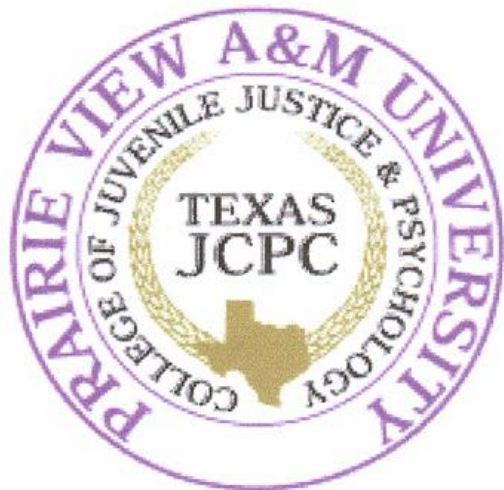


**Doctor of Philosophy Degree  
in Juvenile Justice  
Student Handbook**

*COLLEGE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE & PSYCHOLOGY*



**Prairie View A & M University**

**Fall 2012**

Fall 2012

NOTE: This *Handbook* is the governing document for your doctoral program. Where the University *Graduate Catalog* expressly refers to the Juvenile Justice Doctoral Program, differences between the *Graduate Catalog* and this *Handbook* should be resolved by the *Graduate Catalog* superseding the conflicting materials. However, the *Handbook* is likely to be updated more frequently than the *Graduate Catalog* and each version of the Handbook is dated on the cover. Your official program is established by the version of the *Handbook* current at the time of your enrollment or, in the event of a break in enrollment, your re-enrollment in the Doctoral Program. If changes are made to the *Handbook*, you may elect to be held to that subsequent version of the handbook by signing a waiver of your original program and expressly choosing the version to which you wish to change. Such waivers must also be agreed to and signed by the Department Head.

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## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN JUVENILE JUSTICE**

### **OVERVIEW**

Welcome to PVAMU Doctor of Philosophy in Juvenile Justice Program. To date, the program is the only one of its kind in the world. While the focus is on juvenile justice, students may use their electives to specialize in a subfield or a general area of interest to them (e.g., research and evaluation, corrections). The program is designed as, and intended to be, a full-time, rigorous doctoral program. Therefore, most of the courses will be scheduled during the day. The program requires a total of 61 semester units, 18 of which are dissertation hours.

The Ph.D. programs overall educational goal is to provide doctoral training in Juvenile Justice research. General objectives include the development of new knowledge, juvenile crime prevention and improvement in the Juvenile Justice system, and dissemination of knowledge gained. The specific intention of the program is to produce scholars with three characteristics: First, graduates will have superior empirical skills. Second, they will be specialists in the subject matter of the Juvenile Justice discipline. Third, they will be generalists in the subject matter of Criminal Justice.

The four specific objectives of the Ph.D. program are:

- 1) to develop competent scholars to explain and communicate empirical findings to other scientists, Juvenile and Criminal Justice students and practitioners, and citizens;
- 2) to produce juvenile/criminal justices, skilled in scientific methodology and statistics, who will initiate, conduct, and evaluate Juvenile/Criminal Justice research inquiries;
- 3) to create scholars well versed in the general body of knowledge of the discipline of Criminal Justice; and
- 4) to meet the higher education needs of the State of Texas and the nation in this rapidly growing area of social concern namely, increases in the incidence and intensity of juvenile crime.

Our faculty are actively engaged in research and publish regularly in their areas of expertise. Students are strongly encouraged to join with faculty to learn the research process. Students should consult with the Department Head and/or discuss possible joint efforts with individual faculty members. One of our goals is to present students the opportunity to participate meaningfully in research and generate publications prior to receiving the Ph.D.

The topics below should answer many of your questions on the doctoral program and the various procedures. Should any discussion in this guide conflict with the University Graduate Catalog requirements, the Catalog supersedes this information. However, be aware that the program may be changed or policies may be modified by the Doctoral Committee or the Department Head. In that event, students will have the option of selecting the new program. In cases where the information provided here builds upon, or adds to, the University Graduate Catalog requirements, the information herein represents binding departmental and program policy.

### **PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE & PSYCHOLOGY**

The College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology is a unique entity with both an academic side and a research center. Originating from the Texas Juvenile Crime Prevention Center, the College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology developed graduate degrees in Juvenile Justice and in Psychology (MA, Ph.D.) and Clinical Psychology (MS) and Clinical Adolescent Psychology (Ph.D.) Juvenile Forensic Psychology (MA). The graduate faculty holds degrees in various disciplines (criminal justice, criminology, economics, psychology, sociology, and statistics) but all have an intense interest in juvenile justice issues. In addition all have research and publication experience, some of which is quite extensive.

The Center is the home of sponsored and mandated research activity for the College. Thus, doctoral students can expect to work with Center faculty and staff during their studies. In addition to its legislatively-mandated activities of training,

research, and information dissemination, the Center engages in sponsored (i.e., grant-based funding) research projects on various juvenile-related subjects. It is these projects that will provide third-year funding for doctoral students. Moreover, the Center can offer full-time and part-time research and training positions to qualified students.

