

Doctoral Student Handbook

Prepared for

Graduate Faculty and Doctoral Students

Compiled by

**Texas A&M University-Commerce
Office of Graduate Studies & Research**

In Cooperation with the Graduate Faculty and Doctoral Students

Revised November 2005

CONGRATULATIONS!

Welcome to the Doctoral Degree program at Texas A&M University-Commerce! As you progress through your program, you will become aware that numerous rules and procedures must be followed for you to be successful in your doctoral program. This handbook is designed to assist you in meeting all of the requirements and deadlines, from the time of admission until your graduation.

Included in this handbook is a doctoral program check-list. Timelines and progression through the program are identified for easy reference. Dissertation Submission Guide and sample forms are also included. Please check the Graduate Studies and Research web page for the current/latest version of all guides and forms.

Departments have the right, and may exercise that right, to have program requirements higher than those set by the Graduate School. In no case, however, can a department set criteria lower than the Graduate School minimums. Please consult your advisor, departmental student handbook, or written guidelines for your department-specific requirements.

Doctoral students who have full admission to the doctoral degree program may be eligible for several forms of financial aid. These include the Texas Public Education Grant, College Work-Study, on-campus employment and several loan programs. For information and application forms contact the Office of Financial Aid, Commerce, Texas 75429; (903) 886 5096.

A&M-Commerce Department of Housing can accommodate more than 2,400 single students and families in campus housing. Accommodation costs are reasonable, and the facilities are varied to meet a number of different life style alternatives. The Department of Housing is located on the first floor of Whitley Hall (903) 886-5797.

We are delighted that you have chosen Texas A & M University–Commerce for your graduate studies and will work with you to ensure your success. Please be aware that this handbook is subject to change. The most current handbook is available online. If you have questions or concerns that are not answered in this handbook, please feel free to contact the Doctoral Degree Coordinator (903/886-5161 or natalie_henderson@tamu-commerce.edu).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Doctoral Program Checklist	4
Purpose of the Doctoral Program	8
Doctoral Degrees Awarded at A&M-Commerce	8
Doctoral Degree Requirements	8
1. Degree Plan	8
2. Course Requirements	8
3. Transfer of Credit	10
4. Correspondence Course	10
5. Individual Studies	10
6. Grades	10
7. Academic Probation/Suspension from Degree Program	11
8. Residency	11
9. Doctoral Tuition and Fees	12
10. Research Tools	12
11. Qualifying Examination	13
12. Admission to Candidacy for Doctoral Degree	13
13. Time Limitations for Degree	14
14. Dissertation	14
15. Catalog Privileges	16
16. Filing for Graduation	16
17. Commencement	16
18. Graduate Assistantship	16

APPENDICES

Guide for the Submission and Preparation of the Dissertation	21
Sample Forms	
Institutional Review Board Instructions for Research Protocols	28
Doctoral Comprehensive Exam	37
Schedule Presentation of the Dissertation Proposal	38
Schedule Presentation of the Dissertation Defense	39

DOCTORAL PROGRAM CHECK-LIST:

- ❑ **MEET MAJOR ADVISER:** Shortly after acceptance into the program, meet with your assigned adviser to develop a degree plan.
- ❑ **FILE DEGREE PLAN:** Immediately after the degree plan is completed with appropriate signatures, submit it to the Office of Graduate Studies & Research for final approval. It will be processed and an official copy will be sent to you.
- ❑ **RESIDENCY:** As soon as possible after admission, declare and complete residency. Residency requirements are listed in the *Graduate Catalog* under your major department and must be completed prior to candidacy. Secure the Residency Declaration form from your department.
- ❑ **MEET RESEARCH TOOLS REQUIREMENT:** Must be completed prior to taking comprehensive exams.
- ❑ **SCHEDULE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS:** Schedule your comprehensive exams after you have completed your research tools requirement and a majority of your course work. The examination must be taken and passed a minimum of eight months before the degree is conferred. Comprehensive exam forms are available online, <http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/infofiles/docform.htm>.
- ❑ **MAKE DECISION REGARDING UTILIZATION OF COMPUTER DURING COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS:** At least two weeks prior to writing comps notify the departmental secretary if you intend to use a computer, in order for arrangements to be made.
- ❑ **SUBMIT DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION FORM:** Submit form to the Office of Graduate Studies & Research upon successful completion of the comprehensive examination (written and oral).
- ❑ **OBTAIN ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY STATUS:** After the comprehensive exams are passed and all requirements are met, the Office of Graduate Studies & Research will send a Notification of Admission to Candidacy Form.
- ❑ **SELECT DOCTORAL ADVISORY/DISSERTATION COMMITTEE:** This committee will consist of a minimum of three faculty members, which must include your minor adviser, if you have a minor. At least one committee member must be from outside your major department.

- ❑ **ENROLL IN 718:** You are required to enroll in at least three hours of 718 each fall and spring semester until the dissertation is completed and approved. Enrollment during the summer term is not required unless you are utilizing the counsel of your major adviser and/or University facilities.
- ❑ **DEVELOP DISSERTATION PROPOSAL:** Develop your dissertation proposal in collaboration with Doctoral Advisory Committee.
- ❑ **PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS:** Complete a copy of the Protection of Human Subjects form for approval by the University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This should be submitted and approved by the IRB before you defend your proposal.
- ❑ **SCHEDULE PROPOSAL DEFENSE WITH THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES & RESEARCH:** Obtain and schedule the dissertation proposal defense with the Office of Graduate Studies & Research by completing the Schedule for the Presentation of Dissertation Proposal form. This must be completed prior to the 25th of the month preceding the month during which the proposal will be presented. This schedule form is available online, <http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/infofiles/docform.htm>.
- ❑ **DISTRIBUTION OF FINAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL:** A copy of your proposal including a signed copy of the IRB protocol approval must be distributed to the committee members and dean of your college at least two weeks prior to the proposal date. English majors do not distribute proposal to dean.
- ❑ **REPORT OUTCOME OF PROPOSAL DEFENSE:** Immediately after the proposal defense, report the outcome of the defense on the Office of Graduate Studies & Research Dissertation Proposal Form. Submit this form and a copy of your final proposal to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.
- ❑ **COMPLETE DISSERTATION:** You are expected to make progress toward the completion of your dissertation each semester. All degree requirements beyond the master's must be completed within ten calendar years from the date of admission to the doctoral program.
- ❑ **DISTRIBUTION OF COPY OF FINAL DEFENSE:** Ensure that committee members and your college dean have received all chapters of your dissertation two weeks prior to your defense. English majors do not distribute dissertation to college dean.

