

# Concentrators' Guide

**Environmental Health**

2014 – 2015



**Boston University** School of Public Health

**Doctor of Philosophy**

## BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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### Boston University Policy Statement

Boston University and the Boston University School of Public Health reserve the right to change the policies, curricula, or any other matter in this handbook without prior notice. Students will be notified of major changes as soon as practicable after they are decided.

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**  
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Boston, MA 02118  
<http://www.bu.edu/sph/academics/departments/environmental-health/>



### **Welcome to the Department of Environmental Health!**

We have developed this guide to help you navigate the requirements of our PhD program and familiarize you with the opportunities and resources available to our students. In addition to this guide, you can also consult the BUSPH website, Bulletin, and Student Handbook to stay informed about departmental and school-wide policies and procedures.

As a student in our PhD program, you will have office space on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Talbot Building. This allows our students to sit in close proximity to each other and to the faculty members in the department, just one aspect of the collegial atmosphere in which faculty members are readily available to assist students.

We do not expect our entering doctoral students to know exactly what project they would like to serve as the basis for their dissertation research. Accordingly, our research rotation program is designed to assist students in the process of identifying a dissertation topic, providing an opportunity to not only gain experience on different projects but also in working with different faculty members. Recent research rotation opportunities are listed on our website and are updated each summer for the coming year.

You should have received your advisor assignment and have hopefully had the opportunity to meet and discuss your plan for your first semester. During your first two years, your advisor will help you select courses, help to select and arrange research rotations, and work with you to develop and refine your plans for a dissertation topic. Your current advisor was assigned based on your mutual research interests, but it is not uncommon for students to change advisors as dissertation plans develop.

As director of the PhD program, I am one of your primary resources during your time in our program. I am pleased that you have decided to join the graduate student community in the Department of Environmental Health at BUSPH and I look forward to working with you in the coming years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. D. McClean". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael D. McClean, ScD  
Doctoral Program Director  
Department of Environmental Health

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**QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE**

Please see the SPH Bulletin (<http://www.bu.edu/academics/bulletin/>) and the SPH Student Handbook (<http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/resources/student-handbook/>) for all resources available to SPH students.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Office &amp; Contact Info</b>
<b>Course Materials</b>	<p><b>Online:</b> Course information, assignments, and syllabi are often posted on a course webpage at <a href="http://learn.bu.edu">learn.bu.edu</a>. A BU email address and Kerberos password are required to access these websites.</p> <p><b>Course Readers and textbooks</b> are available for purchase through Barnes &amp; Noble bookstore located at 660 Beacon Street, Kenmore Square, Boston University Charles River Campus.</p>
<b>Career Services:</b> Career advising, resume reviews; alumni networking; job postings, career fair, employer info sessions	<p><b>Office of Career Services:</b> <a href="http://www.bu.edu/sph/careers/">http://www.bu.edu/sph/careers/</a> Talbot 113 Maria McCarthy, <a href="mailto:mamcc@bu.edu">mamcc@bu.edu</a>, 617-638-4602 Lauri Rich, <a href="mailto:lrich@bu.edu">lrich@bu.edu</a>, 617-414-1405 Lisa Toby, <a href="mailto:ltoby@bu.edu">ltoby@bu.edu</a>, 617-638-4675</p>
<b>Financial Assistance</b>	<p><b>Office of Student Financial Services:</b> <a href="http://www.bumc.bu.edu/osfs/osfs-sph@bumc.bu.edu">http://www.bumc.bu.edu/osfs/osfs-sph@bumc.bu.edu</a> 617-638-5130; 617-638-5115; or 877-776-6243</p> <p><b>Financing Your Education:</b> <a href="http://www.bu.edu/sph/admissions/financing-your-education/">http://www.bu.edu/sph/admissions/financing-your-education/</a></p>
<b>Housing:</b> Seeking a roommate	<p><b>Office of Housing Resources:</b> <a href="http://www.bumc.bu.edu/ohr/">http://www.bumc.bu.edu/ohr/</a></p>
<b>Library Resources:</b> Paper and online books and journals; reserve materials; Computer labs; research guides	<p><b>Alumni Medical Library:</b> <a href="http://medlib.bu.edu/">http://medlib.bu.edu/</a> L Building, 12th Floor 617-638-4232</p> <p>Boston University Library Network: <a href="http://www.bu.edu/library/">http://www.bu.edu/library/</a></p>
<b>Parking and Transportation:</b> Student T passes	<p><b>Office of Parking and Transportation Services:</b> <a href="http://www.bumc.bu.edu/parking/">http://www.bumc.bu.edu/parking/</a> 710 Albany Street 617-638-4915</p>
<b>Registration Information:</b> Graduation Applications; Concentration Change Form; Course Rotation Guide; Academic Policies; Transcripts	<p><b>Registrar's Office:</b> <a href="http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/resources/registrars-office/">http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/resources/registrars-office/</a> Talbot 2 Center Chris Paal, <a href="mailto:cpaal@bu.edu">cpaal@bu.edu</a>, 617-638-4963 or Andrea Tingue, <a href="mailto:atingue@bu.edu">atingue@bu.edu</a>, 617-638-5057</p> <p>Degree students register online at <a href="http://www.bu.edu/studentlink">http://www.bu.edu/studentlink</a> Unofficial transcripts available at <a href="http://www.bu.edu/studentlink">http://www.bu.edu/studentlink</a> Official transcripts available at <a href="http://www.bu.edu/reg/">http://www.bu.edu/reg/</a></p>
<b>Student Health Behavioral Medicine</b>	<p><b>Student Health Services:</b> <a href="http://www.bu.edu/shs/">http://www.bu.edu/shs/</a> 881 Commonwealth Avenue 617-353-3575</p>
<b>Student Services:</b> Student organizations; Academic accommodations; Orientation; Commencement; Student events	<p><b>Office of Student Services:</b> <a href="http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/">http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/</a> Talbot 2 East Mary Murphy-Phillips, <a href="mailto:mcmurph@bu.edu">mcmurph@bu.edu</a>, 617-638-5059, Chase Crossno, <a href="mailto:ccrossno@bu.edu">ccrossno@bu.edu</a>, 617-638-5006 or Brendan Hoey, <a href="mailto:brendan2@bu.edu">brendan2@bu.edu</a>, 617-638-5062</p>

## IMPORTANT DATES THROUGHOUT THE ACADEMIC YEAR

Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH), like other schools & programs on the Medical Campus, maintains its own academic calendar. It is important that students always refer to the BUSPH registration packets, academic calendar, and websites for SPH-specific information. That said SPH endeavors to align its schedule with the Charles River Campus schedule while still allowing for 15 class meetings for our four-credit courses.

### Academic Calendar and Course Schedules

Visit the Registrar's Office website to learn more about important dates on the academic calendar such as holidays and exam dates (<http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/resources/registrars-office/>). Also available on this page are course schedules, registration information, and more.

