Doctor of Philosophy in Geoscience Program Handbook

Welcome

The Doctor of Philosophy degree in Geoscience is designed to prepare students for demanding research-oriented careers in academia, government service, private consulting, and industry. Working closely with their advisor, students focus on original research in one of three emphasis areas: geology, hydrology, or soil science. Research expectations are high; students are expected to develop original lines of research that will lead to three or more original manuscripts that are suitable for submission to a refereed scientific journal. Students are expected to have strong content knowledge in their area of emphasis and three additional sub-disciplines of the geological sciences. Fundamental knowledge levels are tested first in a diagnostic interview that is used to guide coursework taken by the student, and then later in a comprehensive exam.

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information that is not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: valarie.burke@unlv.edu or GradAssociateDean@unlv.edu.

Department Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Faculty must hold either associate or full graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up-to-date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the Graduate Faculty status web page.

Program Information

Doctor of Philosophy in Geoscience

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Program Requirements

Program requirements regarding admission, coursework and culminating experience are found in the graduate catalog.

Graduate Program Administration

The Graduate Affairs Coordinator of the UNLV College of Sciences is a valuable contact for navigating graduate school and serves as a liaison with the Graduate College. The coordinator can help answer questions about forms and policies. The current Coordinator's contact information is available on the UNLV College of Sciences webpage. The Graduate Program in the Department of Geoscience is administered by the Graduate Coordinator who oversees student inquiries about graduate school in the Department and the admissions process, and guide students through the regulations of their graduate program in the Department at UNLV. The graduate coordinator is typically a Graduate Faculty member in the Department of Geoscience.

Graduate College Policies

The UNLV Graduate College sets forth policies and deadlines in the Graduate College Catalog, which governs all graduate students at UNLV. New graduate students will follow the edition of the Graduate Catalog current for their year of entrance to UNLV. With Department and Graduate College approval, the Graduate Catalog in effect during the semester in which degree requirements are completed may be used. In addition, the Department of Geoscience has developed the following guidelines, which are in some cases more rigorous and rigid than those of the Graduate College.

These guidelines were generated in order to establish a framework that will assure uniformly high standards throughout the Department and to permit the best possible education for Geoscience Ph.D. students. Each student is obligated to be aware of both sets of policies and to review them periodically so that they are followed to the best of each student's ability.

Please refer to Graduate College Policies for Leave of Absence.

Petitions for Departures from the Rules

The policies of both the Graduate College and of the Department are somewhat flexible and written appeals for exceptions maybe submitted for special cases in which extenuating circumstances occur. Petitions for exceptions must be approved in writing by the advisor, committee, Graduate Coordinator and Department Chair. The Appeal must also be approved by the College of Science and Graduate College Deans. Use the UNLV Graduate College Appeal Form available in Graduate Rebel Gateway. If the appeals are granted, the policies may be modified, but students should not and cannot rely on such a mechanism to circumvent the regulations. Questions regarding any of the policies can and should be addressed by the student's advisor, the Department Chair or the Department Graduate Coordinator. If the information provided by these sources within the Department is not satisfactory, M.S. students should make an appointment with either the Dean or Associate Dean of the Graduate College in order to have questions answered. Do not rely on hearsay information: see it in writing.

Useful Resources

Students are responsible for their own graduate education, and are expected to consult all relevant rules and regulations available at UNLV and in the Department of Geoscience. Below are some useful links that include policies and procedures relevant to Graduate School. As web addresses frequently change, the student should stay up to date with the most recent sites, and is responsible for contacting the relevant offices directly.

1. UNLV Graduate College
2. Grad Rebel Gateway
3. UNLV Department of Geoscience web page
4. College of Sciences
5. MyUNLV for course registration
6. Financial Aid and Scholarships
7. Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA)
8. Office of Student Conduct
9. Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS)

Admissions to the Geoscience Ph.D. program

The establishment of standards of admission to graduate programs at UNLV is largely the responsibility of the Graduate College. Therefore, Ph.D. students should refer to the appropriate general section in the Graduate Catalog, but also be cognizant of the introductory section to Geoscience. The Graduate College receives the credentials of applicants, and the Department recommends that an applicant either be denied admission or admitted with one of the following classifications: (l) Full Graduate Standing, (2) Graduate Provisional, (3) Conditional Admission, and (4) Non-Degree Seeking Student. For either of the first two classifications there maybe deficiencies listed or graduate course work specified. Transfer PhD students must defend a proposal and pass the comprehensive exams at UNLV.

Admission Requirements

Visit the Graduate Catalog for official Admissions requirements.

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The admissions recommendation from the Department of Geoscience is based, in part, on finding an advisor who has agreed to advise the applicant, and by meeting the Departmental guidelines for admission in a competitive process. Contact with potential advisors should be completed in advance of the admission deadline, and the application should mention the advisor's agreement to advise the student. The admissions recommendation made by the Department to the Graduate College maybe rejected if it is judged to conflict with Graduate College standards.

For a currently admitted graduate student to change from one department to another department or program, the student must submit a new application for admission, the required application fee, and all necessary credentials to the Graduate College.

Admission Contingencies

Conditional Admission is given when additional admission materials are needed. It is the student's responsibility to comply with the terms of admission. Admission contingencies vary with each student. The Department and Graduate College must receive all materials required at the time of matriculation no later than the end of the first semester. Progress toward completion of deficiencies noted at the time of matriculation should start in the first semester and be continuous until completed. Deficiencies must be completed as soon as possible.

International Students

The Office of International Student and Scholars (OISS) at UNLV provides expert help on navigating visa and other issues. International students in the Department of Geoscience should work closely with the OISS, their faculty advisor, and the Graduate Coordinator to ensure a smooth transition into UNLV Department of Geoscience graduate program.

Program Timeline

Upon Admission: Select Dissertation Advisor

New Ph.D. students generally enter the program after consultation with a faculty member who agrees to be the advisor. This person may remain the student's advisor, but the student or the advisor may elect to change this arrangement. Each student should talk to faculty members during the first semester to determine with whom they would like to work, and who wishes to supervise a specific student's research.

During a student's graduate study, the student or the advisor may choose to discontinue the relationship. Depending on the timing or cause for this change, the student may have to also change dissertation topics and resubmit a new dissertation proposal. In this case, the student needs to formally present the new proposal to their committee. Such changes are unusual, but do occur due to illness, sabbatical leave, or other problems. A change of advisor or any member of the committee must be approved by the Department as discussed earlier and submitted to the Graduate College for approval using the Change in Advisory Committee form. No changes may occur during the final semester of the Ph.D. program, except in case of unforeseen emergencies; a desire to graduate by a particular semester deadline does not constitute an emergency.

Prior To and During the First Semester

Prior to enrolling for the first semester, Ph.D. students must confer with the consenting advisor listed on their admission form that was chosen based on the student's statement of interest. During the meeting, it will be decided which courses should be taken during the first semester. These should include GEOL 701 and some of the deficiencies or graduate courses that may be listed on the admission form. Students admitted in spring must take GEOL 701 in their second semester. A Ph.D. student who earned a M.S. degree from the UNLV Geoscience Department is not required to retake GEOL 701. Before the end of the first semester, Ph.D. students must select an advisor who consents to supervise the research.

