD program. Students must also earn at least a B in each course. If a student receives less than a B in one course, they must repeat the course and receive a B or higher on the second attempt. Students may not receive a B more than one course and may never receive an F in any course. Funded students must maintain a minimum 3.20 GPA to retain their funding. See additional details on grade requirements and ramifications under "Retention Standards" in the [School of Public Service section of the Graduate Catalog](#) and under "Continuance" in the [Graduate Policies and Procedures section of the Graduate Catalog](#).

Electives(9 semester credit hours)

Students are encouraged to use electives to develop their area of research interest and expertise. Electives must be at the 600 level or above and may be taken outside of the SPS with the approval of the PhD GPD or the student's advisor. With the approval of the PhD GPD, students may also complete 3-credit hours of directed research (PADM 898) to fulfill an elective requirement.

Student Performance Review

Each PhD student undergoes a performance review by their advisor and/or the PhD GPD at the end of each academic year. In addition to certifying that the student is making satisfactory progress toward the degree (in compliance with the continuance and retention policies), the evaluation will include an examination of the following factors:

- f* professional integrity, professionalism, and ethical behavior, as reflected in the [American Society for Public Administration \(ASPA\) Code of Ethics](#)
- f* participation in socialization events
- f* collegiality and personal behavior
- f* non-academic performance (e.g., publication efforts, conference papers, participation in SPS and program events, etc.)
- f* capability and desire to pass comprehensive examinations and complete a dissertation in a timely fashion

If a student receives an unacceptable review, the student will be brought before the faculty to discuss their past performance as well as their future in the program. An integral part of this meeting would be to counsel the student. In lieu of an appearance, students may elect to write a letter of explanation to the faculty. The faculty will have the ability, by majority vote of the tenure-track faculty, to place the student on probation for one semester or to dismiss the student immediately, regardless of academic standing or time in the program. If the faculty chooses to place the student on probation and the student fails to meet faculty expectations by the end of the semester following this decision, the student will be automatically dismissed.

If a student improves but then receives a second unacceptable review, they will be automatically placed on a one-semester suspension from the program; if there is a third occurrence, the student will be automatically dismissed, regardless of their academic standing or time in the program. Students may appeal the faculty decision to the Dean of the Strome College of Business in accordance with the Retention Policy.

Socialization Requirement

An integral component of successful doctoral study is the socialization of the student into the discipline and the academy. This socialization process is critical to the long-term success of any PhD student, whether they seek a career in academia or elsewhere. All PhD students are required to attend at least seven (7) designated socialization events during their PhD program. These are non-credit events but no student will be certified for graduation until this requirement is met as determined by the PhD

Students have a maximum of three semesters (excluding summer) to submit the written exam following completion of coursework. The three-semester timeframe begins at the conclusion of the term where the student registered for their 37th credit hour. Students may submit as many drafts to the committee as deemed appropriate by the committee but can only submit one official written exam to the Test Administrator (by the end of the 3rd semester, excluding summer, following coursework completion).

For either the written or oral examination, more than one negative vote from the examining committee will result in a failure. A failed written examination must be retaken successfully within one (1) year. A student who passes the written examination on the first attempt need not repeat the written exam in the event of failing the oral exam. A failed oral exam, which also may be attempted a second time, must be retaken prior to the end of the next semester. The

Dissertation Process

The dissertation process involves the

Approval of the dissertation topic and the dissertation prospectus is not a pro forma activity, and the student is cautioned never to regard it as such. Students are strongly encouraged to work closely with their dissertation committee throughout this process; the key to a successful dissertation experience is excellent communication between the candidate and their committee.

Dissertation Prospectus Defense

With the permission of the student's dissertation committee, the committee chair will coordinate with the GPD to schedule an oral defense of the dissertation prospectus. The prospectus defense is open to all faculty, students, and interested members of the university community.

The candidate will present and defend the proposal for the dissertation, demonstrating the originality of the research, its contribution to the literature of the discipline, requisite literature review, and the methodology that will be used in conducting the research. The committee will judge the merits of the proposal (making necessary suggestions and/or additions) and approve the proposal in writing, providing copies to the PhD GPD. Faculty members not on the committee may also recommend changes to a prospectus, but final approval of the prospectus rests with the dissertation committee.

conducting the study, findings and conclusions revealed by the study, contributions the study is expected to offer. In this way, the candidate and examiners reach a more extensive insight into the candidate's research area.

All members of the dissertation committee must be present at the oral defense and must render a judgment on the candidate's performance. Majority approval by dissertation committee members constitutes successful completion of the defense of the dissertation. In case of failure, the dissertation committee may recommend that the candidate be dropped or be allowed re-examination no earlier than three months after the first examination.