Doctoral Graduation Calendar			
Doctoral Candidates (DrPH/PhD)	September 25, 2014 Award	January 25, 2015 Award	May 18, 2015 Award
Graduation Application (submitted to the BUSPH Registrar)	June 30, 2014	October 31, 2014	February 13, 2015
Dissertation Abstract (submitted to the BUSPH Registrar, Doctoral Program Director and EH Curriculum Coordinator)	At least 30 days prior to Dissertation Defense	At least 30 days prior to Dissertation Defense	At least 30 days prior to Dissertation Defense
Last Date to hold Dissertation Defense	August 15, 2014	November 25, 2014	April 13, 2015
Deadline for Submission of Approved and Signed Dissertation**	September 11, 2014	December 16, 2014	May 1, 2015

**\*Dates are subject to change**

### School of Public Health Policy on Religious and Government Holidays

The School, in scheduling classes on religious or government holidays, intends that students observing these holidays be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe such holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet with their classes or for canceled classes to be rescheduled.

### Emergency Cancellation Information

In the event of an emergency or class cancellation, notices will be posted to the BUSPH student web site (<http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/>). Email messages will also be sent to faculty, staff and students in the event of closings. A message will also be posted to the BUSPH main telephone number: 617-638-4640. Instructors are required to reschedule cancelled classes. Students will be notified by the instructor of make-up dates for any cancelled classes.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Do not rely on information about the Charles River Campus or Boston University. The Boston University Medical Campus has different closing policies from the Charles River Campus. Obtain information specific to SPH from the above resources.

**Section****1**

## The Environmental Health PhD Program

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**OVERVIEW**

The doctoral program in environmental health, which leads to the PhD degree, provides students with specialized training and research experience in environmental and occupational epidemiology, exposure assessment, spatial epidemiology/GIS, risk assessment, and toxicology. Our program is one of a small number of academic units nationally that specializes in investigating exposure-related health outcomes in community settings. The training program provides knowledge, experience, and training in core disciplines to allow for critical thinking in research design, interpretation, and translation. Graduates of our doctoral program continue the department's tradition of rigorous, innovative, and socially engaged research as post-doctoral research fellows and faculty members at academic research institutions, as senior scientists at environmental consulting companies, and as senior scientists at regulatory health agencies.

This guide describes each of the major elements and requirements of the PhD program, the role of faculty advisors in helping students navigate requirements and make decisions, and the administrative requirements of the program. The program requirements described here apply to all students entering the program in Fall 2014 or later. Students who entered the program before that time are encouraged to follow the structure described here to the extent feasible, but have the option of adhering to the prior doctoral program guidelines, and should consult with their advisor and/or program director about how best to proceed.

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**COMPETENCIES**

Upon completing the PhD in environmental health, students will be able to:

- Communicate the basic characteristics of major chemical, physical and biological hazards and the properties that govern the hazards' behavior in the environment;
- Explain the scientific characteristics (e.g. route of exposure, dose response, mode of action) of major chemical, physical, and biological hazards that result in human health risk;
- Explain and analyze genetic, physiologic, and social factors that affect the susceptibility to adverse health outcomes following exposure to environmental hazards;
- Critically evaluate and interpret the hypothesis, experimental design, methods and results presented in a paper from a technical journal article in an environmental health discipline (toxicology, epidemiology, exposure assessment, environmental policy);
- Identify data gaps and formulate testable hypotheses about critical questions in environmental health (epidemiology, toxicology, exposure assessment, environmental policy);
- Design and implement data collection strategies and rigorous evaluations to test hypotheses using novel or current techniques;
- Analyze and interpret environmental health data;
- Identify appropriate intervention strategies for specific environmental health problems;
- Prepare scientific manuscripts for publication in peer reviewed journals in the field of environmental health; and
- Communicate scientific results at national and/or international conferences in the field of environmental health.

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## ADVISING

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Boston University offers its students an enormous array of intellectual opportunities and resources on both the Medical and Charles River Campuses. In addition to fulfilling the academic requirements, it is up to the student to make choices that best enhance their career preparation. To assist with these decisions, students will be assigned a faculty advisor upon accepting the School's offer of admission. The student advisor is available to discuss coursework, research rotations, career paths, and other issues relevant to student success; however, while the advisor can help the student make the most of their investment, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to meet administrative and academic requirements and deadlines.

In the EH PhD program, we recognize two distinct advising roles — the pre-dissertation advisor and the dissertation advisor. These two roles can be filled by the same faculty member or different faculty members, depending on which arrangement best serves the student's needs. These advisors are responsible to advise the student on all aspects of progress through the doctoral program.

The pre-dissertation advisor is assigned to each accepted applicant by the EH MS/Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Committee based on common research interests to ensure that formal advising is in place upon acceptance to the program. The pre-dissertation advisor meets with the student regularly, helping to select courses, arrange research rotations, and refine research interests.

The pre-dissertation advisor often continues as the dissertation advisor, though it is also acceptable for students to change advisors when research interests become more clearly defined and the student would be best served by such a change. Each student's dissertation advisor also serves as the chair of their dissertation committee. The dissertation advisor meets weekly with the student, providing scientific training and helping the student manage progress through the program.

If you have questions, concerns, or comments about the overall academic curriculum and policies of the concentration or the advising process, contact Michael McClean, Doctoral Program Director, at [mmcclean@bu.edu](mailto:mmcclean@bu.edu) or 617-638-7755.



## Section

## 2

## Course Requirements

Students begin coursework immediately upon entering the program. A student entering the program without prior graduate training must complete a minimum of 64 credits in graduate-level courses, as detailed below. A student entering the program with a related master's degree must complete a minimum of 32 credits in graduate-level courses, unless the incoming student has completed the MS degree in our department, in which case the student is required to take a minimum of 16 additional credits (since the MS is a 48 credit program). However, all students must still meet the specific common course requirements and track course requirements of the program, and complete all relevant coursework, as detailed below.

Students are required to achieve a minimum grade of B in all required courses—each course required in the common curriculum-- and maintain an overall GPA of 3.0.

The following pages provide a summary of the curriculum, which includes three categories of courses: the common curriculum, the track requirements, and electives. The *common curriculum* consists of eight courses that are required of all PhD students in the EH program. Most full-time students will complete these courses during the first year of study. Together these courses provide students with a foundation in the science and methods of environmental health, including the translation of science into policy. Students who have previously taken statistics are encouraged to take BS723 Introduction to Statistical Computing without first taking BS704 Introduction to Biostatistics. If a student does take BS704, this course will be counted as an elective in the PhD program.

The *track requirements* consist of required courses in one identified track, chosen by the student from among four possible tracks of study: environmental epidemiology, exposure and risk assessment, toxicology, or urban and community environmental health. A student may design an individualized set of track requirements if the student's desired program of study is not otherwise achievable. The student should consult with their advisor in developing the custom track, which must be approved in writing by the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee.

Finally, each student works with their advisor to identify *electives* to complete at least the minimum required credits, though occasionally the nature of the student's research interests require coursework beyond the minimum credits. Courses required in tracks other than the student's own may also be chosen as electives.

By taking four courses each fall and spring semester, many full-time students complete coursework within two academic years. However, in addition to these specific course requirements, the student is required to complete all courses determined to be relevant to the student's research interests. This requirement to complete all relevant coursework will sometimes mean that the student takes more than the minimum number of required credits.