- ❑ **SCHEDULE DISSERTATION DEFENSE:** Submit the Schedule for the Presentation of Final Examination/Defense to the Office of Graduate Studies & Research by the 25th of the month preceding the month of defense. This schedule is available online, <http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/infofiles/docform.htm>.
- ❑ **DEFEND THE DISSERTATION:** Defend the dissertation at the scheduled time. Obtain signatures of the committee members, the Department Head and your college Dean on the Final Examination Report (the Office of Graduate Studies & Research will forward to you and your doctoral advising committee chair prior to the dissertation defense).
- ❑ **SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW WITH DEAN OF THE COLLEGE & SUBMIT DISSERTATION:** Immediately following dissertation defense meet with the Dean of the College to obtain his/her signature on the Final Examination/Dissertation Defense Report. English majors are not required to meet with the dean, but are required to obtain the dean's signature. Submit the signed forms and a copy of the dissertation in final form to the Office of Graduate Studies & Research.
- ❑ **SUBMIT DISSERTATION FOR REVIEW:** Submit one copy of your dissertation and all signed forms to the Office of Graduate Studies & Research by the deadline stated in the Schedule of Class (approximately six weeks before commencement.) The dissertation will be reviewed and you will be contacted by the doctoral degree coordinator regarding any changes to the dissertation and final submission of your dissertation.
- ❑ **SUBMIT COPIES OF DISSERTATION:** The Office of Graduate Studies & Research requires five copies of your dissertation. Four of the copies (on a 100% cotton bond at least 20 lb. weight) will be bound and distributed as follows: One copy to the library, one for the department, one copy to your adviser, and one copy for you. The fifth copy which can be on regular paper will be sent to University Microfilms, Inc.
- ❑ **FILE FOR GRADUATION:** File for graduation in the Registrar's office by the deadline noted in the Schedule of Classes. You may file for graduation beginning with the first class day of the semester you will graduate. Order graduation regalia.
- ❑ **DOCTORAL STUDENT LUNCHEON:** On the day of commencement the Office of the Provost, the Office of Graduate Studies & Research, and the Doctoral Student Association provide a celebration luncheon for you, your adviser, and family. Officials from the University will be present to recognize

you, as a new doctoral graduate. You, one guest, and your major adviser will be paid for. A nominal fee will be charged for additional guests.

- **ATTEND COMMENCEMENT EXERCISE:** You are expected to be present at commencement. If circumstances will prevent you from attending, you must request permission to be excused from the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

PURPOSE OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM:

1. To educate a person who has developed breadth of vision, a capacity for interpretation, and the ability to carry out critical investigation.
2. To help acquire new concepts, a zeal for adding to the sum of human knowledge, and development of ability to conduct original research, and to think clearly and independently.
3. To develop the professional competencies necessary for applying knowledge in the essential areas of human and public interest.

DOCTORAL DEGREES AWARDED at A&M-Commerce

1. **Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)**
 - a. Educational Administration
 - b. Supervision, Curriculum and Instruction in:
 - i. Elementary Education or
 - ii. Higher Education
2. **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)**
 - a. Counseling
 - b. Educational Psychology
 - c. English

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTORAL DEGREE

(Graduate Catalog 2002-2003)

1. **Degree Plan**—Upon acceptance into a doctoral program, you will receive from the Office of Graduate Studies & Research a degree plan form and copies of all transcripts. You should contact the major and minor departments for adviser assignments. The degree plan will then be completed with the major and minor advisers and forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies & Research for approval no later than by the end of the first semester of enrollment as a doctoral student. An official copy of the degree plan will then be sent to you.
2. **Course Requirements**—A minimum of 90 semester hours beyond the baccalaureate degree or 60 semester hours beyond the master's degree is required for the doctoral degree. At least 45 hours of doctoral graduate course credit must be earned from A&M–Commerce. All courses applied toward a doctoral degree must be 500-level or higher. No more than twelve graduate credit hours beyond the master's degree or twenty-four semester hours of graduate certification course work taken prior to admission to a doctoral program can be applied toward a doctoral degree.

- a. **Major** – A major requires at least 36 semester hours excluding dissertation hours (718); however, a specific program may require additional semester hours for a major.
- b. **Minor** – Students selecting the 60 hours beyond the master's degree option are not required to have a minor. A minor, consisting of a minimum of 30 semester hours, is required in all 90-hour programs except counseling, psychology and English. The minor requirement can be fulfilled by one of the following options:
 - i. **A comprehensive minor with all course work in one academic area:** A committee member will be assigned from the minor area and will determine the courses to be taken and be involved in evaluating the written and oral qualifying examinations, the dissertation, and the dissertation defense.
 - ii. **A split minor involves two academic areas with a minimum of twelve hours from each area, and constituting a total of 30 hours (a 12 – 18 or 15 – 15 format):** Committee members will be assigned from both academic areas, and they will determine the courses to be taken and be involved in the written and oral qualifying examinations, the dissertation, and the dissertation defense.
 - iii. **An interdisciplinary studies minor in three academic areas (12 – 9 – 9 format):** In rare cases, an interdisciplinary studies minor, consisting of at least nine hours in each of three academic areas constituting a total of 30 hours may be approved. Committee members will be assigned from each of the three academic areas, and will be involved in the written and oral qualifying examination, the dissertation proposal, and the dissertation defense.

Regardless of the option chosen, the following conditions will apply: Assignment of minor advisers rests with the head of the minor department or departments; all courses applied to the minor areas must be approved by the head of the appropriate department offering the minor; at least one committee member must be from outside your major department; transfer courses applied toward a minor must come in academic areas taught at Texas A & M University-Commerce.