The doctoral advising committee should be established prior to the end of the 2nd semester. The Ph.D. student and the advisor need to identify additional committee members that will best augment the research requirements. Both breadth and related expertise need to be balanced. The doctoral advising committee will normally consist of the advisor (committee chair); two additional members from the graduate faculty of the Department of Geoscience; a fourth faculty member from UNLV Geoscience, a relevant discipline at UNLV or from outside the university; and a graduate faculty member from another department to serve as the Graduate College Representative. According to the Graduate College, "*The Graduate College Representative is a neutral, outside faculty member with approved appropriate level of graduate faculty status who participates on the committee to ensure that all graduate college policies are followed, to make sure that all milestones in the student's progression are met appropriately, and to witness rigor, quality, and fairness throughout the student's culminating experience and defense.*"

If the identified faculty members are willing to serve, the Appointment of Advisory Committee form initiated by the student in Grad Rebel Gateway will be routed to the faculty electronically for signature. Students must submit the Appointment of Advisory Committee form to the Graduate College before establishing the degree program. The name of

the advisor, committee members, and external member must be submitted to the Graduate College. The Graduate College must approve the Graduate College Representative suggested by the student and the advisor. The student should talk to this person and ask to what extent they wish to be involved in the student's program and progress. The Ph.D. student must not ignore this person during the years spent in the graduate program, or there maybe repercussions that delay completing the degree.

If a student anticipates consultation with departmental faculty or use of Department facilities to conduct research or for the preparation of a proposal, then they must enroll in dissertation credit hours reflecting the amount of faculty time and facility use. Before enrolling for dissertation credit hours, the student's advisor must be consulted to determine the amount and type of work to be completed and to determine the number of credits during the given semester. This should be viewed as a contract, and the advisor will judge each semester whether or not the stated work was completed. Such work will be a criterion used in the evaluation of satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress of a Ph.D. student.

During the 2nd Semester

Prior to the end of the second semester after admission to UNLV, Ph.D. students must (1) establish a doctoral advising committee; (2) identify a dissertation topic, (3) meet with the committee for the Diagnostic Interview (described below) to provide recommendations for the Degree Program; (4) submit to the Graduate College the Appointment of Advisory Committee form and the Plan of Study Part I and II forms. The Plan of Study Part II form cannot be submitted until Appointment of Faculty Advisor or Appointment of Advisory Committee form is submitted. Part II is downloaded from the Degrees Directory, completed by the student, and uploaded into the Grad Rebel Gateway Part I form.

The Appointment of Advisory Committee form must be submitted to the Graduate College not later than the last day of instruction of the 2nd semester of enrollment (see section on selecting an advisor and dissertation committee). After establishing a committee, the student will schedule a time to meet with all committee members for the diagnostic interview. The purpose of the Diagnostic Interview is to assist new Ph.D. students in identifying any curricular strengths and weakness and set up the degree program, and is described more fully below. The Geoscience Department requires that the Degree Program/Audit form be submitted shortly after the Diagnostic Interview and prior to the beginning of the third semester. Students may request a maximum of 15 graduate credits taken at UNLV (9 credits taken at other institutions) prior to admission be included in the graduate Degree Program, providing those credits were not used to fulfill undergraduate requirements and a grade of B (3.00) or higher was achieved.

During the 4th and 5th semesters

Before the end of the fourth semester, students should complete the Comprehensive Exam, and in the same or following semester complete the Proposal Defense Exam. Details of these examinations are provided in a subsequent section. The Graduate College requires that the exams be taken at least three weeks before the last day of instruction of the semester. Students will take the Comprehensive Examination the semester after the completion of all required course credits or before the end of the fourth semester, whichever comes first. Required course credits are those courses listed on the Plan of Study Part II form. The Plan of Study Part II form should not contain significantly more courses than needed to fulfill the minimum number of course credits required. Failure to take this exam prior to three weeks before the last day of instruction of the semester after completing all required course work or the end of the fifth semester (whichever comes first) can result in the separation of the student from the Ph.D. program.

During All Semesters Prior To the Final One

Students who hold Graduate Assistantships are required by the Graduate College to register for a minimum of 6 semester hours of credit each semester (see Graduate Catalog); the Department of Geoscience recommends that graduate assistants register for 9 credits, including dissertation credits, each semester. Graduate students who are working on the dissertation during their graduation semester must register for a minimum of 3 credits, provided they are not supported by graduate assistantship. However, if the student does not graduate in that semester, they may have to appeal for the Graduate College to add 3 credits and pay a late fee. Students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment while working on their degree.

Important information is available in the "Academic Policies" section of the Graduate Catalog. Students who are not registered for academic work within a calendar year are separated from our program and will need to reapply for admission to the Graduate College should they wish to continue. Exceptions to the above policy, as in the case of a request for a Leave of Absence, are made only in advance with the approval of the student's advisor, Department Chair (or delegate - typically the Graduate Coordinator), Academic Dean, and the Graduate Dean.

For Ph.D. students, annual committee meetings are required. Annual committee meetings keep the entire committee apprised of the student's progress, and provide a forum to discuss any potential changes in the plan. The Diagnostic Interview, Comprehensive Examination, and Proposal Defense Examination meetings can be counted as annual committee meetings. For Ph.D. students, satisfactory performance on comprehensive examinations is required. See the section on comprehensive examinations.

During the Final Semester

A Ph.D. student must (1) apply for graduation and pay fees prior to the deadline listed in the class schedule for each term; (2) allow at least three weeks for the committee to examine the dissertation during Fall and Spring semesters and more for summer defenses (see "Final Examination" section below), prior to scheduling the final examination (dissertations must be submitted to the committee no less than eight weeks prior to the last day of instruction in the term in which the student will graduate); (3) obtain a written statement from all committee members that they deem the written dissertation defendable: all members of the committee must be satisfied with the dissertation prior to scheduling the defense.; (4) schedule the final examination (defense) with the committee. See Graduate College website for more information; (5) deposit a copy of the defendable dissertation in the Department office at least one week prior to the exam, and notify the faculty of its presence and the date, time, and place of the exam; (6) pass the final examination no later than three weeks before the end of classes; (7) submit two unbound copies of the dissertation (one on high-quality paper) to the Department office staff; and (8) deposit two signed, unbound copies of the dissertation in the Graduate College two weeks before the end of classes.

Students who are graduating with a Ph.D. are encouraged to participate in the university commencement ceremony. However, you may not participate in commencement prior to completing all degree requirements.

Students are advised to determine these deadline dates, verify them, and mark them on a calendar. Students must be highly organized during their final semester. The most difficult deadlines for most Ph.D. students to meet are (1) the completion of a defendable draft of the dissertation and (2) the completion of the dissertation for deposition in the Graduate College. Students must remember that they are not working on this alone, and are relying on the efforts of five other very busy people: the committee. Therefore, students must discuss plans with the committee early. Read the guidance given above in the Dissertation section.