### **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY and GENERAL INFORMATION**

Doctoral education is a substantially more challenging level of education than the masters. Moreover, the Ph.D. is a scholarly degree. You must think critically, think on your own, and have writing skills superior to the average graduate student. If you cannot convey what you mean to say, it is virtually the same as not having the thought. Graduate education, in general, is less about the accumulation of information, than it is about learning and developing critical thinking and problem-solving so that the knowledge level in the field is enhanced. This process is what you will take with you as a doctoral degree holder and what you will put into practice in your future employment.

The faculty collectively believes that the best graduate program is one that “pushes” its students as much as possible. If we fail to do this, you will not learn as much as you otherwise would have. Expect critical comments to be written on virtually everything you turn in - this is our method of giving you feedback and pushing you to do better. Also expect a great deal of writing; it is this “practice” that develops the skills you need as someone who will someday hold a Ph.D. These philosophies are commensurate with a full-time program and echo the comments of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (memorandum, 5-4-2000): “The broad purpose... is to ensure that doctoral study is pursued seriously and in depth, with sufficient time and focused attention given to engaging faculty, other students, and the wide variety of opportunities for personal, professional, and scholarly growth available on the university campus. The result should be substantial mastery of the subject matter, theory, literature, research and methodology of significant part of the field.

A word about grading at the doctoral level: Your colleagues in the doctoral program are *all* capable of doing work at the "B" (3.0), or higher, grade level in undergraduate- and masters-level education. We sincerely hope that remains the case in your doctoral work. However, you need to know that our expectations of the quality of your work reflect your *doctoral* status. We expect the average grade to be a "B" (3.0), but we will give you the grade that you earn - this may be an "A" or it may be a "C," "D," or an "F." We do not relish giving the latter grades, but we *do* give them. The most important element in grading your work is not *what* you regurgitate, but the quality of your thought as you do so.

One other thing is important for you to know. The assignments made on course outlines and the readings in the textbooks are considered *minimal* work. A good student will be searching for corollary materials in the library and adding to the breath of his or her information. (Perhaps you might interpret this as saying that your graded work might reflect such outside work?) Most of you will go on to work in academia and this is your chance to prepare yourself with a foundation in the field. Be serious about your education and make the most of this opportunity.

### **ADMISSION CRITERIA and PROCEDURES**

Although preferences for admission are individually important, a “holistic” assessment of the applicant will be used in making admission decisions. The agreed-upon definition of “holistic” is that a composite evaluation of the preferences listed below will be used to admit. No single item failing to meet an expressed preference will be treated as a disqualifying factor. Admissions will be competitive and based on the number of students expected to be enrolled for the admissions period.

Regardless of preference and interpretation, the essential character of the committee’s decisions will be focused on a determination that there is strong evidence that the applicant will successfully complete the Ph.D.

#### **Admission Criteria:**

**Required elements:** no application will be considered without the *presence* of the following required items.

**Required elements:** (In order for an application to be considered, all elements below must be present in the applicant's file by the application deadline.)

- Baccalaureate degree conferred by a regionally accredited institution;
- Master's degree, prior to entering doctoral course work, conferred by a regionally accredited institution;
- Official scores on the general component of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) which consists of verbal, analytical and quantitative scores. An unofficial copy may be used by the Doctoral Admission Committee in initial screening. An application without GRE scores will not be reviewed;
- Original transcripts for all academic work taken at the undergraduate and graduate levels (unofficial copies may be used by the Doctoral Admission Committee in initial screening);
- Three letters of recommendation from professors with personal knowledge of the candidate's skills and potential for doctoral work;
- Original 1000 word essay as described in the doctoral application form *and* a copy of the master's thesis or other lengthy report or paper; and
- International students must submit official scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Unless the student has a degree from an U.S.A. institution of higher education. A score of 550 or higher is mandatory.

**Preferences:**

- Baccalaureate degree in juvenile justice, criminal justice, or criminology. A secondary preference is a directly related social science discipline (such as sociology) in which there is evidence of the study of crime-related phenomena;
- 3.0 Grade Point Average (GPA), or higher, on a four-point scale on all completed undergraduate course work;
- Master's degree in juvenile justice, juvenile forensic psychology, criminal justice or criminology. A secondary preference is a directly related social science discipline (such as sociology) in which there is evidence of the study of crime-related phenomena;
- 3.5 GPA, or higher, on a four-point scale in all completed graduate course work;
- Graduate research methods course (if not present, stem work must be completed);
- Graduate statistics course (if not present, stem work must be completed);
- Graduate Record Exam (GRE) verbal, quantitative and analytical scores in the higher percentiles;
- Evidence of a successfully completed master's thesis or published research paper;
- 1000 word essay demonstrating strong writing skills; an expressed desire to teach at college level, work as researcher in a juvenile justice agency, and/or assist in developing juvenile justice policy within a governmental environment; realistic expectation of the degree's value; evidence of commitment to completing the degree; strong rationale for wanting this specific Ph.D.; and a rationale expressing what the applicant will add to the field; and
- ~~Letters of recommendation from faculty sufficiently acquainted with the student to be able to comment on the potential to successfully complete a doctoral program and demonstrate evidence of excellent critical thought, motivation, study skills, and writing skills. Preferred ratings would be primarily excellent in all categories with an overall rating in the top 3 to 10 percent of all graduate students~~

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**Enhancing qualities:**

The committee will consider a combination of the following as information that will enhance an application:

- Three or more years of paid work experience in a juvenile justice agency (law enforcement, probation/parole, or correctional institution);
- Publication(s) in academic and/or scholarly outlets, with greatest emphasis on peer-reviewed publications;
- Grant-writing experience;
- GRE scores in higher percentile;
- Ability to attend courses as a full-time student (requires less than full-time outside employment). Completion of a previous doctoral degree in any field;
- College-level CJ teaching experience, either as a part-time or full-time instructor; and

Paid research *work* experience (not that involved in the production of a thesis).