- c. **Other Requirements:**
 - i. Earn credit for no less than nine semester hours and not more than twelve semester hours of dissertation (718).
 - ii. Comply with electives and other course requirements as indicated by each department.
 - iii. Successfully complete the research tool courses for the Ed.D. or Ph.D. Please see **Research Tools (#10)** in this section for complete tool information.
3. **Transfer of Credit** – Credit for work taken from other regionally accredited graduate schools in the United States is granted in accordance with an evaluation by the Office of Graduate Studies & Research and upon recommendation by your Advisory committee. Transfer courses applied to a doctoral degree must be in a graduate academic area taught by Texas A & M University-Commerce. Time limitations on transfer courses are the same as for A&M-Commerce courses. Transfer credit will be granted for only those courses in which you received a grade of “B” or better. Only grades earned at A&M-Commerce will be calculated into your grade point average. There is not limited to the number of hours a doctoral student may transfer in from a regionally accredited graduate school, but each doctoral student must have forty-five (45) doctoral graduate hours from A&M-Commerce.
4. **Correspondence Courses** – Credit earned by correspondence will not apply toward a doctoral degree.
5. **Individual Studies** – Registration in an individual studies courses (589 or 689), research, or similar course shall imply an expected level of effort on the part of the student comparable to that associated with an organized class with the same credit value. No more than twelve graduate semester hours (including master’s credit) of individual studies courses may be applied to a doctoral degree. Individual studies course credits cannot be used toward fulfilling the residency requirement.
6. **Grades** – A grade point average of 3.00 or better on all graduate work completed at this university and in your major, as well as an overall grade point average of 3.0 or better on all graduate courses completed, is required for graduation. If a course is retaken, the last grade will be counted toward graduation and computation of the overall grade point average. No grade of “C” or below will count toward a doctoral degree. A course in which an “F” is received is considered a course completed. Only grades earned at A&M-Commerce will be calculated with your grade point average. A student receiving a grade of “C” or lower in a third graduate course will be disenrolled and will not be allowed to pursue further doctoral study at this institution. This provision applies to all courses taken and to all repeated courses.

7. **Academic Probation and Suspension from Degree Programs** – If you fail to achieve and/or maintain an overall 3.00 grade point average during any semester of enrollment you will be placed on academic probation for semester. If at the end of the next semester of enrollment you fail to achieve a 3.00 overall grade point average, you will be placed on academic suspension for a minimum of two semesters (two summer terms count as one semester). After the academic suspension is removed, you may be allowed to re-enroll only upon the recommendation of the major department and with the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. Failure to achieve an overall 3.00 grade point average during any subsequent semester of enrollment will result in dismissal, and you will not be allowed to pursue further study toward the doctoral degree at this institution. Courses taken from other institutions will not be transferable if taken during a period of suspension from Texas A&M University-Commerce. Students on academic suspension from another institution will not be admitted to A&M-Commerce until their specific period of suspension expires.

Students who fail to meet the professional expectations of the field for which they are preparing may be suspended from further study in that program by the department administering that program.

A graduate student who has not been enrolled for a period of at least six years may petition the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research to have previous graduate grades eliminated from the calculation of the official grade point average. No courses eliminated from such calculations could be used toward a graduate degree.

8. **Residency** – After admission to a doctoral degree program, each student is required to engage in activities that fulfill departmental residency requirements. The departmental residency plan specifies requirements in the following areas:
- a. Involvement in events that broaden intellectual growth,
 - b. use of academic support resources,
 - c. faculty-student interactions that promote scholarship, mentoring, and opportunities for evaluation,
 - d. involvement with cognate disciplines and research scholars in those disciplines, and
 - e. engagement in meaningful peer interactions.

Check with your major department for specific requirements. Successful completion of residency is conferred by approval of the department.

9. **Doctoral Tuition and Fees** – Due to legislative changes, doctoral students who have completed over 99 doctoral hours will be charged non-resident tuition and fees.
10. **Research Tools** – Candidates for the doctoral degree must possess proficiency in the use of the research skills necessary to successfully complete the doctoral dissertation. It is desirable for students to demonstrate these proficiencies early in their program; however, students must demonstrate such proficiency prior to taking the qualifying examinations.
- a. Research tool requirements for the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) and the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in the College of Education can be met by successfully completing one course from each of the following four areas with a grade of “B” or better:
- 1) **Level I:** 695 Doctoral Research Seminar
 - 2) **Level II:** PSY 612 Psychological and Educational Statistics or Soc 576 Data Analysis in Social Research; or KINE 617 Statistical Procedures in Health and Physical Education
 - 3) **Level III:** COUN 613 Advanced Statistical Techniques or PSY 681 Intermediate Statistics
 - 4) **Level IV:** EDAD 698 Ethnography of Education Organizations or SHED 696 Advanced Research Methodology: Program Evaluation or PSY 610 Non-Parametric Statistics or PSY 670 Multivariate Analysis

All research tool courses must be taken in sequence (i.e., Level I should be taken before Level II). New courses proposed to be offered on a regular basis are to be approved, in advance of their offering, by the Graduate Council. The second level research tool (Introductory Statistics) may be satisfied by the successful completion of a proficiency examination over the content of these courses. You may contact the Doctoral Degree Coordinator for proficiency examination information.

These requirements are to be viewed as minimal requirements. Consequently, a department may require additional research tools courses either for all of their students or as a requirement for an individual student based upon that student’s need.

- b. The requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in the English program is one of the following:
1. One foreign language
 - a. 18 semester hours of appropriate college-level

- classes, or
 - b. score at the 50 percentile or higher on the Graduate Student Foreign Language Test (GSFLT)
2. Two foreign languages
- a. score at the 25th percentile or higher on the GSFLT, or
 - b. pass the Foreign Language Proficiency Examination (FLPE) given by the Department of Literature and Languages.

Submission of a proficiency report form to the Office of Graduate Studies & Research is required for Option 2. Foreign language exams are administered the first Monday in November and April. Students must register with the Department of Literature and Languages at least two weeks before the exam.

- 11. Qualifying Examinations:** Doctoral students take written and oral qualifying examinations upon the completion of approximately two full years of study. The examinations must be taken and passed a minimum of eight months before the degree is conferred. The qualifying examinations are designed to test the student's knowledge in the major and minor fields and are administered under the direction of an Advisory committee consisting of representatives from the major and minor departments.

Application for taking qualifying examinations must be submitted to the major department at least three weeks prior to the examinations.

An applicant who does not pass the qualifying examinations may be suspended from the doctoral program, or upon the recommendation of the Advisory committee and approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, may be permitted to repeat the examinations.