Description of Ph.D. Student Requirements

Diagnostic Interview

For Ph.D. students, a Diagnostic Interview must be conducted. The committee must be established prior to holding the Diagnostic Interview. The purpose of the Diagnostic interview is to assist the advising process for new Ph.D. students and to identify any of the student's curricular strengths and weakness. During this meeting, the student and the committee will determine which courses (Proposed Degree Program) the student needs to take in order to achieve success in the student's area of research interest and on the Comprehensive Examinations. The Diagnostic Interview should be scheduled with the committee before the end of the second semester in the program. Generally, the earlier this is done, the better. After the student and the committee have established the courses that a Ph.D. student will take, the student must file the Plan of Study I and II forms and submit to the Graduate College. The Plan of Study II form should not contain significantly more courses than needed to fulfill the minimum number of course credits required.

Ph.D. students must have a basic knowledge in three content fields within Geoscience. Knowledge in these areas will be tested during the Comprehensive Examination, so the Diagnostic Interview should take into account the student's background with regards to the areas that will be tested during the Comprehensive Exam. If the structure of a Ph.D. student's committee is not representative of three of these areas, then an additional faculty member must be present during the diagnostic interview to evaluate the student's basic knowledge in that field.

Ph.D. Degree Program

The Plan of Study Part II outlines the courses the student will complete for the Ph.D. degree and is posted on the UNLV Degrees Directory. The student, the advisor and the entire doctoral advising committee will design the degree program during the Diagnostic Interview. It is strongly suggested that Ph.D. students establish and submit the Plan of Study I & II forms be submitted to the Graduate College during their 2nd semester. It is required by the Graduate College that this be done prior to completing 16 credits of course work toward the degree (See Graduate Catalog on The Degree Program). The student may make minor changes in the Degree Program with advance approval from the Department and the

Graduate College. Plan of Study Part I and II cannot be submitted until Appointment of Faculty Advisor or Appointment of Advisory Committee form. Part II is downloaded from the Degrees Directory, completed by the student, and uploaded into the Grad Rebel Gateway Part I form. The Degree Program does not include deficiencies listed at the time of admissions, although a student must take those classes.

A minimum of 60 credits past the baccalaureate or bachelor's degree is required to earn a Ph.D. degree. Please see the Graduate Catalog for official program requirements. Students entering the Ph.D. program with an M.S. degree in geology or a related field will be awarded 24 credits toward the Ph.D. Credits taken at another institution will be considered for transfer; however, at least two-thirds of the minimum number of credits required for the degree, not including dissertation credits, must be taken at UNLV. Course selection is based on the student's research objectives and requirements for the Comprehensive Examination. The 60 credits required of those students entering the program with a B.S. degree must include 12 credits of GEOL 799 (Dissertation) and at least 12 course credits at the 700-level. The 36 credits required of those students entering the program with an M.S. degree must include 12 credits of GEOL 799 and at least 12 course credits at the 700-level. The Graduate College requires a minimum of 50 percent of the degree program semester hours are 700- level courses excluding thesis, dissertation, or professional/scholarly paper. In both cases, the 700-level courses must include GEOL 701 unless the student took this class previously at UNLV; remaining courses maybe at the 600- or 700-level. Although more course work and dissertation credits may be taken, only 12 credits of GEOL 799, and 48 course credits for those entering the program with a B.S. or 24 course credits for those entering the program with an M.S., will count towards the degree program.

Ph.D. students are encouraged to take courses from outside of Geoscience; however, a minimum of 15 credits must be in Geoscience (GEOL) courses. A maximum of 3 credits of Independent Study (GEOL 793) are permitted, except in special circumstances in which case permission from the doctoral advising committee, the department Graduate Coordinator and the Department Chair is required. We strongly recommend that students take at least one class outside their major area of emphasis within Geoscience and encourage Geoscience Ph.D. students to take graduate-level courses outside of the department.

Annual Committee Meetings

Ph.D. students must meet with their committees on an annual basis. Meetings with the committee for the diagnostic interview, proposal defense, comprehensive and final exams satisfy this requirement. It is strongly advised that if any modifications of proposed work are anticipated at other times during the year (particularly if these changes are major), that a committee meeting be scheduled at the first opportunity, without waiting for the annual meeting. By agreement of the full dissertation committee, the annual meeting may take place via electronic mail, where the student fully informs the committee of progress, and the committee has a chance to respond.

Dissertation Proposal

All Ph.D. students are required to write and defend a Dissertation Proposal, which outlines the scientific problem, hypotheses, and methods to be used. An NSF-style proposal with Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts is recommended. The selection of the research problem is the responsibility of the individual student, not that of the faculty member with whom the student desires to work. However, input from faculty member is required and students should consider selection of a dissertation topic a collaborative effort. Students are helped through the initial phases of the proposal in GEOL 701 and by working with their advisor. The proposal should be submitted to the student's advisor as early as possible, certainly before beginning the actual project. While taking GEOL 701 and working on their proposal, students should submit at least one draft of the proposal to their advisor.

The Ph.D. student should file the Advanced to Doctoral Candidacy form with the Graduate College after the proposal defense. The complete dissertation proposal must be submitted to the committee at least 2 weeks prior to the date of the Proposal Defense Exam. The entire advisory committee must agree that the proposal is defendable prior to scheduling the defense date. The committee may request as many rounds of revisions to the proposal as reasonably necessary prior to approving it as defendable. The student should ask the committee members if they prefer the proposal in digital or printed format; if printed, the document must also be printed in color if it contains color figures, table, or other items. Following the Proposal Defense Exam, the dissertation proposal will likely need to be revised based on committee concerns, comments, and suggestions arising from the proposal defense. The student must make the suggested proposal changes and submit the revised proposal to the committee. The revised version of the proposal must be approved by the entire committee. The revised version of the proposal is subject to an open review prior to receiving Department approval.

To satisfy this review requirement, the written and committee-approved dissertation proposal must be duplicated and deposited in the Department office for a two-week period excluding holidays and summer after passing the Proposal Defense Exam. The student must notify the Geoscience faculty in writing that the proposal has been deposited for their review. Any faculty member may notify the student's adviser in writing of any suggestions or why the faculty member does not believe the proposal should be approved. If a request for discussion is not received within two weeks, the proposal is automatically approved by the Department. If any individual's objection to a proposal cannot be satisfied through the committee, the objection must be brought before the graduate faculty of the Department.