**Interview:**

In the event the initial committee decision is favorable, applicants must submit to an interview with the Doctoral Committee prior to final acceptance. That interview may be either in person or via the equivalent of a telephone conference call, depending upon the distance and hardship involved in a personal interview. The student may pass or fail the interview based on the criteria established by the faculty which will focus on professional promise and interpersonal competence. However, a positive qualifying score and interview do not automatically result in admission to the Ph.D. program.

Applicants will be admitted in one of two statuses: full graduate status or provisional status.

1. Full graduate status is conferred on those students admitted to the program with no conditions of admission, or who have satisfied all conditions of admission.
2. Provisional admission status is used when the Doctoral Committee feels that prerequisites have not been met, official versions of required forms have not been received, and/or there is a question of ability to perform at doctoral standards by virtue of a failure to meet specific admissions criteria. Students who are provisionally admitted must satisfy all requirements prior to being admitted to full graduate status (conditions and requirements will be provided via letter to the student). In the event of a failure to meet prerequisites, deficiencies must be completed prior to beginning doctoral course work. No doctoral course work may be taken when there are prerequisite deficiencies nor may stem work be used to meet doctoral program requirements. Where stem work is assigned to rectify deficiencies, any grade lower than “B” will automatically result in a decision to deny admission. No more than 12 units of course work may be taken in provisional status.

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that all conditions of admission are met in a timely fashion and to notify the Department Head when all conditions are met. Following the first semester in provisional status (non-prerequisite-deficiency cases), the Doctoral Committee will meet to consider placing the student in full graduate status. Based on the evidence at hand, the Committee may admit to full graduate status or dismiss from the program.

Students will not be accepted in courses unless they are in full graduate status or provisional status within the Juvenile Justice Doctoral Program.

**Processing of Applications**

There are essentially two major components to an application. The Graduate School requires an application form, official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate coursework, and official GRE results (and official TOEFL results if a foreign student). Those should be sent directly to the Graduate School. The Doctoral Program requires an application form, an essay, and three letters of recommendation. However, applications can potentially be expedited if the applicant sends a COPY of ALL materials to the Doctoral Program.

When the materials sent to the Graduate School are complete, and the minimum University criteria met for admission, the Graduate School will forward documents to the Doctoral Program. Note that the criteria for the Ph.D. program in Juvenile Justice are more stringent than the general University requirements and meeting University criteria does NOT convey admission to the Ph.D. program.

When the application package for the Ph.D. program is complete, the Doctoral Committee will meet to consider admission. Normally this meeting occurs when there are five or more applicants to consider, but may occur with fewer applicant records. The committee considers the record of each applicant and makes a decision to admit or deny admission to the program. This decision will include an assessment of the applicants essay content and the letters of recommendation. Other information, such as research experience, subject-matter-related publication and college-level teaching, may be used in a secondary manner insofar as that information bears upon the suitability of the applicant for doctoral work in juvenile justice. Assuming the decision of the committee is favorable, the applicant will be called for an interview as a final step in determining who is admitted. The interview may be conducted either in person or



telephonically, at the discretion of the committee. Based on this interview, the committee will make a final decision to recommend admission to the University Graduate School. The interview does not automatically result in admission to the Ph.D. program.

#### **FINANCIAL AID and ASSISTANTSHIPS**

The University offers various forms of financial aid, from scholarships to work-student arrangements and loans. Scholarships are usually in very short supply. Those interested in financial aid are encouraged to contact or make an appointment with the financial aid office on campus. <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/5917.asp>

The College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology will normally have two forms of financial aid available: (1) graduate assistantships (usually requiring 20 hours of work a week) and research assistants supported by externally-funded grants. All teaching and research assistantships carry a waiver of out-of-state tuition fees. For information on these opportunities, contact the Department Head or individual faculty in charge of various grants.

Assistantships will be competitively awarded to full-time students only. Half assistantships may also be awarded at the discretion of the Doctoral Committee and the Dean. All full-time applicants admitted to the program should apply to be considered for assistantships by the Doctoral Committee. These assistantships will normally be awarded for a period of one academic year and may be renewed for a second year. Assignments most likely will include teaching and/or teaching support, research/research support, and/or editorial duties. Other assistantship requirements are specified in the award offer letter.

Award criteria for assistantships are similar to admission criteria. Those who are admitted under full-time status will be ranked by the Committee based on their Graduate GPA, GRE scores, and additional evidence of preparation for the discipline. Other forms of award other than student loans also will be taken into consideration in the awarding of assistantships. The Committee will award assistantships based on ranking and the available number of assistantships.

In order to maintain an assistantship the following are necessary (see Doctoral Policy 3 for specific details):

- Continuing full-time enrollment (9-12 hours)
- Doctoral Grade Point Average above B
- Satisfactory evaluation by the supervising professor
- Satisfactory progress evaluation by the Doctoral Committee
- Indications of professional potential

In the event of a failure to meet one of these areas, the Doctoral Committee may decide to continue the assistantship, predicated on the student's acceptance of appropriate remedial activity.