**COURSEWORK FOR THE PHD PROGRAM IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

Required Courses in the Common Curriculum		Cr.	Semesters
EH710	Physiologic Principles for Public Health	4	Fall
EH717	Foundations of Environmental Health	3	Fall, Spring, Summer
EH725	Analytical Methods in Environmental Health	2	Fall
EH768	Introduction to Toxicology	4	Spring
EH804	Exposure Assessment	4	Spring
EH805	Environmental Health Science, Policy & Law	4	Alt. Springs, even years
EP713	Introduction to Epidemiology	3	Fall, Spring, Summer
BS723	Introduction to Statistical Computing	4	Fall, Spring, Summer

Students should plan to take EH717 Foundations of Environmental Health and EH725 Analytical Methods in Environmental Health their first Fall semester. These courses are complementary and are meant to be taken together.

Each student identifies one major field from the tracks below, in addition to two minor fields. A student should plan to take at least four courses beyond the introductory level in the major field and two courses beyond the introductory level in each minor field. These three areas serve as the basis for their qualifying exam. Students and advisors work together to select appropriate courses in each of the three content areas.

Additional Required Courses by Track		Cr	Semester
<b>Environmental Epidemiology</b>			
EH757	Environmental Epidemiology	4	Fall
EP813	Intermediate Epidemiology	4	Fall/Spring
BS852	Statistical Methods in Epidemiology	4	Fall/Spring
EP854	Advanced Epidemiology	4	Fall
<b>Exposure &amp; Risk Assessment</b>			
BS805	Interm. Statistical Computing & Applied Regression Analysis	4	Fall/Spring/Summer
BS857	Analysis of Correlated Data	4	Spring
EH811	GIS in Public Health – or –	4	Fall
EH840	Advanced and Emerging Topics in Toxicology	4	Fall
EH866	Risk Assessment Methods – or –	4	Spring
EH962	Directed Field Research in Exposure Assessment	4	Fall/Spring
<b>Toxicology</b>			
BS805	Interm. Statistical Computing & Applied Regression Analysis	4	Fall/Spring/Summer
EH840	Advanced and Emerging Topics in Toxicology	4	Fall
EH866	Risk Assessment Methods	4	Spring
<b>Urban &amp; Community Environmental Health</b>			
EH757	Environmental Epidemiology	4	Fall
EH800	Community-Based Methods in EH	4	Spring
EH811	GIS in Public Health – or –	4	Fall
EP775	Social Epidemiology	4	Spring
BS857	Analysis of Correlated Data – or –	4	Spring
SB818	Qualitative Research Methods	4	Fall/Spring

In addition to the courses listed below, students may also take courses from other tracks as elective courses.

Elective Courses		Cr	Semesters
SPH EH961	Directed Study in Immunotoxicology, Neurotoxicology, or Advanced Risk Assessment	4	Fall/Spring
SPH EH962	Directed Research in Immunotoxicology, Neurotoxicology, or Advanced Risk Assessment	4	Fall/Spring
SPH BS853	Generalized Linear Models with Applications	4	Spring
SPH EP755	Infectious Disease Epidemiology	4	Spring
SPH EP759	Reproductive Epidemiology	4	Spring
GMS BI751	Biochemistry and Cell Biology	6	Fall
GMS BN798	Functional Neuroanatomy in Neuropsychology	4	Fall
GMS BN821	Seminar in Neuroimaging	2	Var.
GMS MI713	Comprehensive Immunology	4	Fall
GMS MI715	Immunological Basis of Disease	Var. cr.	Spring
GRS MA751	Advanced Statistical Methods II	4	Spring

\*GMS and GRS courses require pre-approval from program director and course professor

In meeting the course requirements described above, these specific restrictions apply:

- No more than 8 credits can be in the form of directed studies.
- If the doctoral seminar is taken for credit (see below), credits earned for the seminar cannot be counted toward the credit requirement for the doctoral degree.
- With the exception of courses taken for the MS in the BUSPH Department of Environmental Health, courses counted towards a completed degree cannot be transferred for credit in the doctoral program.
- If taken prior to entering the doctoral program, the specific courses listed above will count towards the doctoral degree if the course was taken at Boston University not more than five years before entering the doctoral program.
- Students with prior graduate-level course experience may be eligible to transfer a maximum of 8 graduate level credits toward their degree. The course must be degree-related and cannot have been used for another degree program. The student seeking credit for such a course must submit a written petition to the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee.

Students who have completed all required coursework must register for EH980 Continuing Study in Environmental Health each Fall and Spring to maintain their status as registered full-time students (See Section 6).

**Section****3****Research Rotations and Training****RESEARCH ROTATIONS**

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Students are encouraged to become involved in research early in the program, while still taking courses. However, we do not expect our entering doctoral students to know exactly what project they would like to serve as the basis for their dissertation research. Accordingly, our research rotation program is designed to assist students in the process of identifying a dissertation topic, providing an opportunity to not only gain experience on different projects but also in working with different faculty members.

Specifically, during their first calendar year of study, students are required to participate in three research rotations with faculty members. Students work with their advisor to select rotations based on their research interests. A research rotation has three components:

- At the beginning of each rotation, the project leader provides the student with background reading material, such as copies of proposals and relevant papers.
- Students engage in research activities and participate in meetings of the research group, which typically occur weekly or biweekly. At these meetings, the details of projects are discussed, including progress, problems, and new directions or interpretations.
- At the end of each rotation, the student and the project leader write a short review and evaluation of the student's experience.

In some situations, research rotations are allowed to serve as the basis of a directed research course for which the student receives course credit. However, the student's advisor and the rotation mentor must approve such an arrangement. Before the start of each research rotation, the student must complete a "Research Rotation Proposal" form, obtain the necessary signatures, and pass the form into the EH Curriculum Coordinator.

For a complete list of updated EH doctoral research opportunities, please visit <http://www.bu.edu/sph/academics/departments/environmental-health/research/student-research-opportunities-in-environmental-health/>.

**RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAMS**

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Each doctoral student is required to complete two Boston University training programs: training in the responsible conduct of research, which consists of four training sessions; and training in the protection of human research subjects. These training programs should be completed as early as possible, preferably during the first year of study.

**DOCTORAL SEMINAR**

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All resident doctoral students are required to participate in the doctoral seminar, a weekly departmental seminar held during the fall and spring semesters, throughout their time in the program. This seminar series provides an opportunity for students to share ideas and research initiatives with fellow doctoral students and faculty, while gaining experience in making presentations to their professional peers.

Each doctoral student is required to give at least one presentation each year in the doctoral seminar (or at the annual research retreat) until he/she has completed the program. In preparing any seminar presentation, the doctoral student will work closely with their advisor in a structured process that includes at least one required practice presentation.

The doctoral seminar is offered as a one-credit course (EH914), but students are not required to register for the course. As noted above, seminar credits do not count toward the required number of credits for doctoral students.