The adviser and the advisory committee should assist students in writing concise proposals and should consider proposals carefully before endorsing them. The proposal must outline the problem(s) concisely and clearly, with a statement of the problem(s) or hypotheses to be addressed and the importance to the discipline, proposed methods of approach, and expected results or contribution to Geoscience. A dissertation proposal submitted by a Ph.D. student in the Department of Geoscience should normally include a 250-word abstract, and a main proposal body that clearly and concisely defines the problem to be solved and hypotheses to be tested. The text may include preliminary results from the student's, advisors, or others' work, but should not contain final data sets. A complete proposal will typically consist of 4000 to 7000 words in the main text (exclusive of Figure Legends, tables, and references cited). The text should be double spaced with standard margins, in a readable 10- or 12-point font (e.g., Times New Roman). The proposal should be sufficiently well documented with citations from pertinent literature to assure the faculty that the student is aware of the work of other investigators in the proposed and related fields. The references cited section should be in Geological Society of America Bulletin format (see guide for authors of GSAB at www.geosociety.org). It is recommended that students use an appropriate citation software package, like RefWorks, available for free through the UNLV Library website, or commercial software like EndNote. Typically, the bibliography of a complete proposal will include at least twenty citations, but fifty or more is common. All proposals must include a realistic budget and time schedule. The complete and revised Dissertation Proposal must be submitted to the Geoscience office with signed cover sheet after successfully passing the Proposal Exam

Suggested Format of Dissertation Proposal

1. Cover Sheet required, with approval signatures of all Advisory Committee Members (See Appendix 1 for an Example)
2. Abstract — 250 words.
3. Main proposal text:
    a. An introduction that places the topic to be studied a broad disciplinary framework, and identifies why the topic remains an outstanding problem and why it is of significance to the discipline.
    b. A background section or literature summary outlining the current state of knowledge relevant to the proposed research, including gaps in current understanding and outstanding problem(s) remaining to be solved.
    c. A clear statement of the hypothesis(es) to be investigated or geologic problem to be solved. Simply generating new data that does not solve a geologic problem is rarely enough to justify proposed work.
    d. A description of how the hypothesis(es) will be investigated or the geologic problem will be solved, including description of the methods to be used in the study.
    e. Expected outcomes
    f. Figures pertinent to the proposal, either in-line inside text boxes with legends, or after References cited.
4. References Cited
5. Estimated Budget

Work plan and estimated time schedule

Proposal Defense and Comprehensive Examinations

The Department of Geoscience requires the successful completion of two examinations for Ph.D. students prior to Advancement to Candidacy for the doctoral degree: the Comprehensive Examination and the Proposal Defense Examination. Students must be enrolled in the semester in which they take the exams. To schedule these examinations, the student will consult with the committee to establish mutually convenient times; plan far in advance as it may be difficult to find a mutually acceptable time among all members. The Comprehensive Exam will take place prior to the proposal defense. Typically, the Comprehensive Exam will take place prior to or during the fourth semester. The proposal defense exam will typically take place the semester following the Comprehensive Exam. This will ensure that the committee will have a good idea of the student's capabilities prior to completing a research proposal. The Graduate College requires a unanimous decision by the committee for the student to pass both exams. Students who fail to pass either the Proposal Defense or the Comprehensive Examination on the first attempt must successfully complete a second examination (as

specified by the doctoral advising committee) within the next six months in order to remain in the program. The basis of evaluation for the repeated exam should be at the same rigorous level as for the first exam. Students who were not successful in their first attempt for either the comprehensive exam and/or Dissertation Proposal defense will be placed on probation. Students who entered the program with a baccalaureate degree and who fail the second examination may be allowed to continue as a Master of Science student with the consent of the doctoral advising committee. Students who entered the program with a Master's degree who fail the examination a second time will be separated from the program. A student who has successfully passed both the Proposal Defense and Comprehensive Examinations will be admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree.

Comprehensive Examination and Content Topics

The Comprehensive Examination will be taken either the semester after all course work is completed or before the end of the fourth semester, whichever comes first. For the oral examinations, allow for a four-hour period, although the actual duration may be more or less. The format and content of the Comprehensive Examination will be determined by the student's doctoral examination committee. Ph.D. students must have a basic knowledge of Physical Geology and a comprehensive knowledge of three fields of Geoscience listed below. In addition, students must possess greater knowledge and understanding in their area(s) of specialization and related topics. The following non-inclusive list is provided as guidance in selecting fields within Geoscience for the Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam.

- Hydrogeology and hydrology
- Sedimentology and stratigraphy or paleontology
- Paleontology
- Quaternary geology
- Geomorphology and/or surficial processes
- Paleoclimatology
- Soil science
- Structural geology and tectonics
- Igneous and metamorphic petrology
- Geochemistry and/or geochronology
- Economic geology
- Planetary Science
- Geophysics
- Low temperature geochemistry
- Environmental science

The Comprehensive Examination can be taken either entirely as an oral examination or with both oral and written components. The decision of which of these options to take is decided by unanimous agreement by the student's doctoral advising committee. In the case of non-unanimous agreement, both the oral and written components will be given. The doctoral advising committee will administer the Comprehensive Exam. In cases where the advising committee lacks representation in the three discipline areas that will constitute the exam subject areas, substitution of other graduate faculty of the Geoscience Department may occur. The doctoral advising committee, in conference with the Graduate Coordinator shall decide upon any such substitution.

Proposal Defense Examination

The Proposal Defense Examination follows the Comprehensive Exam, and must be completed by the end of the fifth semester. However, it is recommended that full-time students take this exam during their fourth semester. The Graduate College requires that this exam be taken at least three weeks before the end of the semester. Part-time students should take this exam after completing 9 course credits and prior to completing 18 course credits but no later than the end of the sixth semester. The Proposal Defense Examination focuses on the dissertation proposal and the student's ability to perform the research. It includes a formal oral presentation of the student's dissertation proposal (about 25 minutes long), research to date, and questions by the dissertation advisory committee on the dissertation topic. After the committee agrees that the student has passed the Proposal Defense and have made all necessary revisions to the proposal, the committee will sign, and the student will submit, the Department Proposal Defense Form.

Advancement to Candidacy for the Doctoral Degree

A student who has successfully passed both the Proposal Defense and the Comprehensive Examinations will be admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. The Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy form must be submitted to the Graduate College to advance to candidacy. The semester/term of the advancement is recorded on the student's official UNLV transcript. The minimum stipend increases for doctoral GAs who have advanced to candidacy.

Dissertations

Format and Style

Students should download the Guide to Preparing & Submitting a Thesis or Dissertation manual from the Graduate College's web page prior to beginning writing. Each student must follow these guidelines to the letter regarding format or the dissertation will not be accepted by the Graduate College. Questions may be addressed to the student's adviser or the Thesis-Dissertation Director at the Graduate College. Ph.D. students should have extensive discussions with their advisors and possibly their committees before embarking on writing a dissertation; every advisor follows a different procedure depending on the project and the capabilities of the student. Remember that a dissertation need not be a long document. The format of the dissertation should include an introduction, a minimum of three manuscripts, and a conclusion. In order to defend, at least one manuscript should be accepted to a peer-reviewed scientific journal and the two other manuscripts should be ready to be submitted. The writing style of the dissertation should be equivalent to one in a professional peer-reviewed scientific journal. Recently published articles in disciplinary peer-reviewed international journals should be consulted for format, style, and length (e.g., Bulletin of the Geological Society of America, Journal of Hydrology, etc.); also, completed dissertations can be used as guides, but realize that they are of variable quality and may not always be up to the standards of a peer- reviewed publication. Also recall that the writing style of a scientific dissertation or article is not easily taught in classes; instead, emulation of published works is advised, and students should work closely with their advisor and committee to learn appropriate scientific writing style. Extensive reading of the current literature will assist students in their own writing. Further, keep in mind that most journals charge money for color figures; it is wise to consult your advisor and advisory committee, and read the journal guidelines to determine if your original figures should be created in black and white or color format.