If a student receiving compensation for an assistantship of 20 hours a week decides to seek either full-time or part-time employment elsewhere, that fact shall be made known in writing to the Department Head. In general, full-time employment constitutes grounds for automatic termination of assistantship and/or scholarship awards. Part-time employment will be considered on an individual basis, but normally will be discouraged.

#### **GRADUATE STATUS**

Applicants will be admitted in one of two statuses: full graduate status or provisional status.

**Full graduate status** is conferred on those students (1) admitted to the program with no conditions of admission, or (2) who have satisfied all conditions of admission.

**Provisional admission status** is used when the Doctoral Committee feels that prerequisites have not been met, official versions of required forms have not been received, and/or there is a question of ability to perform at doctoral standards by virtue of a failure to meet specific admissions standards. Students who are provisionally admitted must satisfy all requirements prior to being admitted to full graduate status (conditions and requirements will be provided via letter to the student). In the event of a failure to meet prerequisites, deficiencies must be completed prior to beginning doctoral coursework. *No doctoral coursework may be taken when there are prerequisite deficiencies nor*

*may stemwork be used to meet doctoral program requirements.* Where stemwork is assigned to rectify deficiencies, any grade lower than “B” will automatically result in a decision to deny admission.

In other than prerequisite-deficiency situations, no more than 12 units of coursework may be taken in provisional status. At the end of the first semester in provisional status (non-prerequisite-deficiency cases), the Doctoral Committee will meet to consider placing the student in full graduate status. Based on the evidence at hand, the Committee may make one of two decisions: (a) the student is given full graduate status; or (b) the deficiencies are too great and the student is dismissed from the program.

If provisional status is assigned because official copies of required forms/reports are unavailable, the student is reminded that it is his/her responsibility to ensure that all conditions of admission are met in a timely fashion and to notify the Department Head when all conditions are met. Official copies of all transcripts and GRE report forms are required by the Graduate School for admission to the University; therefore, provisional status due to a lack of these forms *must* be removed prior to registration. Failure to meet conditions of admission in a timely fashion may result in dismissal when the doctoral committee reviews the student’s case.

No students will be accepted in courses unless they are in full graduate status or provisional admission status within the Juvenile Justice Doctoral Program.

#### **TRANSFER OF GRADUATE COURSEWORK FROM OTHER UNIVERSITIES**

A maximum of six (6) units of juvenile-justice-related *doctoral-level* coursework may be transferred from other accredited universities. A minimum grade of “B” is required in any such courses. Transfer credit is granted by petition to, and approval by, the Doctoral Committee, with final approval by the Dean of the College. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the petition and justify the acceptance of the courses. In the event that a student has taken less than 7000-level courses to be used toward the coursework requirements of the doctoral program, the number of allowed transfer units is reduced on a one-for-one basis. Courses presented for transfer credit must be the equivalent of courses in the doctoral program. Please keep in mind that transfer credit is by permission only and is not a right of the student.

1. The student gathers information/credentials about the course. Each desired transfer course must be from a regionally accredited graduate program. Information and credentials include; syllabus, course description in the catalogue of the university in which the class was taken (or will be taken), or a letter from the professor stating the subject matter covered in the class. The more information provided the better.
2. The student provides his/her advisor with the information. The advisor reviews the information for adequacy. If the advisor feels that enough information has not been gathered, the student is told what information is needed. If the class (es) is/are transferable in the opinion of the advisor, a university transfer form is completed by the advisor and forwarded to the Department head for consideration, followed by the Dean. The transfer form states why the course should be transferred or not transferred. If the advisor feels that the course is not transferable, the student may write a letter of appeal to the Department head.
3. The Department Head will verify the transferability of the course and recommend approval or disapproval. If disapproved, the student may appeal to the Dean of the College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology.

#### **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

The Juvenile Justice Ph.D. Program has no tracks. There is a common core and students may develop a specialty by structuring their choice of substantive courses, elective courses, and dissertation topic.

#### **The Doctoral Curriculum**

The program requires a minimum of 61 semester credit hours for the Ph.D. Of these hours, 43 are coursework hours and 18 are dissertation hours.

Coursework hours are divided as follows:

- 9 hours in the area of delinquency theory
- 9 hours in the area of juvenile justice
- 13 hours in the area of research methodology and statistics support courses
- 12 hours of electives

Specific courses and requirements are:

*Prerequisite Courses Required:* No credit hours accrued for stem work toward the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

JJUS 5943 or equivalent	Research Methods
JJUS 5963 or equivalent	Applied Statistical Methods and Computing
JJUS 5123 or equivalent	Foundations of Juvenile Justice
JJUS 5763 or equivalent	Theories of Delinquency

*Area: Required Support Courses* (13 semester hours)

JJUS 7661	Juvenile Justice Statistics Lab
JJUS 7943	Advanced Research Methods I
JJUS 7953	Advanced Research Methods II (must pass JJUS 7963 Advanced Statistical Techniques I in order to take Advanced Research Methods II.)
JJUS 7963	Advanced Statistical Techniques I
JJUS 7973	Advanced Statistical Techniques II

*Area: Juvenile Justice* (9 semester hours)

JJUS 7113	Juvenile Justice Issues and Practice (required) and six additional hours chosen from:
JJUS 7653	Seminar on Juvenile Corrections*
JJUS 7683	Philosophy of Punishment*
JJUS 7753	Demographics and Juvenile Justice*
JJUS 7763	Seminar on Juvenile Processing by Police and Courts*
JJUS 7783	Legal Aspects of Juvenile Justice*
JJUS 7863	Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation*