### **PROSEMINAR**

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In proseminar, doctoral students meet every other week during the fall and spring semesters to receive additional training in aspects of research that are often under-addressed as components of their coursework (e.g., grant writing, strategies for preparing a manuscript, strategies for managing data, etc). The first session of each semester is typically an update from the Department Chair (Dr. Roberta White) who provides an overview of the latest activities/developments in the department and in the school as a whole. Subsequent sessions then alternate between a *topic session* and lunch with a guest speaker, following the speaker's presentation in doctoral seminar. The topic sessions are identified by the students, with oversight and input from the Doctoral Program Director (Dr. Michael McClean). The final session of each semester is used as a *student review session*, in which doctoral students provide feedback to the Doctoral Program Director to be used as a basis for program enhancements.

## Section

## 4

## Qualifying Exam

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To be eligible to defend his/her dissertation, students must pass the **qualifying exam**, which covers specified areas of study and consists of a written and an oral component.

**MAJOR AND MINOR FIELDS OF STUDY**

The qualifying exam evaluates the student's knowledge of core areas of environmental health, with particular emphasis on **one major and two minor fields**. These are areas in which the student has substantial preparation in the form of coursework and which are relevant to the student's likely dissertation topic. A student should plan to take at least four courses beyond the introductory level in the major field and two courses beyond the introductory level in each minor field.

The exam also evaluates the student's ability to synthesize information, organize thoughts, put those thoughts down on paper in a coherent fashion, to think on his/her feet, and handle the pressures of an oral presentation. Finally, preparation for the exam encourages synthetic, critical learning.

The following are examples of major or minor fields of study:

- environmental epidemiology, spatial epidemiology, social epidemiology
- urban health, environmental justice
- immunotoxicology, neurotoxicology, regulatory toxicology
- exposure assessment
- risk assessment
- occupational health
- biostatistics

Working with his/her advisor, a student may choose major and minor fields from this list or define one or more areas of study tailored to his/her interests. The student must provide a written proposal for such a custom areas of study, which must be approved by the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee.

**APPLICATION TO TAKE QUALIFYING EXAM**

After completing all required coursework, each student must submit an application to the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee for approval to take qualifying exams by the end of their fifth semester. The application includes identification of one major and two minor fields, a summary of all completed course work, and a draft dissertation proposal, which is prepared by the student in collaboration with their faculty mentor in a format analogous to an application for a Public Health Service grant (PHS398). The proposal must include a clear statement of the goal(s) of the research project, descriptions of the study design and analyses to be performed, and a brief presentation of how this project will contribute to a scientific understanding of the problem. Requiring that a draft dissertation proposal be completed prior to qualifying exams ensures that the trainee has a plan for proceeding with research and provides the faculty examiners with information about that plan so that the written and oral exams can be designed accordingly. If the application is approved by the EH

MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee then the student is allowed to schedule the exam; otherwise, the Committee communicates with the student's advisor regarding the additional steps required.

The student must also submit a "Request to Complete Qualifying Exam" form. The form is to be completed by the student and the Examination Committee and returned to the EH Curriculum Coordinator.

### **THE QUALIFYING EXAM**

The members of the qualifying examination committee are selected by the EH MS/Doctoral/ Post-Doctoral Committee and include three faculty members with expertise in the major and minor fields.

#### **Written component:**

Each student is assigned six published journal articles chosen by the examination committee, two papers in each of three topic areas. Students have one month to review the papers and related research. During the subsequent written examination, students are required to answer two of three analytic essay questions in each research training area based on the assigned papers. The written examination is administered by the Doctoral Program Director and is limited to 6 hours. Exceptions to the 6-hour time limit or other procedures will be made only for documented disabilities, and any such accommodations will follow the School-wide procedures already in place to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact Director of Student Services, Mary Murphy-Phillips at [mcmurph@bu.edu](mailto:mcmurph@bu.edu) or at 617-638-5059 for more information.

Committee members grade examinations and make one of three determinations: pass, conditional pass, or fail. The Doctoral Program Director communicates the results to the trainee within 3 days. In the event of a pass, the trainee is allowed to proceed with the oral exam. In the event of a conditional pass, the exam committee makes a recommendation to the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee that specifies additional remedial activities to be completed by the student before proceeding to the oral exam. In the event of a fail, the committee will suggest remedial activities and the student will work with their academic advisor to construct a written plan for proceeding. Students who fail the written component of the qualifying exam will be given one opportunity to retake that component of the exam.

#### **Oral component:**

At the start of the oral exam, students give a 20-minute oral presentation of their draft dissertation proposals. The examination committee asks questions related to the three chosen topic areas, topics raised in the papers assigned for the written examination, and/or topics relevant to the proposed dissertation research. The oral exam lasts as long as committee members feel is necessary for rigorous evaluation of the student's knowledge.

At the end of the oral examination, the committee immediately confers to evaluate the student's performance and recommends a pass, a conditional pass, or a fail. In the event of a pass, the student is allowed to form a dissertation committee and proceed with full-time dissertation research. In the event of a conditional pass, the exam committee makes a recommendation to the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee that specifies additional remedial activities to be completed by the student, at which time the student would be awarded a pass. In the event of a fail, the committee will suggest remedial activities and the student will work with their academic advisor to construct a written plan for proceeding. Students who fail the oral component of the qualifying exam will be given one opportunity to retake that component of the exam.

# Section 5

## Dissertation

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The student may begin working with faculty members on research at any time after starting the program.

### **DISSERTATION ADVISOR AND DISSERTATION COMMITTEE**

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Upon passing qualifying exams, the student works with their dissertation advisor to form a dissertation committee. The committee should consist of at least three faculty members, including the dissertation advisor who serves as committee chair. Additionally, at least one member must have an appointment in the Department of Environmental Health.

The doctoral student must submit a “Request to Form Dissertation Committee” form to the Doctoral Program Director naming the topic of the proposed research and listing the proposed dissertation committee, with a brief description of each proposed committee member. The Director will circulate the form to the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee, which must approve the dissertation committee before the doctoral student may formally begin work with the committee. If the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee raises concerns about the composition of the dissertation committee, the student will be asked to meet with the Committee to consider those concerns. After the form is completed and approved it should be returned to the EH Curriculum Coordinator.

The dissertation advisor meets weekly with the student, providing scientific training and helping the student manage his/her progress through the program. The student is expected to meet with the full dissertation committee at least once a semester. Committee members mentor the student in carrying out the research and writing papers, and help the student manage the timing of their progress through the program.

The student is required to form his/her dissertation committee no later than 6 months after passing the qualifying exam.

### **RESEARCH PROPOSAL(S)**

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The student is required to write a research proposal for his/her planned research. The research proposal serves important purposes: it obliges the student to clarify the conceptual basis of his/her work and state the research question(s) being addressed; it forces detailed planning of the work itself; it gives the student experience in the professional skill of proposal writing; and it serves as an agreement between the student and his/her committee about the research work to be done.

As described in the Section 4, a draft of the proposal is prepared in collaboration with the advisor prior to taking the qualifying exam. However, since a student does not form a dissertation committee until after passing the qualifying exam, the proposal must be reviewed and approved by the dissertation committee.