The references cited section should be in Geological Society of America Bulletin format (see guide for authors of GSAB). Deviations from the GSAB reference format may be approved in advance by the Dissertation Committee, as for manuscripts to be submitted to peer- reviewed journals with a different reference format. As with the Dissertation Proposal, it is recommended that students use an appropriate citation software package, like RefWorks or EndNote, and some advisors may require such use. Keep in mind that conversion of reference formats between different journal styles is only easy while using such software, and significant time savings will result from their use.

Students writing a dissertation chapter that is a manuscript to be submitted to a journal for publication must have that chapter reviewed and approved by the dissertation committee prior to submitting the manuscript to the journal. Committee approval maybe contingent on required editing and revisions. Manuscripts that have been submitted to journals without committee approval may not be used to satisfy dissertation requirements. As for the dissertation in general, up to three weeks should also be provided to the committee to review each draft of a manuscript to be submitted to a journal. This chapter may be submitted to the committee either prior to or at the same time as the entire dissertation.

Timeline

For guidance, we suggest that students have a completed first draft of the text, figures and tables to the advisor no later than February 1st for May graduation, no later than March 1st for an August graduation, and no later than September 1st for a December graduation. A student's advisor may have read sections of text prior to those dates, but these deadlines are aimed at a completed draft. The advisor should have up to three weeks to read and comment on the student's work. Also, at this time, the Ph.D. student should advise committee members of progress so the committee can be aware that they may soon receive a draft of the dissertation. Committee members may outline their time constraints to the student (i.e. meetings, field trips, etc.). Students should be reminded that faculty members have other teaching, research, and service commitments, as well as other graduate students. Each student must be prepared to make numerous revisions quickly and return the revised drafts to the advisor until achieving a draft that the advisor deems acceptable to be distributed to the committee members. Remember that the advisor is provided up to three weeks to review each draft submitted.

Following the advisor's approval, the dissertation draft will be submitted to the Advisory Committee members, who have up to three weeks to review the dissertation, and who may request revisions. The Graduate College representative committee member may choose to see the first draft or perhaps only the defendable copy: ascertain their input and keep

them appraised as appropriate. If revisions are requested, the student should make the required changes and resubmit the dissertation to their committee members, who will have another up to three-week period to review the dissertation.

Faculty members should keep in mind that their review should be done in the most fair and expeditious manner possible, within reason, to help the student stay on a viable defense timeline, but that quality and rigor should not be sacrificed for expediency. The student should plan for at least one round of revisions before the dissertation is deemed defendable by all committee members, but in exceptional cases the dissertation maybe approved as-is for defense. Any suggested revisions should be discussed with the committee member and advisor. It is the obligation of the committee chair to reconcile differences of opinion with regard to content and organization of the dissertation. This is achieved most constructively through meetings of the candidate with the committee. Depending on the extent of comments and suggested edits, it may be helpful to propose a tentative defense date to all committee members to obtain a realistic view of their schedules. When the dissertation has been approved by the Advisory Committee, the Graduate College requires that the student announce a defense date at least two weeks prior to the examination through the Graduate College.

The timeline for this complete process maybe many weeks: each advisor's review may take up to three weeks, each Advisory Committee member's review may take up to three weeks and more than one round of revisions is possible, and a two-week period is required by the Graduate College to announce the defense after the dissertation is deemed defendable but prior to the defense date.

Once the committee has deemed a draft as defendable, the student must make any final changes and display the draft in the Department office for one week prior to the final examination. This displayed copy should be the nearly final version. The text should be free of grammatical and typographical errors, and figures and maps should be drafted and very near their final form, so that any person who wishes to read it before the exam can do so easily. While the dissertation is available for review in the office, the student should make final preparations for the final exam. However, to successfully pass the final exam, which includes a defense of the dissertation, a student should have been studying and preparing long before this point.

The exam must occur no later than three weeks before the end of classes in the semester in which the student wishes to graduate. The oral defense should not be scheduled during school holidays, weekends, or the summer unless all committee members agree in advance; the composition of the committee shall not be changed to facilitate scheduling during these periods. Graduate Faculty are typically not employed by the University in the summer months between the week after the end of Spring semester, and the week before the beginning of the Fall semester, and many are away at meetings or doing field and/or laboratory research to satisfy obligations for externally- funded grants.

Many of our Ph.D. students do not meet the deadlines for spring graduation. If a Ph.D. student applied for spring graduation and missed the deadlines, the student must reapply for August or December graduation and pay additional fees. The Graduate College requires that students must be registered for a minimum of three credits in the semester in which they will graduate. If a student anticipates not making a spring graduation, and if the entire committee approves, then the initial filing should be for an August graduation. Functionally, this change only gives an extra month to work on the dissertation. The student must discuss the expected schedule of events with the committee, and it must be approved by them. It is best if final exams for August graduation can be taken prior to the end of spring final exam period and a final draft of the dissertation is ready for the committee to sign shortly thereafter.

Preparing for the Final Examination

The regulations for the final examination, or oral defense, for Masters and Ph.D. candidates are discussed in the Graduate Catalog and should be read by every candidate. The Department adheres to the general guidelines of the Graduate College. To prepare for this examination, a student is advised to review all graduate course work, all details of the dissertation, and all current literature related to the dissertation and their field of interest. The committee will be examining to ascertain whether the student has developed a sufficient foundation with both depth in their research and breadth in Geoscience. The student may be called upon to extend one's knowledge beyond "what one knows" by testing the use of sound scientific reasoning, or the candidate may be asked to state an opinion regarding particular papers or theories to test whether the candidate possesses the ability to be critical of our science. A Ph.D. student should be in their most alert and educationally honed state to pass this final examination, which is only in part a dissertation defense.