*Area: Delinquency Theory* (9 semester hours chosen from the following)

JJUS 7673	The Juvenile Offender and Youth Gangs
JJUS 7773	Theories of Crime and Delinquency
JJUS 7873	Advanced Seminar in Crime and Delinquency Theory

*Elective Courses* (12 semester hours chosen from the following)

JJUS 7623	Seminar in Grant Writing
JJUS 7643	Management and Administration
JJUS 7653	Seminar on Juvenile Corrections*

JJUS	7683	Philosophy of Punishment*
JJUS	7693	Qualitative Methods in Social Sciences
JJUS	7713	Special Topics
JJUS	7753	Demographics and Juvenile Justice*
JJUS	7763	Seminar on Juvenile Processing by Police and Courts*
JJUS	7783	Legal Aspects of Juvenile Justice*
JJUS	7853	Prevention and Treatment of Crime and Delinquency
JJUS	7863	Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation*

Courses taken during a master's degree program may not be repeated for credit at the doctoral level.

*Dissertation Hours (18 hours of dissertation):*

JJUS	8913.	Dissertation I.
JJUS	8923.	Dissertation II.
JJUS	8933.	Dissertation III
JJUS	8943.	Dissertation IV

Note: Dissertation hours may be repeated if necessary. Enrollment in dissertation courses requires admission to doctoral candidacy.

*Non-Course Requirements:*

Beyond course work and required hours, the additional requirements for the Ph.D. include:

1. Completion of Doctoral Comprehensive Examinations
2. Prospectus and prospectus defense
3. Dissertation and dissertation defense (Note: the student must be enrolled during the semester he or she intends to graduate.)

**COURSE LOADS**

The normal full-time course load is 9 to 12 semester credits during regular academic semesters. The minimum number of credits for full-time status is 9. Full-time or part-time status within the doctoral program does not exist during the summer, although the University imposes limits on summer enrollment. Students taking courses in part-time status are warned that the seven-year course expiration requirement may pose a problem. Overloads are defined as more than 13 semester credits and are discouraged. Students anticipating an overload must receive approval from the Department Head prior to enrolling for any course that would constitute the overload. The maximum course load during a 5-week summer term is 6 hours.

**CONSIDERATIONS FOR MAKING COURSE ENROLLMENT DECISIONS**

It is possible for students to be enrolled in the program for 1 to 4 courses (plus statistics lab) during any semester. While the course flow provides some instruction for enrollment, some general considerations are necessary to ensure that courses are taken in a proper order:

1. Courses will normally be offered once a year. A few exceptions will exist.
2. Some courses are required (Issues and practice, statistics, methods and theory). Those should be taken at the beginning of the program.
3. Some courses are sequenced. Follow up versions of courses have as prerequisites the previous versions (e.g., statistics I - statistics II, methods I - methods II, theory - advanced theory). Other courses are best taken after having had other courses as preparation (e.g., statistics, methods, grant writing and program evaluation).
4. Should you take courses out of sequence, you may have to wait a substantial period for a needed course to be taught again.
5. It is possible for a scheduled course to be cancelled for various compelling reasons. If this should happen, subsequent semester course schedules may be adjusted to minimize harm to enrollment planning.
6. Always consult with your Program Advisor or the Department Head prior to registration.

### **CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT**

Continuous enrollment defines the minimal level of academic activity needed to remain enrolled in the program. A Ph.D. student is considered to be continuously enrolled when he or she is enrolled for at least one course during each of the spring and fall academic semesters. Once a Ph.D. student has been admitted to candidacy he or she must enroll for a minimum of 6 hours during the 12-month academic year to be continuously enrolled. Students who fail to meet the continuous enrollment criteria will be withdrawn from the program and must apply for readmission. The sole exception is enrollment during comprehensive exams. Ph.D. students taking comprehensive exams are not required to be enrolled in a course. [Note: Should the University develop a zero-unit continuous enrollment course, Ph.D. students will be required to continue enrollment.]

### **RESIDENCY**

Students must establish coursework residency before being admitted to candidacy. The residency requirement is considered to be met when a student has been continuously enrolled on campus for two consecutive semesters (excluding the summer semester).

### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Graduate students who have not completed their formal course requirements are expected to enroll continuously in the program during all consecutive long semesters (fall and Spring Semesters) after initial registration. Students who do not expect to be enrolled should request a leave of absence in a letter to the Department Head. A leave of absence is granted at the discretion of the Dean of the College.

This provision includes students who have completed their formal course requirements and are in the process of taking the comprehensive examination or writing the dissertation away from the campus. During a leave of absence, a student cannot make use of the University or College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology resources, nor can a student attempt the comprehensive examination or defend a dissertation.

### **GOOD STANDING**

Ph.D. Students remain in good standing when they maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 for graded courses in the doctoral program. Only grades of "B" or better count toward required course work (i.e., all but the elective courses) and dissertation hours. Only grades earned in, or approved by the College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology doctoral level courses will be used to calculate a student's GPA. Any grade lower than "B" in a required area course will require the student to retake the course and pass it with a grade of "B" or higher. While one elective grade of "C" may be counted toward the Ph.D., only grades of "B" or better indicate satisfactory completion of courses required for the Ph.D. If a student receives a total of two grades of "C," in any combination of courses (elective/required), the student will be dismissed from the program, but may petition the Doctoral Committee for readmission. After reviewing the petition, the committee may allow readmission under such conditions as it deems appropriate. A third grade lower than "B" will result in permanent dismissal from the program with no recourse to petition.