- 12. Admission to Candidacy for Doctoral Degree:** After the qualifying examinations have been satisfactorily completed and all requirements have been verified by the Office of Graduate Studies & Research, the student will be admitted to candidacy.

Notification of admission to candidacy will be made by the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. After a student has been admitted to candidacy and all course work (except 718 Dissertation) has been completed, the student may qualify for reduced tuition. The degree can be conferred no sooner than eight months after admission to candidacy.

13. **Time Limitation for Degree:** All degree requirements beyond the master's must be completed within ten calendar years from the date of admission to the doctoral program. However, no course work beyond the master's degree which is over ten years old at the time the doctoral degree is conferred can be used toward the doctoral degree.
14. **Dissertation:** A candidate must present a dissertation which is acceptable to the student's Advisory committee and the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. To be acceptable, the dissertation must give evidence that the candidate has pursued a program of research, the results of which reveal superior academic competence and a significant contribution to knowledge.
- a. **Advisory committee:** The student should check with the head of the major department concerning the membership of the dissertation committee. The committee will consist of a minimum of three faculty members from the student's major and minor areas of study (at least one committee member must be from outside the student's major department).
 - b. **Proposal:** The student should secure from the Office of Graduate Studies & Research the following forms: (1) Dissertation Proposal (including human subject policy information) and (2) Schedule for the Presentation of the Dissertation Proposal. The student will work with the members of the Advisory committee in developing the dissertation proposal. That proposal will be presented to the Advisory committee and a Graduate Council representative in a session that will be open to all graduate faculty members. The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research will be informed of this session by the 25th of the month prior to the month the session is scheduled. The Dissertation Proposal form must be presented to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and should be approved at least one semester prior to graduation.
 - c. **Human Subjects Protection:** In preparing your dissertation proposal, you should be aware that any research which involves human subjects must be in compliance with University Rule A15.02 Human Subjects Protection. If your research involves human subjects, you must have written approval from your departmental human subjects representative and the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to contacting your research subjects and before your proposal defense. Failure to gain appropriate approval before interacting with research subjects could result in denial of your proposal and have possible legal ramifications for you.

- d. **Dissertation Credit:** After admission to candidacy, the student is required to enroll in at least three hours of 718 each fall and spring semester until the dissertation is completed and approved by the Advisory committee and the Office of Graduate Studies & Research. Enrollment during the summer term is not required unless the student is using the counsel of the major adviser and/or University facilities. Students who fail to enroll for dissertation during a fall or spring semester after admission to candidacy will be prohibited from enrolling until the tuition has been paid for those semesters.
- e. **Scheduling the final examination/dissertation defense:** The form, Schedule for the Final Examination/Dissertation Defense, must be filed in the Office of Graduate Studies & Research by the 25th of the month prior to the month the examination is to be held. The Final Examination/Defense Report will then be forwarded to the committee chairperson for recording the results.
- f. **Final Examination/Dissertation Defense:** The student will defend the completed dissertation and respond to any questions related to his/her program of study before the Advisory committee in a session open to all graduate faculty members. A Graduate Council representative will attend the examination to help assure that general graduate standards related to format and quality are upheld. Students must be in good academic standing with the Office of Graduate Studies & Research to be eligible to take the final examination.
- g. **Submission of Dissertation:** Registration in the dissertation course (718) is required the semester that the dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School.
 - (1) Initial submission: One copy of the dissertation in its final form must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies & Research by the deadline indicated in the Schedule of Classes for that particular semester (the deadline is approximately six weeks prior to commencement). Accompanying this copy will be the following:
 - (a) Final Examination/Dissertation Defense Report.
 - (b) Receipt showing payment of the doctoral fees, plus fees for copyright, binding and mailing the dissertation. (Payment is to be made to the Business Office, cashier's window, in the McDowell Administration Building.),
 - (c) Four signature pages on 100 percent cotton bond, at least 20 lb. paper. The Office of Graduate Studies & Research

requires five final copies (four copies on the 100 percent cotton bond, 20 lb. paper, and one copy on regular paper) of the dissertation. Four copies will be bound and distributed to the student's major department, major adviser, the library and the student. One additional copy will be sent to University Microfilms, Inc. Final approval of the dissertation rests with the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

15. **Catalog Privileges:** A student is entitled to use the degree provisions of any catalog in effect between the semester the student is admitted to the doctoral degree program and the semester the student's degree is conferred, provided the catalog used is not more than ten years old at the time the degree is conferred.
16. **Filing for Graduation:** The candidate must file for graduation in the Registrar's Office by the deadline indicated in the schedule of classes for that particular semester. A student must be in good standing with the Office of Graduate Studies & Research in order to complete graduation requirements.
17. **Commencement:** The degree is conferred at the commencement following the fulfillment of all requirements. The candidate is expected to be present. If circumstances will prevent you from attending, you must request permission to be excused from the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS AT A&M-COMMERCE

Graduate teaching and non-teaching assistantships at Texas A&M University-Commerce offer financial support for graduate education. Assistantships are awarded to qualified masters and doctoral students and are distributed through academic and non-academic departments. In addition to funding graduate education, assistantships also provide students opportunities for professional growth.

The University awards two types of assistantships:

1. **Graduate Teaching Assistants (TAs)** require recipients to teach courses in the department in which they are assigned. Teaching Assistants are teachers of record, meaning they have primary responsibility for teaching a course for credit or noncredit and/or for assigning final grades for the course. In order to qualify for Teaching Assistantships students must have earned a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the field in which they will be teaching. Although they are teachers of record, they must work under the

direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching field, receive regular in-service training, and be regularly evaluated. Copies of the evaluation must be forwarded to Graduate Studies and Research.

Graduate students whose native language is other than English must demonstrate a sufficient level of oral and written proficiency (successfully pass the Speak Test) before they may be awarded a teaching assistantship.

2. **Graduate Non-teaching Assistants (GAs)** work in a variety of settings across campus performing such tasks as assisting with labs, offering teaching support, assisting faculty with research, preparing reports, entering data or other responsibilities as assigned. Such assignments are meant to be both important service to the University and a valuable opportunity for the student's professional development.