Final Exam Protocol

In detail, the format of the final examination in Geoscience is as follows. During the time in which the final exam is scheduled, the candidate presents, in a professional manner, an oral summary of the dissertation stressing the major conclusions of the research. The presentation should be about 25 minutes in length and may not exceed 45 minutes. This presentation must be open to a public audience including non-graduate faculty, students, and interested people from the community. All members of the Advisory Committee must be present during the oral defense. Following the presentation, the public audience may ask questions related to the dissertation. During this time, the graduate faculty and particularly the examining committee should refrain from questioning the candidate. At the end of this brief discussion period, the public audience will be excused. As specified in the Graduate Catalog, the candidate will be fully examined with only graduate faculty members present unless the student's committee has unanimously approved the presence of other individuals. It is during this questioning period that the student must be able to defend the findings and methodology of the dissertation and to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of a broad field of study as well as a detailed understanding of a more limited field. After completion of the question-and-answer period, the student will be dismissed, and the examination committee will evaluate the student's performance with the advice and consultation of any other graduate faculty members that maybe present. As per Graduate Catalog policy, the advisory committee must unanimously pass the student. At the conclusion of the committee deliberation, the committee should discuss their conclusions with the student. Typically, the Advisory Committee chair emails the results of the defense with any requested revisions to the student after the final exam. Please note that the Culminating Experience Results form will not be signed by the Advisory Committee until the finalized thesis has been approved by the Advisory Committee. The finalized thesis includes addressing all the revisions requested by the Advisory Committee

If the committee votes unanimously to fail the student or the vote is not unanimous to pass, the student, in conjunction with their advisor, may request the committee to administer a second examination. If the student is not successful after the first attempt, they will be placed on academic probation. The student must wait at least three months before taking the second examination. The Department may require additional coursework, substantial reworking of the dissertation or whatever is believed necessary to prepare the student for the second examination. Per Catalog, if the student is not successful after the second attempt the student may be separated from the program.

After the Defense Examination

Upon passing the oral exam (which includes the defense of research), the Ph.D. candidate will need to make any final revisions in the dissertation based on the advisory committee's oral and written comments. These final revisions may be substantial. This revised document should be quickly prepared and presented with additional cover sheets to all committee members. The revised dissertation must be approved by the entire committee to ensure that the revisions were appropriately handled. After the entire committee approves of the revised Dissertation, the Culminating Experience Results form should be signed by all committee members, and submitted by the student to the Graduate College. After approval the student must also submit the final dissertation document to the Department and to the Graduate College. Remember that the committee's role is to ensure scientific quality and rigor commensurate with a Ph.D. degree, not to meet Graduate College or employment deadlines. In some cases (e.g. substantial and difficult revisions), student graduation may be delayed until the final document is deemed acceptable by all members of the committee. Students should thus plan accordingly and schedule a defense as early in a given semester as possible to avoid an intractable time crunch at the end of the semester.

After the student has passed the Final Examination, and made all of the requested revisions to the dissertation to the satisfaction of all Advisory Committee members, one copy of the dissertation, unbound and signed by all members of the examination committee, must be deposited in the Graduate College office in final form at least two weeks prior to the end of instruction within the term in which the student will graduate. The Graduate Dean must give permission for extension of this deadline in writing. The Department strongly recommends adhering to the deadline and only under exceptional circumstances will it support the request to the Dean. In addition, the Department requires a single unbound copy be submitted to the Department Chair or office staff when the document is submitted for the Chair's signature. This copy should be on high-quality paper. It will remain in the Department office for immediate use and photocopying. It is considered proper conduct to also give a bound copy to the advisor at this time. The Department usually pays the cost of binding departmental copies.

Application for Graduation

If a student applied for spring graduation and missed the deadlines, the student must reapply for August or December graduation and pau additional fees. If it is anticipated that a student will not finish in time for a spring graduation, then the initial filing should be for August. Functionally, this change only provides an extra month to work on the thesis. The

student must discuss the expected schedule of events with the committee, and they must approve it. It is best if final exams for fall graduation can be taken prior to the end of the spring final exam period and a final draft of the thesis is ready for the committee to sign shortly thereafter. Remember, the University does not employ faculty members during the summer, and many are away at meetings or doing field research on externally funded grants.

Students may not participate in Commencement prior to completing all degree requirements.

Annual Mandatory Individual Development Plan and Procedures

Each winter break and early spring term, graduate students are required to complete the Graduate Student Individual Development Plan (IDP) form. [Formerly known as the Student Annual Review]. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress, and it establishes reasonable goals for the year ahead.

Faculty Advisors/Graduate Coordinators have the option to provide feedback to each student's submitted IDP and provide acknowledgement that they have reviewed the IDP.

Reported student data is shared with students' graduate coordinators and advisors to foster opportunities for discussion about students' strengths and weaknesses, accomplishments and next requirements, and mentoring plans so that students know what they need to do in order to progress successfully through their programs in a timely manner.

Students who are graduating are also required to complete the form in order to record their achievements since the data are also used to track UNLV metrics related to the annual productivity of all students.

Additional Program Information

Financial Support

Financial support may be obtained from a variety of sources: (1) Assistantships granted by the Graduate College upon the recommendation of the Department, (2) Fellowships and Scholarships awarded by the Graduate College or UNLV, (3) Fellowships, Scholarships, and Assistantships sponsored by extra-university individuals and organizations that are awarded directly by the Department, Desert Research Institute (DRI) or other institution, (4) grants-in-aid of research awarded by both on-campus and off-campus organizations, (5) Research Assistantships provided to support funded research, and in rare cases (6) student can be admitted as self-funded. New students desiring financial support as a Teaching or Research Assistant must have applications on file in the Graduate College by December 1st but please check the specific deadlines on the Graduate College website for official dates in order to be considered for support during fall semester and students wishing to be supported in spring semester must have applications on file by October 1st of the preceding year. Continuing students who have already been granted financial support and desire to have their support renewed must notify the departmental Graduate Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the Ph.D. student to follow all guidelines related to their financial support.

Teaching Assistantships

The Graduate College allocates state-funded graduate assistantships to the colleges, which are then distributed to the departments. Because the Geoscience Department has a small number of these assistantships, positions are commonly used for Ph.D. students teaching in undergraduate laboratory sessions. Once students have applied for the assistantships, it is the responsibility of the Department to recommend to the Graduate College which applicants should receive available positions. The initial award of an assistantship does not assure the recipient of continuous support until a degree is attained. However, the Department attempts to continue support for initially funded Ph.D. students for four academic years under the conditions that a student performs duties satisfactorily, as determined by the student's academic advisor, dissertation committee, or T.A. supervisor (e.g., the GEOL 101 coordinator or class Professor), and maintains satisfactory academic progress, and as long as the department has positions and funds. The expected performance of Graduate Assistants is described subsequently. See the Graduate Catalog for additional guidelines on assistantships.

Fellowships

At present all UNLV fellowships available to Ph.D. students are awarded by the Graduate College and the UNLV President's Office. Applications are typically due in the Graduate College on December 1st each year for scholarships and fellowships in the following academic year. Students who receive these awards usually have a 3.5 minimum GPA, and strong letters of support from faculty. If awarded a fellowship, a student receives a full academic-year stipend and tuition

waiver, must enroll for at least 9 credit hours each semester of the Fellowship year, and must devote full time to academic studies. Additional guidelines for fellowships are listed under Scholarships in the Graduate Catalog and on the UNLV web pages. The Department currently awards the Faye and Jack Ross Family Fellowship to exceptional Ph.D. students.