Each proposal must demonstrate to the student’s dissertation committee that the student understands how to do the research at hand and has a plan for accomplishing the work. Specifically, each research



proposal must include a section on the background and significance of the planned work; the research question(s) being addressed; the specific aims of the planned work; and a detailed description of the study design, the planned data collection (if any), and the planned data analysis. Finally, the proposal must articulate, to the satisfaction of the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee, why the proposed research falls within the domain of environmental health.

## **DISSERTATION**

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As noted above, the dissertation usually takes the form of three papers meeting current standards of publication in peer-reviewed journals (e.g., *Environmental Health Perspectives*, *Environmental Science & Technology*, *Journal of Exposure Analysis & Environmental Epidemiology*, *Journal of Occupational & Environmental Hygiene*, *Annals of Occupational Hygiene*, *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*, etc). The papers must be original work by the student; a review article does not meet this standard. Further, at least two of the three papers that make up a dissertation must be closely related, forming a body of work.

The student must be first author on at least two of the papers. It is acceptable for the student to be second author on one paper if, in the opinion of the dissertation committee, the student has made a substantial intellectual contribution to both the research and the writing of the paper.

In addition to the papers, the dissertation must include an abstract, an introduction, and a conclusion. The introduction should provide the background and significance of the research, integrate the three papers conceptually, and place the research in an environmental health framework. The conclusion should summarize and integrate the findings of the three papers, describe the limitations of the research, and indicate next steps for related research.

## **OUTSIDE READER**

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The dissertation committee selects an outside reader for the student's dissertation. The outside reader cannot be an author on any of the papers that make up the student's dissertation and is generally from outside the Boston University School of Public Health; however, an outside reader from within the Boston University School of Public Health may be allowed if approved by the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee.

The outside reader does not participate in the research itself, but rather reviews and comments on the dissertation, including the research approach and the work's relevance or contribution to the field. The outside review takes place after the dissertation has been completed and before the dissertation defense, allowing the student time to make revisions in response to the outside reader's comments. The outside reader also participates in the dissertation defense.

## **APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION**

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The completed dissertation—including abstract, introduction, and conclusion—must be submitted to and approved by the dissertation committee and the outside reader before the student can formally announce his/her defense. However, to accommodate the practical scheduling issues, the student is encouraged to schedule a tentative date for the dissertation defense prior to receiving these approvals.

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**DISSERTATION DEFENSE**

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The student must pass the defense within 7 years of starting the program (excluding formal leaves of absence). The dissertation defense can be formally scheduled only after:

- the student has passed the qualifying exam; and
- the completed dissertation has been submitted to and approved by the dissertation committee and outside reader.

The dissertation defense is a public event to which all faculty and doctoral students in the department are invited. The dissertation defense must be formally scheduled and the date publicly announced at least 2 weeks before the event. During this period, the dissertation is made available to members of the Department of Environmental Health.

At the defense, the student first presents his/her research for approximately 45 minutes to one hour. The dissertation advisor then invites questions—first from the dissertation committee and outside reader, and then from others. Anyone present may ask questions of the student, subject to the discretion of the chair. Following the defense, the thesis committee and the outside reader confer and must agree on final approval for granting of the doctoral degree. The doctoral student must complete an “Approval to Grant PhD in EH” form and return to the EH Curriculum Coordinator.

## Section

# 6

## Student Policies, Student Resources & the BUSPH Community

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All students must adhere to all Boston University School of Public Health academic policies, available at <http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/resources/policies/>; the University's Administrative Policies, available at <http://www.bu.edu/dos/policies/lifebook/>; and the policies listed in the School of Public Health Student Handbook, available at <http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/resources/student-handbook/>.

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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#### International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)

The ISSO provides professional expertise on immigration and employment issues to students, faculty, and staff at Boston University.

#### ISSO Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: 9:00AM - 5:00PM

Wednesday: 12:00PM - 5:00PM (closed every Wednesday morning until 12:00PM)

#### Contact Information:

888 Commonwealth Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

Boston, MA 02215

Phone: (617) 353-3565

Fax: (617) 358-1170

Email: [isso@bu.edu](mailto:isso@bu.edu)

Students who have any questions regarding their required registration or necessary documents for travel or study should contact the ISSO.

#### Maintaining Visa Status

To remain lawfully in the United States during their doctoral studies, international students must obey the laws regulating F-1 and J-1 visa status. These regulations include, but are not limited to, registering for a fulltime course of study (whether by taking 12 or more credits or via registering for Continuing Study during all fall and spring semesters), limiting travel outside the U.S. to no more than 5 months at a time, and maintaining a current and valid I-20. For a complete discussion of these requirements, please visit the ISSO website:

Students on an F-1 visa: <http://www.bu.edu/isso/students/current/f1/status/>

Students on a J-1 visa: <http://www.bu.edu/isso/students/current/j1/status/>

#### Completing the Dissertation

Regardless of when they participate in graduation ceremonies, international students officially complete their doctoral studies when they submit the final version of their dissertation and when Boston University certifies that they have successfully completed all degree requirements. Please note that all

students who will complete and submit their dissertation during the summer must be registered as continuing students during the summer semester to maintain lawful F-1 status. Otherwise, students must register in every fall and spring semester.

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## **GRADING STANDARDS, SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS, AND DISMISSAL**

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### **Grading Standards**

All SPH degree candidates must earn a minimum 3.0 GPA each semester to be in good academic standing and must have a minimum 3.0 GPA at SPH to graduate. Additionally, students in the PhD program in environmental health are required to achieve a minimum grade of B in all required courses—that is, in each course required in the common curriculum and each course required in the student's chosen track.

Please see the BUSPH Grading Policy at <http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/resources/policies/> for information on grade changes and incomplete grades.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Satisfactory academic progress will be assessed using the School of Public Health guidelines. More information on these guidelines can be found at the SPH Registrar's Office or Student Services. In addition, the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral committee may assess a student's progress at any time, and may place the student on warning or probation if, in its opinion, it is determined that the student has not made adequate progress toward meeting graduation requirements. This includes but is not limited to if he or she has not submitted an application to take qualifying exams (including a dissertation proposal) within three years of entering the program, or has not shown adequate progress on his/her dissertation in the last year as represented in the required Student Annual Evaluation Report.

A student on warning status will need to meet with the Doctoral Program Director and develop a learning plan for the next two semesters. The student must also meet with the Doctoral Program Director at least twice in the semester.

If a student is placed on probation, the Doctoral Program Director will send the student a letter specifying the reason(s) for probation, what is required to be removed from probation, and the deadline by which the requirement(s) must be met. After the student has fulfilled the relevant requirement(s), he/she must write a letter to the Doctoral Program Director that describes these steps. The Doctoral Program Director will respond in writing with a determination of whether the student has met the requirements and is removed from probationary status, has not met the requirements and will remain on probation or refer the matter to the SAP Committee for further action.

### **Dismissal**

A student who is on probation for not making adequate progress will be dismissed from the doctoral program if he/she does not demonstrate substantial progress during the specified probationary period, or does not meet the requirement(s) of probation by the deadline specified by the SAP Committee and/or the MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral committee.