General Qualifications

Initial Requirements

To hold an assistantship, a student must satisfy both the Graduate School and departmental requirements. Academic or creative excellence, professional competence, and relevant experience or skills are the primary qualifications considered for appointments. If your native language is not English, you must demonstrate a sufficient level of oral and written English language proficiency before you may be awarded an assistantship. More specifically:

To hold a Master's Level Assistantship a student must:

- Be fully admitted to a master's degree program and have an undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher;
- Have completed a minimum of 18 graduate hours in the field to be taught if applying for a teaching assistantship;
- Maintain a 3.00 graduate GPA if already enrolled in a graduate program;
- Be in good standing with the Graduate School; and
- Be enrolled for at least six hours of credit.

Or

- Be fully admitted to a master's degree program and have a graduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.25 or higher on a minimum of twelve semester hours of graduate credit.
- Have completed a minimum of 18 graduate hours in the field to be taught if applying for a teaching assistantship;
- Maintain a 3.00 graduate GPA if already enrolled in a graduate program;
- Be in good standing with the Graduate School; and

- Be enrolled for at least six hours of credit.

To hold a Master's Assistantship if a student is working on a second master's degree, the student must:

- Be fully admitted to a master's degree program and have an undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher;
- Have completed a minimum of 18 graduate hours in the field to be taught if applying for a teaching assistantship;
- Maintain a 3.00 graduate GPA if already enrolled in a graduate program;
- Be in good standing with the Graduate School; and
- Be enrolled for at least six hours of credit.

Or

- Be fully admitted to a master's degree program and have a graduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.25 or higher on a minimum of twelve semester hours of graduate credit.
- Have completed a minimum of 18 graduate hours in the field to be taught if applying for a teaching assistantship;
- Maintain a 3.00 graduate GPA if already enrolled in a graduate program;
- Be in good standing with the Graduate School; and
- Be enrolled for at least six hours of credit.

To hold a Doctoral Assistantship, a student must:

- Be admitted to a doctoral program and have a graduate GPA of 3.5 or higher;
- Have completed a minimum of 18 graduate hours in the field to be taught if applying for a teaching assistantship;
- Maintain at least a 3.00 graduate GPA;
- Be in good standing with the Graduate School; and
- Be enrolled for at least six hours of credit.

Maintaining an Assistantship

To maintain an assistantship position, students must:

- Remain enrolled full-time. The Graduate School considers you to be full-time if you are enrolled in six hours during the fall and spring semesters and three hours during each summer semester. However, the Financial Aid Office requires students to be enrolled in nine hours each fall and spring semester and a total of nine hours combined over the summer semesters to be considered full-time.

- Maintain a graduate GPA of 3.0; and remain in good standing with the Graduate School.

Once you commit to a particular department, you must stay with that department until the end of the semester/term.

Applying for Assistantships

Inquiries about the availability of assistantships should be addressed to the head of the department in which the applicant wishes to work or undertake graduate study. Each department hires its own assistants and establishes duties in accordance with University procedures. To apply for an assistantship, consult with the department in which the assistantship is being offered and fill out an application. To download an application, apply online, or to find out which departments are offering assistantships, check out <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/infofiles/asist.html>.

APPENDICES

GUIDE FOR SUBMISSION AND PREPARATION OF THE DISSERTATION

Graduate Studies & Research

The Graduate School will only accept manuscripts that have been approved by the student's committee, department head and his/her college dean and are in final form. Refer to the *Graduate Catalog* for information pertaining to dissertation procedures.

SUBMISSION

The manuscript must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research by the deadline indicated in the university calendar (approximately five weeks prior to commencement). Upon the approval of the manuscript by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, the candidate will be contacted to pick up the manuscript, make corrections and have the final copies made. The Graduate School requires five copies of the dissertation (**four copies on the 100 percent cotton bond, at least 20 lb. paper and one copy on regular paper.**) Four of the copies will be bound and distributed as follows: one copy to the library, one for the department, one copy to student's major adviser and one copy to the student. The Library copy will be placed on the open shelves of the Library and may be accessed by the public. If the student desires additional bound copies, the cost is \$10.00 per copy to be paid to the cashier. Additional signature sheets can be submitted for the signature of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

PREPARATION

The style manual approved by the department should be used for the dissertation and thesis preparation, except for the following Graduate School requirements:

- 1) The text of the dissertation or thesis must be a standard face of type. All final copies must be submitted on a good grade of 100 percent cotton bond paper, 20-pound weight, 8 1/2 by 11.
- 2) The **margins** for each page shall be as follows: left side, one and one-half inches; all other margins, one inch.
- 3) Arrangement of materials in the manuscript will be as follows: Blank Sheet; Title Page; Signature Sheet; Copyright Page (if applicable); Abstract; Acknowledgments (if applicable); Table of Contents; List of Tables (if applicable); List of Figures (if applicable); Body; Bibliography; Appendix (if applicable); Vita; Blank Sheet. The page number should be at the bottom center of the page for the first page of each of these sections.
- 4) The **first page of each major division** of the manuscript (such as the Table of Contents, Acknowledgments, Bibliography, etc.) and the first page of each chapter must be numbered in the center of the bottom of the page, one line below the one-inch margin. Number all other pages at the top, right-hand side. The two blank pages and the title page are not numbered, all other pages of the manuscript must be numbered. Preliminary pages are numbered with small Roman numerals. The signature page is given page number "ii." The body of the manuscript is numbered with Arabic numbers.
- 5) The format of the title page, signature sheet, abstract and vita shall follow the guides attached to this hand-out.
- 6) The copyright page (if applicable) will be page number iii. Center "Copyright @ year" on line 56 and your name on line 58.

TITLE OF DISSERTATION

(Center title between the left and right margins. Succeeding lines of title must be shorter than the preceding line and double spaced.)

by

YOUR NAME

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Texas A&M University-Commerce
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
YOUR SPECIFIC DEGREE IN CAPS
Month, Year

Example of Signature Page

Sample

Approved:

Adviser

Department Head (Remove this line if not English major)

Dean of the College

Dean of Graduate Studies and Research

page no.

**EXAMPLE
COPYRIGHT PAGE**

Copyright © 1994

Bonnie B. Blue

sample

page no.

ABSTRACT

TITLE OF DISSERTATION

Your Name, EdD
Texas A&M University-Commerce, 2003

Adviser: Name of Your Adviser and Degree

Begin abstract. Abstract should include purpose, procedure, results and conclusions. A dissertation abstract shall not exceed 350 words, while a thesis abstract shall not exceed 150 words.