Completion of PhD Requirements

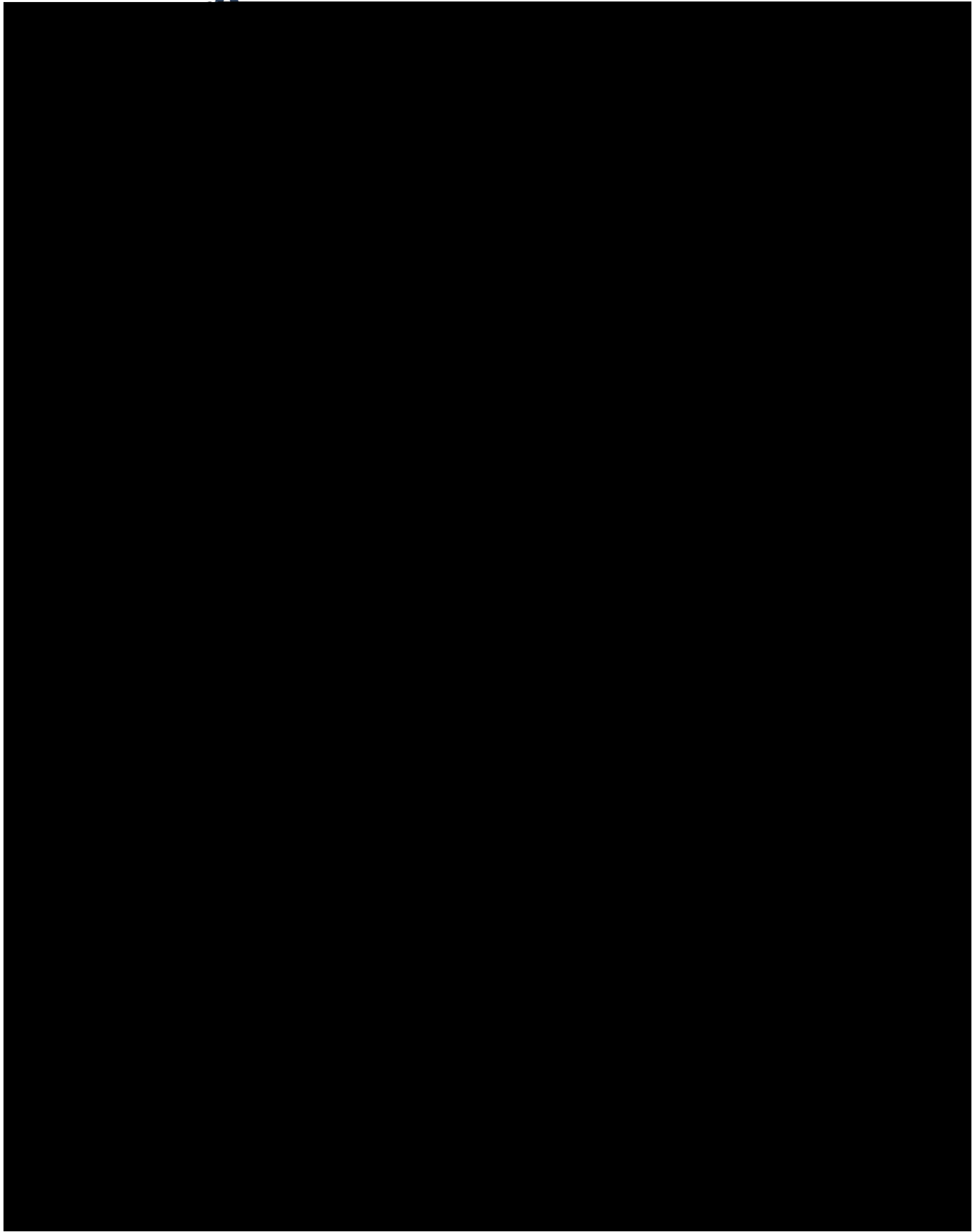
Satisfactory performance on the oral defense of the student's dissertation and adherence to the regulations outlined above complete the requirements for the PhD degree. [D5 Doctoral Dissertation Acceptance and Processing](#) form must be submitted to the [University Registrar](#) with the

Requirement/Milestone	Description	Form
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Other Resources

Counseling Services	https://www.odu.edu/counselingservices
Disability	https://www.odu.edu/life/diversity/problem/disabilites
Forms	https://www.odu.edu/graduateschool/forms [Doctoral Level Forms D] D1 - Appointment or Change of Doctoral Candidacy Examination Committee D2 - Appointment or Change of Doctoral Dissertation Committee D3 - Result of Doctoral Examination or Requirement D4 - Doctoral Candidates-Hour Full-Time Notification D5 - Doctoral Dissertation Acceptance and Processing D7 - Leave of Absence from Doctoral Program D9 - Advancement to Candidacy
Graduate Admissions Graduate Policies & Procedures	https://www.odu.edu/admission/graduate

Student Name:		UIN:	
<u>ADVISING FORM</u>			
Content Areas	PhD in Public Administration and Policy 49 credits [37		



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