### **PROGRESS EVALUATION**

In the second and fourth semesters of each student's academic year, a formal evaluation will be conducted by the Doctoral Committee. This evaluation will focus on the student's progress toward the Ph.D. degree. Students, attending full time and taking 9-12 units each semester, should be able to complete formal doctoral course work within two full years. However, this constitutes a heavy course load and student progress in the program will be measured against the more reasonable average of 9-12 units a semester. Where needed, the Committee will provide recommendations and guidance to students use. Committee decisions related to student progress will be one of the following:

1. Progress is satisfactory, student is encouraged to continue in the program;

2. Progress is potentially unsatisfactory, remediation work is suggested, student is encouraged to continue in the program; or
3. Progress is unsatisfactory, student should be terminated from the program.

Students receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation may petition the Dean to remain in the program. Only one petition of an unsatisfactory evaluation is allowed.

#### **TIME LIMIT**

A student must complete all requirements for the Ph.D. degree within seven (7) consecutive years after the first date of enrollment in the program. If transfer courses are permitted, the initial enrollment date of those courses must not exceed seven years prior to the date the degree is awarded.

#### **EXAM MODIFICATIONS**

Students who need special modifications for examinations must submit the following information:

1. A letter from the student requesting modifications
2. A letter of diagnosis from the appropriate profession; and
3. Test results confirming the diagnosis.

This information should be submitted to the Office of the Administrator, Office of Diagnostic Testing and Disability Services (Evans Hall, Rm 317). Students currently enrolled must follow the same procedure.

Approval of requested modifications will be made by the above named office after review of the circumstances and documents presented. Upon arrival and at the student's request, faculty members will be advised of the required modifications in order that students may be provided assistance.

From time-to-time, the University may modify its policies or procedures in this regard. Should this occur, the new guidelines established by the appropriate office take precedence.

#### **University Withdrawal Policy and Procedures**

refer to PVAMU Graduate Catalog <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/231.asp>

##### **Voluntary Withdrawal from a Course**

##### **Withdrawal from the University (Voluntary)**

##### **Administrative Withdrawal (Involuntary)**

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR NAME** refer to PVAMU Graduate Catalog <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/231.asp>

#### **THE DOCTORAL ACADEMIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Department Head will meet with each student upon admission to the Ph.D. program and will serve as academic advisor to all first-year doctoral students. Prior to the completion of 18 hours of course work, a Doctoral Academic Advisory Committee will be selected and one graduate faculty member will be designated to chair the student's committee. An academic advisory committee is composed of the chair and one other member, normally from the graduate faculty. The doctoral student will initiate the formulating and forming of his or her academic advisory committee in consultation with the Department Head. The chair of the individual doctoral student's academic advisory committee is responsible for advising that student for courses taken beyond eighteen credit hours, generally overseeing the student's progress, and assisting in preparation for comprehensive examinations and the dissertation. It is not expected that the chair of the advisory committee will chair the student's dissertation. The choice of

dissertation chair (and the committee) may be based on different criteria than those used in the advisory committee decision.

## **TEACHING AND DOCTORAL TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS**

The faculty encourages all doctoral students to engage in teaching. Because teaching activity is a core component of the scholarly enterprise, even those who do not anticipate entering the professorate may find themselves invited to teach as an adjunct in a local college or university. Therefore, preparation in teaching is desirable and potentially essential to one's career.

The College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology retains adjunct professors from time-to-time, depending on the needs of the various academic programs. These are paid positions and doctoral students may be eligible. To inquire about such positions, contact the Juvenile Justice Department Head. Note that a course instructor must have a minimum of 18 graduate hours in the discipline of instruction.

Those on doctoral assistantships can anticipate that at least one of their semester assignments will involve teaching. This can range from assisting a Professor with a course to becoming the instructor of record in a course. If possible, it is the faculty's goal to provide teaching experiences in a traditional lecture format as well as in distance learning/internet formats. In gaining such experiences, Ph.D. graduates will likely be in greater demand in the academic marketplace.

## **CONDUCTING RESEARCH**

Research is another expected skill of a Ph.D student. To this end, the faculty encourages all doctoral students to engage in research projects with individual faculty members, either in an assisting capacity or as a co-investigator. It is also possible that students may engage in independent research. Similarly, students are encouraged to participate in the grantsmanship process. Students should contact individual faculty members to ascertain research opportunities and/or the availability of data for secondary analysis. For those who wish to pursue an academic career, or a research career within a juvenile justice agency, such preparation is virtually mandatory.

## **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

Before they may be admitted to candidacy, students must successfully complete their doctoral examinations. These examinations are employed to test the student's general knowledge, his or her ability to integrate and synthesize the wealth of information in the field, and his or her preparation for engaging in the kind of independent scholarship required to complete a doctoral dissertation.