The word ABSTRACT should be centered and positioned 12 lines from the top of the page. The title is single-spaced, each line shorter than the preceding line. Use your specific degree after your name (Ed.D., M.S., etc.) and the year your degree is conferred after Texas A&M University-Commerce.

page no.

VITA

Suzanne Jones Durkee was born in Lancaster, Texas, on July 15, 1942, the daughter of Mary Suzanne Davis Jones and William Jack Jones. After graduating from Lancaster High School, Lancaster, Texas, in 1960, she enrolled at The University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, Texas. She received the Bachelor of Science degree with a major in mathematics and a minor in computer science in August 1965 from the University of Houston. She taught mathematics in Oak Cliff High School, Dallas, Texas, for three years following her graduation from college. In September 1968, she enrolled in The Graduate School of Texas A&M University-Commerce and was awarded the Master of Science degree in August 1971. She was employed as an instructor in mathematics at Paris Junior College, Paris, Texas, in September 1971 and has continued in that position to the present. In the fall of 1975, she entered The Graduate School of Texas A&M University-Commerce and was awarded the Doctor of Education degree with a major in Supervision, Curriculum and Instruction-Higher Education in August 1984. In 1966 she married George Durkee of Paris, Texas. One daughter, Mary Sue, was born in 1967.

Permanent address: 1511 Pine View Street
 Paris, Texas 75460

page no.

Instructions for Submission of Research Protocols to the A&M-Commerce Institutional Review Board

In order to comply with federal regulations regarding research with human subjects, as well as to conform to guidelines of the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), all faculty, administrators, students, and staff should obtain approval of their research protocol from the IRB prior to any contact with human subjects or collection of data. Normally, doctoral and master's degree students completing dissertations or theses will be expected to obtain approval from the IRB prior to the presentation of their proposal to the faculty. The Dean of the Graduate School must approve exceptions to this timeline.

For additional details of the IRB review process, including the IRB Submission and Protocol Forms, scheduled meetings of the IRB, a list of the IRB Committee members, the Texas A&M University-Commerce IRB Procedure and Guidelines Manual for Research with Human Subjects, links to IRB related sites, and other information, please visit the Graduate School IRB homepage at <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/gradschool/research/irb/irb.html> . The IRB review process involves four major steps; please refer to the flow chart on page 3 for an overview of this process.

Step 1: The applicant should fax, mail, or hand deliver the IRB Submission Form (page 4 only) to the Chairperson of the Departmental Human Subjects Protection Committee (DHSPC). If the applicant is not associated with a University Department, then the IRB Submission Form and the IRB Protocol form should be submitted directly to the Graduate School. In addition, the IRB Protocol Form (see pages 5-9) should be electronically submitted as an MS Word compatible email attachment (file) to the Chairperson of the DHSC. Please note that pages 1-4 of this document should not be included as a part of the Protocol Form and that some material within the Protocol Form may also be deleted (see additional instructions on the Protocol Form). It is preferred that all information required for the IRB Protocol Form should be contained (inserted) within the Protocol Form.

The DHSPC will review the materials you have submitted and notify you of the outcome of the review. You may be asked to modify or clarify the information contained within the Protocol Form--in this case you should make the required changes and resubmit the Protocol Form to the Chairperson of the DHSPC. When your protocol is approved by the DHSPC, you should then submit the Protocol Form as a MS Word compatible e-mail attachment to Natalie Henderson (Natalie_Henderson@tamu-commerce.edu) in the Graduate School. The Submission Form will be forwarded to the Graduate School by the DHSPC Chairperson.

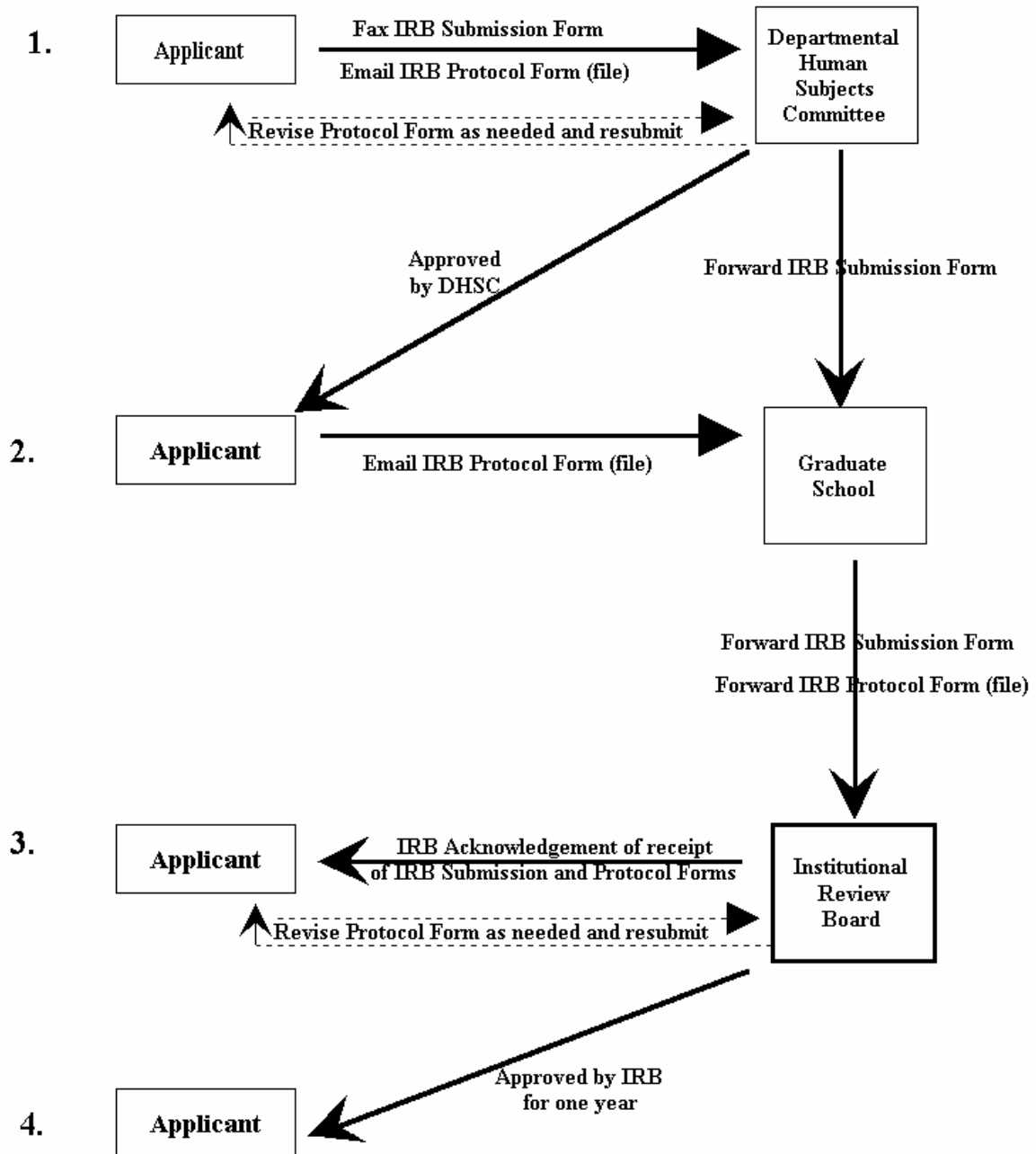
Step 2: The Graduate School will open an IRB file and make copies of the Submission Form (forwarded from the DHSPC) and the Protocol Form (electronically submitted to the Graduate School by the applicant). These two forms will then be forwarded to the IRB Chairperson by the Graduate School.