A student who fails one of the qualifying examinations two times will be dismissed from the PhD program but may be eligible to be awarded the MS degree, provided that the degree requirements of that program have been met. Dismissal may also occur as a result of committing an act of academic dishonesty, as defined in the School's policy on Academic Dishonesty and is final.

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**REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

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All doctoral students at Boston University School of Public Health, regardless of citizenship or immigration status, must register each fall and spring semester during their doctoral program until they officially graduate.

**Continuing Study**

International students holding F-1 or J-1 non-immigrant status and who are in residence at Boston University must meet the requirements of their visa, in particular full-time enrollment. Full-time enrollment is achieved by registration for 12 or more credits of academic coursework, or by registration in Continuing Study with additional full-time certification (“Certified Full-time”) coding by the SPH Registrar. International students must check in at the Boston University International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) when they first arrive at Boston University and then complete “Semester Verification” in each subsequent semester to ensure that they remain in lawful status. Students who are not full-time by virtue of academic course load (12 credits or more) or who are not certified full time by enrolling in continuing study will be considered in violation of their immigration status. Students who violate their status are subject to the penalties prescribed in relevant immigration laws.

Students who are permanent residents or United States citizens must meet the requirements of their program and must register for either coursework or Continuing Study each fall and spring semester.

**Leaves of Absence**

A student may request a leave of absence of up to two semesters by writing a letter to the Doctoral Program Director and the BUSPH Registrar. Longer leaves of absence may be approved under compelling circumstances.

International students must have approval of ISSO to take a leave of absence and must work with ISSO when they are ready to return to their studies.

Students on leave of absence are not entitled to be advised officially by their advisers during a leave of absence, nor do they have library privileges. It has been possible for students on leave to maintain their ACS accounts.

**PROGRAM TIME LIMIT**

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The Boston University School of Public Health requires all doctoral students to complete their degree requirements within 7 years of entering the doctoral program. A typical program might consist of the following: one to two years for completing the course work, one year for passing the qualifying examination/s and submitting a dissertation proposal, and two years for researching and writing the dissertation. Any extensions of the overall time limit must be requested in writing to the Doctoral Program Director with documentation of the extraordinary circumstances creating the delay and a date by which the requirements will be met. The request must be reviewed and approved by the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee. A student who does not meet the time limits established by the program may be dismissed from the program without a degree.

**COURSE WAIVERS AND TRANSFER CREDIT**

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Some SPH students enter their degree program having completed previous coursework that might help them meet degree requirements. Students with prior graduate-level course experience may be eligible to transfer a maximum of 8 graduate level credits toward their degree. The course must be degree-related and cannot have been used for another degree program. Other students may have the opportunity to

explore coursework at other approved universities, including courses through the Boston Academic Consortium. Students must seek pre-approval before registering for courses for which they seek transfer credit. The course waiver and transfer credit policy is available at:

<http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/resources/policies/>.

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## **DISSERTATION ABSTRACT, DEFENSE, AND SUBMISSION**

### **Dissertation Abstract**

All doctoral students must submit a dissertation abstract of no more than 350 words to the BUSPH Registrar and the Doctoral Program Director when they apply to graduate. This abstract must be accompanied by the “Dissertation Abstract Submission Form,” which must be signed by the student’s first reader/committee chair to signify the committee’s approval of the abstract. The “Dissertation Abstract Submission Form” can be found in Appendix B of this guide. Both application and abstract must be received no later than 30 days prior to the dissertation defense date. (See form included in the Appendices.)

### **Dissertation Defense**

Dates included in the Doctoral Graduation Calendar represent the absolute deadlines (in each semester) for holding a dissertation. (Please see the “Doctoral Graduation Calendar” in the front of this guidebook.) When scheduling their dissertation defense, students should allow sufficient time for making any final revisions recommended by their doctoral dissertation committee prior to the absolute deadline for submitting the approved dissertation to the Mugar Memorial Library. The doctoral candidate and all dissertation committee members must participate in the dissertation defense on the selected defense date. Both the doctoral candidate and the dissertation committee chair must be available on the selected defense date to appear in person at the defense, which must be held on the BU Medical Campus. Other committee members should appear in person for the defense; however, if they cannot, they may make arrangements to participate remotely.

Students must notify the Doctoral Program Director and BUSPH Registrar of the dissertation defense date no later than 30 days prior to the defense. Within one week after the dissertation defense, the dissertation committee chair must send written notification of the outcome of the defense to the Doctoral Program Director.

### **Dissertation Submission**

Beginning in January 2014, all theses and dissertations will be submitted to the Mugar Library electronically. Please visit <http://www.bu.edu/library/guide/theses/> for a series of brief, informative videos that detail the submission process. A PDF guide is also available.

Conferment of the doctoral degree is contingent upon receipt of the dissertation final draft by the deadlines established by the Doctoral Graduation Calendar. Students must present the BUSPH Registrar with the “Dissertation Transmittal Approval” form, signed by the student’s first reader/committee chair, when the Registrar completes the dissertation transmittal paperwork. Failure to do so by the established deadline will require that the student submit a new graduation application and will defer the student’s graduation to the following semester.

Please note that, to be accepted by the Mugar Memorial Library, all doctoral dissertations must be formatted according to the guidelines described in the “Research Guide for Writers of Theses and Dissertations,” which is available at: <http://www.bu.edu/library/guide/theses/>.

Students with questions about formatting or the dissertation submission process should contact Brendan McDermott, Thesis and Dissertation Librarian at the Mugar Memorial Library, at [brendan@bu.edu](mailto:brendan@bu.edu) or Alan Hatton, Academic Program & Research Coordinator at [alhatton@bu.edu](mailto:alhatton@bu.edu).

## THE OFFICIAL DOCTORAL STUDENT RECORD

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The Official Doctoral Student Record is an extremely important set of documents that demonstrate the progress of the student through the doctoral program. All students will be responsible for understanding the contents of their own file and familiarizing themselves with the rules outlined below.

The Official Doctoral Student Record is available for inspection by the student and members of the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee. Initially, the file contains the student's name, the date of entry into the program, and the name of the assigned academic advisor. With a few exceptions, described below, it is the student's responsibility to make additions to the Official Doctoral Student Record and guarantee that the Doctoral Program Director has received the appropriate information. Additions may be made in person or by mail, fax, or email.

### Student Responsibilities

Students must submit the following information and materials to their Official Doctoral Student Record:

- All students are responsible for the timely completion of progress forms listed in Appendix A of this guide. Please see the EH Curriculum Coordinator for access to the forms.
- Notification of change of academic advisor, including the name of the new advisor and the date of the change; this change must be submitted to the EH Curriculum Coordinator.
- Copies of transcripts and other required documentation showing completion of the credit requirements;
- A copy of all qualifying examination documents;
- A letter identifying the members of and date of formation of the doctoral dissertation committee;
- A copy of all dissertation progress reports; and
- A copy of an announcement of the dissertation defense.