### **The Purpose of Doctoral Comprehensive Examinations**

Comprehensive examinations are given to insure that doctoral students possess satisfactory understanding of the core areas of the discipline; in addition, they provide students and their advisors with a tool for identification and remedy of deficiencies. Doctoral comprehensives are assessment tools that allow the faculty to evaluate the Ph.D. student's problem-solving skills, integrative and independent thinking, and theoretical and methodological readiness to formulate research that meets the field's scholarly requirements. The examinations are also used to assess the student's preparation and readiness for work on the prospectus and dissertation. For these reasons, examination grades in prior coursework are not comparable and do not constitute a reliable measure of performance on the comprehensives.

### **The Content of Comprehensive Examinations**

Comprehensive examinations are examinations taken over the range of coursework and readings necessary to exhibit mastery of the subject matter of juvenile justice. The examinations are *not* course-specific, nor are they derived from singular sources. Questions on the examination are designed to elicit thoughtful responses that indicate a comprehension of issues, policy orientations, and research in the field.

All graduate faculty will be invited, in writing, by the Department Head to submit questions for the examination. Those who have taught courses in the doctoral program will be specifically asked for questions related to the content areas in which they have taught. The Doctoral Committee will meet and select the questions to be used on the comprehensive exam, and is responsible for the final format of the examination. Every effort will be made to select questions requiring thoughtful, integrative answers rather than questions with specific factual answers. The Research Methods and Statistics area, however, will tend to be less integrative and more specific.

In preparing for the examinations, students are encouraged to visit faculty for information, advice and assistance in the examination areas. All faculty are encouraged to aid students in study efforts related to preparation for the doctoral examination, offering direction as needed. To allow adequate time for preparation, students should contact faculty and begin their study preparations as early as possible prior to their expected examination date.

### **When Examinations Will Be Offered**

Students desiring to take the comprehensive examination during any semester must notify the Department Head no later than the first week of the semester in which the examinations are to be taken. The Doctoral Committee will schedule one date for examinations during each full semester. That date will normally be during October and February of the fall and spring semesters, respectively. These dates may vary, depending upon holiday schedules and other exigencies. Students will receive notification of the exact date no later than the second week of the semester. No exams will be offered during the summer.

### **Comprehensive Examination Rules and Procedures**

1. Content of the Examinations. The comprehensive examination is composed of three sections. The three sections are General Juvenile Justice and Public Policy, Research Methods and Statistics, and Delinquency/Crime Theory.
2. Examination Period. The examination period will consist of three (3) days, normally scheduled on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of the same week. Each day will comprise a different examination area. The Monday exam will be General Juvenile Justice and Public Policy, the Wednesday exam will be Research Methods and Statistics, and the Friday exam will be Theory. Each day will consist of two three-hour sections, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30a.m., followed by a lunch break, and the second examination section from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
3. Number of Questions. Students will be required to answer two questions during each of these examination sections. Each section will have two categories of questions: one mandatory question which **MUST** be answered, and three questions of which **ONE** must be answered.
4. Allowable Materials. Students should bring the following materials to each three-hour examination section:
  - Five 8.5 by 11 standard blue books (please do not write on them because they will be swapped among the other test takers). **ALL** of each answer must be contained in the blue book(s) for that specific question. No blue book may be used to answer two or more questions.
  - A simple calculator (any electronic device capable of storing and displaying notes will not be allowed)
  - Pens or pencils (bring more than one)
  - No other paper materials, bags, etc. will be allowed in the examination room. Any such materials found in a student's possession may be cause for removal from the examination room and initiation of proceedings under the University's academic dishonesty policy.
5. Provided for student use. A dictionary will be located in the room for use during the test.



6. Relationship to coursework. Comprehensive examinations may not be taken until a student has completed *all* coursework. A student in the final stages of coursework may, however, notify the Department Head of intent to take examinations the following semester.

### **Grading of Comprehensive Exams**

The answer to each question will be graded by two faculty with expertise in that particular question. Normally, the faculty member who asked the question will be one of the graders. Grades will be assigned as follows:

- 0 Fail (inadequate answer - equivalent to failing the question)
- 1 Marginal (weak answer - does not signify that the answer actually contributed to a passing grade on the section)
- 2 Good (adequate answer)
- 3 Excellent (superior answer)

Each area day will be graded separately. The grades assigned by all graders to each question in that day will be summed. **In order to pass a section, the summed total must be equal to, or higher than, a score of twelve (12).** The maximum possible summed total is twenty-four (24). Students who score above twenty (20) points on any one examination section will be deemed to have passed with distinction. Grades will normally be available from the Graduate Coordinator two weeks after the examination date.

*Failing Grade.* Students who receive a failing grade (a summed total less than 12) on a section examination will be allowed to retake the section examination once. Two consecutive failures on any examination will result in the student's dismissal from the Ph.D. program. Sections passed do not have to be retaken. All failed sections must be retaken at the same time. I.e., a student may not choose to retake multiple failed sections one at a time.

*Failing Grade Comments.* Faculty members grading the comprehensive examinations are required to submit comments on questions for which they provide failing grades to each student's Advisory Committee Chair in an effort to aid the student's future study efforts. Faculty may choose to surpass this minimal requirement.

*A Note on Failed Comprehensive Examination Sections.* Please note that it is possible for students to do well in course work, but to be otherwise unprepared for the kind of work required either to write a prospectus and dissertation or to perform to acceptable standards of academic scholarship. Such students may not have made an adequate effort in independent research, or may simply lack the kind of insight necessary to integrate the various forms of knowledge the College's faculty expects of its doctoral candidates.