Step 3: The Chairperson of the IRB will acknowledge to the applicant the receipt from the Graduate School of the Submission and Protocol Forms and the IRB will begin a review of the research protocol. Almost always, the IRB will complete the initial review of minimum risk protocols within a seven-day period. Protocols that are not considered minimum risk and therefore cannot be reviewed under the expedited review process will be reviewed during the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the IRB. If, during the IRB review, modifications or changes to the research protocol are requested by the IRB, then the review process will be extended to provide the applicant time to make the needed changes and resubmit the modified Protocol Form to the IRB for further review. Applicants should note that the time to complete the review by the IRB is often extended because applicants do not follow these directions carefully, do not include needed information in the protocol, or do not attend to the guidelines for the informed consent process and forms.

Step 4: You will receive notification from the IRB Chairperson that your research protocol has been approved for a period of one year. Research that extends beyond this one-year period will need an update review for an extension.

Some types of research may be exempt from IRB oversight (not from initial review by the DHSPC or the IRB). Examples would include research conducted with a publicly available database where all participants are anonymous or a non-invasive, anonymous survey. See appendix A for details.

TAMU-Commerce Institutional Review Board Application and Approval Process--Flow Chart (4/2/2001)



PART 1 (completed by the applicant):

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ Day Phone _____

I understand that as Principal Investigator, I have ultimate responsibility for the protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects and the ethical conduct of this research protocol. I have carefully read all the instructions and information included with the Submission and Protocol Forms.

_____ *signature of applicant* _____ *date*

NOTE TO APPLICANT: Fax, mail, or hand-carry this form to the chair of the Departmental Human Subjects Protection Committee.

PART 2 (completed by chair of the Department Human Subjects Protection Committee):

Names of DHSPC Members:

Comments:

_____ *signature of DHSPC chair* _____ *date protocol approved by the Department*

NOTE TO DHSPC CHAIR: Fax, mail, or hand-carry this form to Natalie Henderson at the graduate school.

PART 3 (completed by the Graduate School):

_____ *date received* _____ *signature of graduate school representative*

Section I: General Information

Insert the requested information below; use additional space as needed.

Name of Principal investigator (applicant):

Mailing Address:

Email address:

Phone Number:

Status of Principal investigator: Faculty Staff Student

University Department of applicant, if applicable:

If applicant is a student, is this either a thesis or dissertation?

If applicant is a student, your faculty advisor is:

Name of Co-Investigator(s), if applicable:

Status of Co-Investigator(s): Faculty Staff Student

Project Title:

Proposed Start Date of Research:

Is this research protocol submitted as:

 New Continuation/Renewal Revision

After answering no to all questions in parts A through C of Appendix A, are you omitting section III and submitting this protocol for consideration as exempt from IRB oversight?

 Yes No

Section II: Description of the Proposed Research

Insert the requested information below; use additional space as needed.

Purpose, Scientific Contribution,, and Potential Benefit

Location of Study

Dates of study

Subjects

Methods and Procedures

Instruments (include copies of any instruments, tests, surveys, questionnaires, etc.)

Participant Payments or Costs

Subject Confidentiality

Potential Risks to Subjects

Risk/Benefit Ratio

Section III: Informed Consent

Place a checkmark in the left column to verify that you have addressed each element in your informed consent process and form. At the end of this section, insert a copy of your informed consent form.

NIH Informed Consent Checklist - Basic and Additional Elements

	A statement that the study involves research and affiliation/identification of the researcher(s)
	An explanation of the purposes of the research
	The expected duration of the subject's participation; dates of participation; and location(s) for participation.
	A description of the procedures to be followed
	A description of any reasonably foreseeable physical and/or psychological risks or discomforts to the subject (this would include anxiety, possible embarrassment, inconvenience, etc.)
	A description of any benefits to the subject or to others which may reasonably be expected from the research
	A statement describing how and to what extent confidentiality of records identifying the subject will be maintained

	For research involving more than minimal risk, an explanation as to whether any compensation, and an explanation as to whether any medical treatments are available, if injury occurs and, if so, what they consist of, or where further information may be obtained
	An explanation of whom to contact for answers to pertinent questions about the research and research subjects' rights (the IRB Chairperson), and whom to contact in the event of a research-related injury to the subject
	A statement that participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled, and the subject may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits, to which the subject is otherwise
Additional elements, as appropriate (indicate as not appropriate or by check mark, if applicable)	
	A statement that the particular treatment or procedure may involve risks to the subject (or to the embryo or fetus, if the subject is or may become pregnant), which are currently unforeseeable.
	The number of participants in the research study.
	Anticipated circumstances under which the subject's participation may be terminated by the investigator without regard to the subject's consent
	Any additional costs to the subject that may result from participation in the research
	The consequences of a subject's decision to withdraw from the research and procedures for orderly termination of participation by the subject
	Identification of any procedures which are experimental
	A statement that significant new findings developed during the course of the research, which may relate to the subject's willingness to continue participation, will be provided to the subject
	A disclosure of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that might be advantageous to the subject

Sections IV-VI typically are not required for most IRB applications. Likewise, the information in Appendix A is typically not relevant to most IRB applications. Therefore, if this information is not relevant to your application, indicate “NA” after the section heading(s) below and then, prior to submitting this form as an attachment, delete the material provided under each heading.