### Doctoral Program Director Responsibilities

The Doctoral Program Director maintains the following materials in all Official Doctoral Student Records:

- Qualifying examination committee's written approval of the passage of the qualifying examination/s;
- EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee's written approval of the proposed dissertation project;
- Dissertation committee chair's written approval indicating the dissertation committee's unanimous approval of the dissertation; and
- Any correspondence pertaining to potential or actual disapproval of the dissertation.

## COMMUNICATIONS

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All official communications from BUSPH will be sent to your BU email so please be sure to activate a BU email account as soon as possible after you accept admission to the program. You may elect to have this email forwarded to an alternative email account if you wish. You should regularly check and clean out your BU email so that the mailbox has sufficient space to accept messages.

There are several ways to stay in touch with faculty and other students and to be informed about events and opportunities in the EH concentration.

- **EH Listserv:** You should receive a message in the first week of the semester with upcoming events. If you do not, please contact the EH Curriculum Coordinator to be added to the EH PhD listserv.
- **Yammer:** Join the Environmental Health Concentrators Group and stay informed about EH events, opportunities, and news.

- **The EH website:** <http://www.bu.edu/sph/academics/departments/environmental-health/>

There are several ways to stay in touch with faculty and other students and to be informed about events and opportunities at BUSPH.

- **The SPH website:** <http://www.bu.edu/sph/>
- **EH Calendar:** <http://www.bu.edu/sph/academics/departments/environmental-health/environmental-health-calendar/>
- **The Student Handbook:** <http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/resources/student-handbook/> and also available in Student Services, Talbot 209 Center.
- **BUSPH Bulletin:** <http://www.bu.edu/academics/bulletin/>

## EVENTS

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Each month, BUSPH hosts several events designed to get students involved in the community and socialize with your fellow students. These opportunities include:

- **5 pm Socials:** Free food held in Chequer's in the L-building basement 3-4 times per semester.
- **Student Meetings with the Dean:** Open discussions and free food for students to discuss issues they find important with the Dean of BUSPH, Robert Meenan.



## Section

## 7

## Faculty

The Environmental Health Department faculty members are committed to their role of teacher and mentors inside and beyond the classroom. Their research brings depth and a real-life context to the classroom. Research in the Department of Environmental Health spans epidemiology, toxicology, urban environmental health, and public policy.

Bios for the full- and part-time faculty can be found under the Faculty & Staff Directory tab at <http://www.bu.edu/sph/faculty-staff/>.

Name	Title	Email
Boden, Les	Professor	<a href="mailto:lboden@bu.edu">lboden@bu.edu</a>
Fabian, Patricia	Research Assistant Professor	<a href="mailto:pfabian@bu.edu">pfabian@bu.edu</a>
Fidler, Anne	Associate Professor	<a href="mailto:afidler@bu.edu">afidler@bu.edu</a>
Heiger-Bernays, Wendy	Associate Professor	<a href="mailto:whb@bu.edu">whb@bu.edu</a>
Patricia Janulewicz	Assistant Professor	<a href="mailto:paj@bu.edu">paj@bu.edu</a>
Leibler, Jessica	Assistant Professor	<a href="mailto:jleibler@bu.edu">jleibler@bu.edu</a>
Levy, Jonathan	Professor and Associate Chair	<a href="mailto:jonlevy@bu.edu">jonlevy@bu.edu</a>
MacVarish, Kathleen	Clinical Assistant Professor	<a href="mailto:kmacvar@bu.edu">kmacvar@bu.edu</a>
McClellan, Michael	Associate Professor	<a href="mailto:mmcclellan@bu.edu">mmcclellan@bu.edu</a>
Ozonoff, David	Professor	<a href="mailto:dozonoff@bu.edu">dozonoff@bu.edu</a>
Peters, Junenette	Assistant Professor	<a href="mailto:petersj@bu.edu">petersj@bu.edu</a>
Scammell, Madeleine	Assistant Professor	<a href="mailto:mls@bu.edu">mls@bu.edu</a>
Schlezingner, Jennifer	Associate Professor	<a href="mailto:jschezi@bu.edu">jschezi@bu.edu</a>
Sherr, Dave	Professor	<a href="mailto:dsherr@bu.edu">dsherr@bu.edu</a>
Sullivan, Kimberly	Research Assistant Professor	<a href="mailto:tty@bu.edu">tty@bu.edu</a>
van Seventer, Jean	Associate Professor	<a href="mailto:jvsevent@bu.edu">jvsevent@bu.edu</a>
Webster, Tom	Professor	<a href="mailto:twebster@bu.edu">twebster@bu.edu</a>
White, Roberta	Professor & Chair	<a href="mailto:rwhite@bu.edu">rwhite@bu.edu</a>

### Adjunct Teaching Faculty

In addition to the faculty based at the School, BUSPH employs a number of experienced public health professionals from the community as adjunct faculty. These adjunct faculty members bring a wealth of information to the classroom as well as help build bridges between the communities that surround the Boston University Medical Campus.

Name	Affiliation	Email
Eugene Benson	Boston University	<a href="mailto:ebbenson@bu.edu">ebbenson@bu.edu</a>
Laura Orlando	RILES	<a href="mailto:orlando@riles.org">orlando@riles.org</a>
Donna Vorhees	Science Collaborative	<a href="mailto:dvorhees@bu.edu">dvorhees@bu.edu</a>



## Student Progress

The Environmental Health MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee consists of the Chair of the department, the Doctoral Program Director, and several at-large members and is involved in many aspects of the doctoral program, as detailed below.

Summarized here are key points from the preceding sections of these program guidelines, pertaining to (a) key prerequisites or linkages between elements of the program; and (b) critical milestones that must be achieved for the student to continue in the program.

(a) The following are key prerequisites that must be met during the course of the program:

- before taking the qualifying exam, the student must complete all relevant coursework, submit a written request to take the exam at least 2 months before he/she plans to do so, and gain the approval of the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee to take the exam;
- each proposal must be approved by the dissertation committee before the student begins data collection or data analysis (as appropriate);
- The dissertation defense can be formally scheduled only after the student has passed the qualifying exam, submitted the dissertation to the dissertation committee, and gained the dissertation committee's approval of the dissertation.

(b) If a student fails to meet any of the following milestones, he/she is normally disqualified from continuing in the doctoral program. The student must:

- take the qualifying exam within 6 months of completing all relevant coursework;
- pass the qualifying exam on the first or second try;
- if writing a single proposal, submit his/her proposal within 18 months after passing the qualifying exam; or, if writing two or three proposals, submit at least one proposal within 9 months after passing the qualifying exam and all proposals within 18 months after passing the qualifying exam;
- form a dissertation committee within 6 months after passing the qualifying exam;
- pass the dissertation defense within 7 years of starting the program.

If a student encounters a circumstance that makes it impossible or burdensome for him/her to meet one of these milestones, the student may submit a written petition to the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee requesting an extension.

For students entering the program in 2011 or later, exceptions to these guidelines may be made only with the prior written approval of the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee. If a student fails to meet any of these milestones, he/she is normally disqualified from continuing in the program.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION**

In addition to meeting the academic requirements of the doctoral program, the student must meet certain administrative requirements.