Research Assistantships

Typically, these positions are funded by extra-university agencies, such as the National Science Foundation, through grant applications by Geoscience faculty members, but are administered through the Graduate College. The duties are controlled directly by the grantee, usually a graduate faculty member. The grantee and the Graduate Coordinator review graduate applicant files and the work of continuing students in the field of interest and select whom to award the positions. These positions carry the same rules and regulations as Teaching Assistantships, but the type of work required depends on the research project. The student is directly responsible to the grantee whether in the Department or at research units such as DRI. Students working as Research Assistants may be fortunate enough to work directly on their dissertation project but commonly may work on research not directly related to their dissertation. Because of the uncertainties of extra-university funding, Research Assistantships maybe granted on a semester-by-semester basis. See the Graduate Catalog for more guidelines.

Other Financial Support

Funding is available from a variety of other sources to supplement student income and to defray some of the costs of dissertation research and preparation. Students may apply for scholarships through the Graduate College. Students must submit the FAFSA form to Financial Services each year in order to be considered for these scholarships. The UNLV Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) awards grants-in-aid of research twice a year. Students must contact the organization directly. Additional forms of financial aid are listed in the Graduate Catalog.

Additional sources of funding — to which students may apply — include those from Sigma Xi, the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG), the Society of Sedimentary Geology (SEPM), and the Geological Society of America (GSA), all of which award grants-in-aid of student research in Geoscience. The student should independently seek information regarding these applications from on-line resources. Many of them require a short proposal regarding the project and deadlines occur throughout the year.

Scholarship money is also available within the Department. These awards are typically given to students in the earlier stages of their program (i.e. approximately initial 2-3 years for Ph.D. students) and are intended primarily to support fieldwork and data collection phases of research. Award of these scholarships is based on a balance of academic performance, research progress and financial need. Scholarships are designed to provide partial support; students are expected to also pursue other funding. To be eligible for one of these scholarships, a Ph.D. student must file a departmental application and have filed a FAFSA with financial services. Other requirements are spelled out on the application form. For questions related to scholarships communicate directly to the faculty chair of the committee. The deadline for applying is approximately November 6 for the following year.

Academic Policies

Graduate Student Responsibilities for Deadlines and Forms

The Department of Geoscience adheres to the academic policies outlined in the Graduate Catalog and each student should be thoroughly familiar with them. Further, students must adhere to the Department of Geoscience Ph.D. policies and guidelines as described in this document. It is the student's responsibility to be informed of and to meet all deadlines for forms and exams, and to fulfill all degree requirements. The Graduate College maintains an online Calendar containing relevant dates. Students will be dropped from the program and separated from the Graduate College if they fail to fulfill these requirements.

Adherence to Student Academic Misconduct Policy

A key policy that all graduate students in Geoscience must adhere to is the current Student Academic Misconduct policy available on the website of the Office of Student Conduct. Students must understand and accept the Student Academic Misconduct policy, and adhere to it at all times. This adherence includes in all drafts of the proposal and dissertation: there are no circumstances in which the student can waive adherence to this policy. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action, including and up to separation from the program, even if the infraction is claimed to have been unintentional. Students should also be aware that it is illegal in Nevada (NRS 200.650) to surreptitiously record

conversations without the full consent of others (e.g., Advisory Committee). No recordings shall be made of any advisory or committee, or other meetings as applicable, without the full consent of the involved parties.

Required and Expected Performance of Graduate Assistants

Details regarding Graduate Assistantships (Teaching and Research Assistantships) are outlined in the Graduate Website and the Graduate Assistant handbook and students are responsible for knowing the requirements and expectations. Graduate Assistants are required to begin work from one week prior to the start of fall classes through the end of fall semester final exam week, and from the day after the New Year's holiday through the end of spring semester final exam week. Graduate Assistants should expect to work on average 20 hours per week.

New Graduate Assistants are expected, as part of their contractual obligations, to attend all orientation events that pertain to them (the Graduate Program Coordinator will notify them in advance). These sessions are offered at the beginning of each fall semester. Also, helpful suggestions sometimes can be obtained through the GPSA. If a student is supported as a Teaching Assistant, they must keep in contact with the professor in charge of the assigned class and with the Graduate Program Coordinator of the Department who may assign additional tasks within the scope of the T.A. position. Research Assistants must contact the graduate faculty member in charge of funding the assistantship. Research Assistants are guided by the same rules and regulations as Teaching Assistants, and consequently they may be asked to perform departmental duties as well as research.

Graduate Assistants, in particular Teaching Assistants, are expected to act professionally while representing the Department of Geoscience and UNLV. Failure to act professionally could result in an unsatisfactory semester evaluation. Examples of professional behavior include arriving on time to all classes, teaching assignments, office hours, and other assigned duties, presenting a professional demeanor and appearance, professional use of NSHE facilities and resources, providing full attention to students, and meeting all contractual obligations. Please see Graduate Assistantship handbook on the Graduate College website.

Course Grades

Satisfactory progress includes maintaining a minimum of a 3.00 GPA in all graduate-level courses. One grade of B- is permitted in the courses listed on the Degree Program as long as the overall graduate GPA remains at or above 3.00. Receiving two grades of B- or one grade of C+ or lower will place a student on academic probation even if the GPA remains above 3.00. The student will be removed from probation when the C+ or one B- is replaced with a B or higher grade in that course, or in the case that the original course is not offered again, a new course approved by the Advisory Committee may be placed on the degree program with a course having a grade of B or better, providing the GPA remains above 3.00. Receiving two grades of C+ or lower during the period of Ph.D. study will be grounds for automatic separation of the student from the Ph.D. program after being placed on probation.

Any grade of incomplete received by a Ph.D. student must be completed within one semester or the student will be put on probation. If there are extenuating circumstances, an extension maybe received in writing from the Graduate Coordinator or the chair of the department, with approval of the Graduate College.

Student Progress Evaluations

Each student fills a semester progress report that is reviewed by their advisor after the end of each semester. The objective of these semester reports is to acknowledge significant honors and awards, recent research advances, and to convey to the student their overall progress as a graduate student and GA. Particular attention will be paid to milestones specified in the Graduate College and the Departmental policies. Any incomplete tasks/classes or unsatisfactory remarks must be addressed.

If a student is making unsatisfactory progress, the student may be put on probation and subsequently separated from the program. The problems or requirements stated in the letter to the student must be corrected or fulfilled during the first semester of probation. If they are not, or if there is further unsatisfactory progress during any subsequent semester, the student may either be placed on a second semester of probation, during which time the student is not eligible for an assistantship or scholarship from the department or university, or, at the discretion of the student's advisor and/or committee, the student may be requested to be separated from the program. In the former case, if at the end of the second semester of probation the student's progress remains unsatisfactory, then the student will be separated from the program.