Section IV: Funding Information (indicate “NA” and delete the following if not applicable)

If this protocol is part of an application to an outside agency, please provide:

A. Source of Funding

B. Type of Application: Grant Subcontract Contract Fellowship

C. Date of Anticipated Submission for Funding:

Section V. Cooperative Research (indicate “NA” and delete the following if not applicable)

Cooperative research projects are those that involve more than one institution and can be designed to be both multi-site and multi-protocol in nature. Each participating institution is responsible for safeguarding the rights and welfare of human subjects and for complying with all regulations. If this proposal has been submitted to another Institutional Review Board please provide:

Name of Institution:

Date of Review:

Contact Person:

IRB Recommendation:

Section VI. Continuation or Renewals (indicate “NA” and delete the following if not applicable)

If this is a continuation or renewal of a research protocol that has been previously approved by the IRB, then:

- A. Indicate all proposed changes in the IRB protocol affecting subjects:
- B. Progress Report--paste below:

- Indicate the number of subjects entered in the study, including their group status, whether they are active or completed, the number of subjects still pending, and the time frame of subject participation.
- Indicate adverse or unexpected outcomes that have occurred or are expected. If none, state none.
- Summarize the results of the investigation to date (in terms of subjects entered, in process, completed, and pending).

Appendix A: Research Covered by and Exempt from IRB Review (indicate “NA” and delete the following if not applicable; i.e., the research does not meet the guidelines below for exemption from full review)

To comply with the federal regulations covering the protection of research subjects, and to ensure appropriate ethical management of research programs conducted by A&M-Commerce faculty, staff, and students, all **funded and unfunded** research proposals involving human subjects fall within the jurisdiction of the IRB. The DHSPC can recommend that the research should be considered "exempt" from full IRB review, however only the IRB can decide if the research is indeed minimal risk or if the protocol falls into one of the "exempt" categories.

Exempt status implies that oversight by the IRB is not necessary; it does not imply that review by the IRB is not required. If, after reading the material below, you think that your research falls into the "exempt" status, complete the application process described in the instructions on pages 1-3 with the following deviation:

- Do not complete section III of the Protocol Form.

EXEMPTION SCREENING QUESTIONS (from the University of Illinois at Chicago IRB)

If, during your reading of the following questions, you would answer NO to all questions under A through C below, then the IRB will probably consider your research protocol exempt from full IRB review.

A. For research involving special populations, interventions or manipulations

1. Does your research involve pregnant women, fetuses, or prisoners?
2. Does your research involve using survey or interview procedures with children?
3. Does your research involve the observation of children in settings where the investigator(s) will participate in the activities being observed?

B. For research using survey procedures, interview procedures, observational procedures and questionnaires (Note: exemption is not allowed in surveys or interviews with children)

1. If data are to be recorded by audiotape or videotape, is there potential harm to subjects if the information is revealed or disclosed?
2. Are the subjects identifiable either by name, code, or through demographic or other personally identifying data?
3. Will collection include sensitive data, e.g. illegal activities, or sensitive themes such as sexual orientation, sexual behavior, undesirable work behavior, or other data that may be painful or very embarrassing to reveal, such as death of a family member, memories of physical abuse?

C. For research using existing or archived data, documents, records, or specimens only

1. Will any data, documents, records or specimens be collected from subjects after the submission of this application?

If the data, documents, records, or specimens are originally labeled in such a manner that subjects can be identified, directly or indirectly through identifying links, is the investigator recording the data in such a manner that subjects can be identified, directly or indirectly through identifying links (i.e., demographic information that might reasonably lead to the identification of individual subjects – name, phone number; or any code number that can be used to link the investigator's data to the source record – medical record number or hospital admission number)?

**THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

APPLICANT COMPLETES THIS PORTION--SUBMIT APPLICATION TO THE MAJOR DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO EXAMINATION

Name _____ SS# _____ Phone _____

Address _____

E-mail: _____

Major _____ Minor _____ Degree _____

I have submitted all degree plan changes to The Graduate School.

Signature _____
Date

COMMITTEE COMPLETES THIS PORTION

Results of written examination ___ Satisfactory ___ Unsatisfactory Date _____

Results of oral examination ___ Satisfactory ___ Unsatisfactory Date _____

Doctoral residency completed _____
Signature of Adviser

Major Adviser _____ Major Dept. Head _____

Member _____ Member _____

Member _____ Member _____

Member _____ Member _____

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL COMPLETES THIS PORTION

___ Research Tools Verified ___ Doctoral Residency Verified

Remaining courses to be completed: Major _____

Minor _____ Electives _____

**THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
SCHEDULE FOR THE PRESENTATION OF
THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

This form must be filed in The Graduate School **by the 25th of the month preceding the month** in which the presentation of the Dissertation Proposal is held. Should the 25th fall on Saturday or Sunday, the form must be filed on the Friday prior to the 25th.

Name _____ SS# _____ Degree _____

Address _____

E-mail: _____

Date Scheduled _____ Time _____ Place _____

Title of Dissertation: _____

The following signatures are required.

Major Adviser: _____ Major Dept. Head _____

Member: _____ Minor Dept. Head _____

Member: _____ Minor Dept. Head _____

Member: _____ Minor Dept. Head _____

Member: _____

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
SCHEDULE FOR THE PRESENTATION OF
THE FINAL EXAMINATION/DISSERTATION DEFENSE

This form must be filed in The Graduate School **by the 25th of the month preceding the month** in which the presentation of the Final Examination/Dissertation Defense is held. Should the 25th fall on Saturday or Sunday, the form must be filed on the Friday prior to the 25th.

Name _____ SS# _____ Degree _____

Address: _____ E-mail: _____

Major _____ Minor _____

Date Scheduled _____ Time _____ Place _____

Title of Dissertation _____

Major Adviser _____ Major Dept. Head _____

Member _____ Minor Dept. Head _____

Member _____ Minor Dept. Head _____

Member _____ Minor Dept. Head _____

Member _____