**Tracking students' progress**

The EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee will review each student's progress every six months. Each student is responsible for completing a series of progress forms and submitting them to the student's Advisor and to the Doctoral Program Director, or for seeing that the forms are completed and submitted by others (e.g., by members of the qualifying exam committee or dissertation committee). All completed forms must be submitted to the EH Curriculum Coordinator. The forms are:

- waiver of credits (as needed);
- summary of coursework (completed at the beginning of each semester with Advisor until coursework is completed);
- progress report (completed at the end of each fall and spring semester);
- research rotation proposal (completed before the start of each of three rotations);
- request to complete qualifying exam (submitted upon completion of coursework);
- request to form dissertation committee (submitted upon completion of the Qualifying exam);
- approval to grant PhD

**Training as researchers**

Each doctoral student is required to complete two Boston University training programs: training in the responsible conduct of research, which consists of four training sessions; and training in the protection of human research subjects. These training programs should be completed as early as possible, preferably during the first year of study.

**Experience in teaching**

Each doctoral student is required to work as a paid teaching assistant (TA) for at least one semester in a course at BUSPH.

**Residence requirement**

All doctoral students are required to spend a minimum of 6 semesters in residence during the course of their doctoral studies.

**Continuing student status**

After a student has completed the course requirements, he/she must maintain the status of full-time continuing student by paying for two credits each semester. This status is especially important for two groups of students: those whose student loan payments can be deferred while they are full-time students, and those with student visas that require them to be full-time students.

**Funding for doctoral studies**

Each student's funding situation is different, and the specifics of funding (including research project/training grant and duration of funding) are included in each student's acceptance letter. Faculty will assist students in identifying potential funding opportunities (e.g., from private foundations, STAR grants).

Continued funding is contingent upon the student's meeting the requirements of the program as described in this handbook. If the student's funding is jeopardized by his/her performance in the doctoral program, the EH MS/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Committee will send a letter to the student describing their concerns and will meet with the student and his/her advisor to determine what needs to be done in order for the student to maintain his/her funding.

**University requirements for the awarding of the PhD degree**

Boston University will not confer the PhD degree unless certain requirements are met, including submission of an electronic copy of the student's dissertation to the Boston University Mugar Library. The deadline for submission of the dissertation varies from year to year, but is typically at least one month before graduation.

The student is responsible to find out about, and meet, all University requirements for graduating with the PhD, as distinct from the departmental requirements described in these program guidelines.



## Dissertation Abstract Submission Form

## Dissertation Abstract Submission Form

This form must be submitted to the **Office of the Registrar, 715 Albany Street, Talbot Building, Room T210C**, and the **Doctoral Program Director, Michael McClean, 715 Albany Street, Talbot Building, Room T442W**, accompanied by one copy of the dissertation abstract (maximum of 350 words) and the Graduation Application, at least **30 days** in advance of the defense of the dissertation. The proper heading of the dissertation abstract must be printed at the top of the abstract. **Prior to submission, the abstract must have been read and approved by your dissertation committee chair/first reader.** Please type or print clearly.

_____ Name		_____ BUID
_____ Department	_____ Degree	_____ Date of Defense

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dissertation Title

I plan to graduate on \_\_\_\_\_. I have completed a graduation application.

### Dissertation Committee

First Reader:

_____ Name	_____ Department/Affiliation
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Second Reader:

_____ Name	_____ Department/Affiliation
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Third Reader:

_____ Name	_____ Department/Affiliation
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Fourth Reader:

_____ Name	_____ Department/Affiliation
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Additional Readers:

_____ Name	_____ Department/Affiliation
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_____ Name	_____ Department/Affiliation
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### Approval and Signatures

The undersigned verify that the enclosed dissertation abstract has been approved for publication and submission to the Office of the Registrar and the Doctoral Program Director. Any subsequent revisions to this abstract will require the immediate resubmission of these documents to the Office of the Registrar and the Doctoral Program Director.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Doctoral Degree Candidate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Dissertation Committee Chair/First Reader

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Graduation Checklist

An additional to the checklist below, please obtain a graduation checklist from the BUSPH Registrar's Office.

- ✓ There are graduation dates in September, January, and May of each year. To graduate on a specific date, **you must meet deadlines** – please see the BUSPH Registrar's Office for updated deadlines and graduation application forms (<http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/> - under the *Graduation* tab).
- ✓ The "Dissertation Abstract Submission" form must be approved and signed by your advisor and submitted to the Registrar's Office and the EH Curriculum Coordinator with your dissertation abstract (<350 words) 30 days before your defense date. This form can be found in Appendix B of the EH PhD Concentrators' Guide. Please ensure that the EH Curriculum Coordinator receives a copy for your official student file.
- ✓ A copy of your dissertation must be submitted to your outside reader at least 3 weeks before your defense date. Another copy of your dissertation should be made available to the Department at least 2 weeks before your defense date. This Department copy does not need to meet the Mugar Memorial Library specifications.
- ✓ You must successfully defend your dissertation by the deadline associated with your target graduation date (see the BUSPH Registrar's Office for updated deadlines: <http://www.bu.edu/sph/students/> - under the *Graduation* tab).
  - You must complete an "Approval to Grant PhD in EH" form following the defense and ensure that the EH Curriculum Coordinator receives a copy for your official student file.
- ✓ Ask the Doctoral Program Director to confirm the defense outcome with the BUSPH Registrar's Office.
- ✓ Pick up a Mugar Library transmittal form from SPH Registrar's Office after the Doctoral Program Director has confirmed a successful defense.
- ✓ You must complete and print the signature page from the preliminary pages of your dissertation (directions and example of the preliminary pages can be obtained from Brendan McDermott, contact info below). The signature page must be signed by your dissertation committee and outside reader after your defense.
- ✓ Please work with Brendan McDermott regarding dissertation formatting and submission to Mugar Memorial Library. The dissertation publication guidelines can be found here: <http://www.bu.edu/library/guide/theses/>.
- ✓ **Dissertations must be submitted to the Mugar Memorial Library before the end of April to walk in May.** Please check with Brendan McDermott regarding specific deadlines. Beginning in January 2014,

all dissertations will be submitted to the Mugar Library electronically. Please visit <http://www.bu.edu/library/guide/theses/> for a series of brief, informative videos that detail the submission process. A PDF guide is also available. If you have questions please contact Alan Hatton ([alhatton@bu.edu](mailto:alhatton@bu.edu)) at the BUSPH Research Office.

**Important Contacts:**

General info & questions	Michael McClean EH Doctoral Program Director	<a href="mailto:mmcclean@bu.edu">mmcclean@bu.edu</a> 617-638-7755
Registrar's Office	Christine Paal BUSPH Registrar	<a href="mailto:cpaal@bu.edu">cpaal@bu.edu</a> 617-638-4963
Mugar Memorial Library	Brendan McDermott Thesis/Dissertation Coordinator	<a href="mailto:brendan@bu.edu">brendan@bu.edu</a> 617-353-9387