If a student regards the faculty's decision or treatment as unjust, a request may be made of one's advisor, the department chair, or the Graduate Coordinator to call a meeting of the Geoscience graduate faculty. The student will present the case in writing to the faculty one week prior to the meeting and may choose to be present at the beginning of the meeting for discussion of the situation. The graduate faculty members will deliberate the case without the student being present and, within one week, render their decision in writing. If a student continues to reject the faculty's findings, an appeal may be submitted to the Graduate College. Additional guidelines on Probation and Separation can be found in the most recent version of the online Graduate Catalog.

Professional Code of Ethics

UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the graduate catalog. Geoscience students are expected to behave in a professional and ethical manner. In addition to Graduate Policy and the UNLV Student Code of Conduct, examples of Professional Codes of Ethics include those of the American Geophysical Union, the American Geosciences Institute, and the Geological Society of America (AGU, AGI, and GSA).

General Timeline

Although there is no single time frame for students seeking to complete a Ph.D., a typical doctoral student may spend four years (or more) completing the required coursework and research. Therefore, the departmental advisor for each student will strive to provide four academic years of support.

During this time the student must be a Teaching Assistant or instructor for at least one semester. The degree must be completed within six years (eight years if the Doctoral student does not have a Master's degree), or credit for course work completed will be lost. Our four-year limit on office space and Ph.D. student funding reflects this four-year program and may be extended only with special permission from the Department Chair, Graduate Coordinator, and the student's entire committee. Therefore, if a Ph.D. student is active in the department and is working on a dissertation, they should enroll in dissertation or dissertation research credit hours every semester following their first.

Also, all students (whether full time or part time) must be continuously enrolled in accordance with Graduate College guidelines, as outlined in "Academic Policies" section of the Graduate Catalog. If for some reason the student cannot actively participate in course work or dissertation research, or if the student is off-campus on an external Fellowship (e.g. a Fulbright Fellowship), then the student should complete a Leave of Absence form from the Graduate College. As stated in the Graduate Catalog, —during the leave of absence, the student should remain in contact with the Department. Please see the Graduate Catalog for Leave of Absence policies.

Before enrolling for dissertation credit hours, the student's advisor must be consulted to determine the amount and type of work to be completed for a specified number of credits during any given semester. This should be viewed as a contract, and each semester the advisor will judge whether the stated work was completed. If the work was either not completed or was of an unsatisfactory quality, then the student may be placed on probation.

General Timeline Summary Sample

Event	**Timing**	**Required Documentation (See in Grad Rebel Gateway)**
Select Advisor	First semester	Email documentation that resides with the advisor
Complete GEOL 701	Fall semester of 1st year	N/A
Select Doctoral Advising Committee	Before the end of the 2nd semester	Appointment of Advisory Committee Form
Diagnostic interview	Before the end of the 2nd semester	Plan of Study form
Comprehensive Exam	Before the end of the 4th semester	N/A
Proposal Defense Exam	Before the end of the 5th semester	Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy Form
Apply for graduation	Before the end of the 4th semester	Apply for graduation in MyUNLV (Student Center under the "Other Academics" drop-down menu).
Dissertation Defense	After approval of full Advisory Committee. Ideally during 8th semester	Culminating Experience Results
Annual Committee Meetings	Each year with full committee; scheduled by the student	Email documentation that resides with the advisor
IDP reports	Every year	Sent by graduate college
Semester progress report	Every semester	Sent by graduate coordinator

University Resources

Leadership and Professional Development Academy

The goal of the Professional Development Academy is to serve as a virtual resource providing support and many professional opportunities to UNLV graduate students. The Academy offers information about events and services such as graduate certificate programs, workshops, training sessions and career services. You can follow Academy activities via social media or look for regular updates on the website.

Academic Success Center

The goal of the Academic Success Center is to help students do well academically and complete they studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

Alumni Association

With an alumni base 140,000 strong, the UNLV Alumni Association offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

Commencement Office

Located in the UNLV Office of the Registrar, the commencement office is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College. It is the students' responsibility to ensure they apply for graduation on time and submit all required forms to the Graduate College. Questions regarding thesis/dissertation should be directed to the Graduate College Student Services Team and questions regarding required forms should be directed to the Graduate College RPC Team

Office of Diversity Initiatives

The vision of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV's diversity mission: to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The DRC is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

Office of International Student and Scholars

International Students and Scholars (ISS) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

Jean Nidetch Women's Center

The Jean Nidetch Women's Center is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

The Intersection
The Intersection is a one-stop resource for UNLV's highly diverse student body — a comprehensive multicultural center grounded in the academic life of our students. As an intersecting campus resource, the Intersection helps ensure students, particularly first-generation and students of color, successfully navigate their academic careers. Here, all members of campus can discuss their differences, discover their similarities, and build a shared sense of belonging.

UNLV Libraries
UNLV Libraries has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)
The Graduate & Professional Student Association serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141 and Gateway Building PDAC Room. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

Office of Student Conduct
The Office of Student Conduct is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the UNLV Student Code of Conduct by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

Military and Veteran Services Center
The Military and Veteran Service Center is staffed with veterans and veteran education benefits experienced staff to assist more than 1,800 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists attending UNLV. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office
The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

Writing Center
This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the Online Writing Lab (OWL) page.

University Policies and Procedures

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the Graduate Student Handbook, and following websites:

- Academic Integrity
- Activation for Military Service
- Change of Address
- FERPA/Privacy Rights

- Health Insurance - Mandatory
- Jean Clery Campus Safety and Security Report
- Proof of Immunization
- Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects
- Rebelmail Policy
- Student Conduct Code
- Student Computer Use Policy
- Title IX

UNLV does not discriminate in its employment practices or in its educational programs or activities, including admissions, on the basis of sex/gender pursuant to Title IX, or on the basis of any other legally protected category as is set forth in NSHE Handbook Title 4, Chapter 8, Section 13. Reports of discriminatory misconduct, questions regarding Title IX, and/or concerns about noncompliance with Title IX or any other anti-discrimination laws or policies should be directed to UNLV's Title IX Coordinator Michelle Sposito.

The Title IX Coordinator can be reached through the online reporting form at Title IX Reporting Form, by email at titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu, by phone at (702) 895-4055, by mail at 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Box 451062, Las Vegas, NV, 89154-1062, or in person at Frank and Estella Beam Hall (BEH), Room 555.

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the Graduate Student Handbook:

- Academic Calendar
- Academic Policies
- Admission and Registration Information
- Progression and Completion Policies (listed alphabetically)

In addition, the Graduate College website contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.

Handbook Information

Last revised	Revised by	Changes summary
April 2020	Ganqing Jiang	Update policies and information
March 9, 2021	Matthew Lachniet	Update Graduate Coordinator information
March 28, 2023	Arya Udry	Reorganization to GC Template and editing, faculty vote to approve unanimous

Appendix 1: Proposal Cover Sheet Example

Dissertation Proposal

Insert Title Line 1 Insert Title Line 2

Student Name

Previous earned degree, Institution, semester, year

Advisory Committee Dr. First name Last name (Chair) Dr. First name Last name (Member) Dr. First name Last name (Member) Dr. First name Last name (Member)
Dr. First name Last name (Graduate College Representative)