### **Petition of Decision and Remediation**

If a student is dismissed from the program as a result of failing any portion of the exam twice, a petition may be forwarded to the Doctoral Committee, through the Department Head, requesting reconsideration. If the Committee determines that circumstances warrant reinstatement in the program, one or a combination of the following remedial steps must be taken prior to a third attempt at examinations:

- Required readings in the failed area (to be supervised by the student's Advisory Committee Chair)
- Required coursework, including enrollment in specified courses related to the failed area
- Required papers in the failed area (to be supervised by the student's Advisory Committee Chair)

The student will be given the Doctoral Committee's requirements in writing, and provided with a specific and reasonable deadline for completion. Under no circumstances shall a second retake of failed comprehensive examination section(s) be scheduled sooner than six (6) months from the approval of the petition. Should remedial steps not be accomplished within a reasonable time period (normally one year from the reinstatement decision), the student shall be dismissed from the program without recourse to further petition.

***Helpful Suggestions for Writing the Comprehensive Exam:***

1. Answer all questions **FULLY**. If any portion of a question is not answered, graders will be required to note that you have not completely answered the question. Similarly, a cursory response to any one portion of a question tends to suggest superficiality.
2. Take your time, but do not work overlong on any one answer.
3. Answers will be graded on logic, knowledge of the subject matter, integration of materials, organization of the answer and critical reasoning ability. Write concisely, logically, and to the point. Superficial answers will not receive high grades.
4. Use references to the literature where appropriate, but do not cite for the sole purpose of impressing the graders. Answers without appropriate referencing suggest that the writer has only a cursory knowledge of the literature in the area. Remember, part of a doctoral education is not only knowing the literature, but also the context in which it was produced.
5. Consider outlining your answer prior to writing it. An outline usually will assist you in organizing your thoughts and may result in a more coherent answer.

**ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY**

It is the student's responsibility to petition for advancement to candidacy. Forms are available in the Doctoral Program Office. To be advanced to candidacy, students must have completed all of the following requirements and/or procedures:

1. Achieved a cumulative grade-point average no lower than 3.0 in program coursework and a minimum grade of "B" (3.0) in all required area courses.
2. Completed all coursework with no more than one grade lower than "B" (unless the student successfully petitions his or her dismissal and retakes a second "C" course with a grade of "B" or higher).
3. Successfully passed all comprehensive examinations.

The Doctoral Committee will review all petitions for advancement to candidacy and consider the student's scholastic performance and other circumstances. The decision shall be to grant advancement, specify such additional preparatory courses as the committee shall deem necessary, or recommend alternative courses of action. One of the possible alternative courses of action is to refuse candidacy and initiate dismissal from the graduate program. This latter action would take place in the event of consistently poor scholastic performance or other unfavorable circumstances.

Following approval of the student's application to candidacy, the student may enroll in Dissertation hours.

Students admitted to candidacy are required to accumulate a minimum of 6 credit hours during each twelve month period following admission to candidacy and until such time as the degree is granted. Further, a student must be enrolled for a minimum of 3 dissertation hours during any semester in which University resources are used. Assistantship students must continue to meet the enrollment criteria for maintaining their assistantship. Any exception to this policy requires the approval of the Doctoral Program Coordinator and the Dean of the College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology. Students who fail to enroll for the appropriate number of hours following advancement to candidacy shall be placed on probation. To be removed from probation, the student must enroll for the deficient number of credits plus three additional credits in the next semester. Students who do not meet these requirements will be dismissed from the doctoral program and required to reapply for admission, subject to any new admissions criteria in effect at the time of readmission.

**THE CONCEPT PAPER:**

The first step in the dissertation process is the approval of the concept paper. As soon as possible after passing all sections of the comprehensive exams comprehensive examination the concept paper will be submitted to dissertation committee members for approval. The concept paper is the research idea. At a minimum it should address the what, why, how of the research idea. It can be as brief as two-three pages.

The goal of the concept paper is to get the students writing as soon as possible, and to give chair and committee members the opportunity to agree, early on, on a dissertation topic or decline committee membership. The concept paper might change or take on a different shape as progress is made towards the prospectus defense. While the primary goal of the concept paper is to get the student thinking about a topic as soon as possible after comprehensive exam; a secondary goal is to get the faculty members involved, very early on, rather than being presented with an unfamiliar manuscript or topic.

The concept paper will evolve into the prospectus, as initially presented it will not be considered a prospectus. The concept paper will not be publicly defended.

### **THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE**

Students must choose a Dissertation Committee of four faculty. Three of the members are to be chosen from the faculty of the College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology, one of whom will be the chair. A fourth committee member is chosen from faculty outside the College. This is done in consultation with the Department Head and the Chair of the student's Advisory Committee. A letter requesting approval of the proposed committee must be forwarded to the Department Head. No committee may be constituted without the Department Head's formal approval. The members of the committee are normally chosen for their expertise in the proposed topic or for expertise in a particular methodology. All voting members of the committee must be on the graduate faculty. Other members may be added to the committee in a non-voting status if the committee chair and the Department Head's concur. Faculty who have not published juvenile justice or criminal justice-related materials within the past five years may only be added to the committee in a non-voting status.

Where a student is unable to assemble a complete committee, the Department Head shall appoint members as needed from the faculty, or aid the student in contacting appropriate faculty from other departments.

The doctoral committee can be changed at the student's discretion. The student should consult with the Department Head about such changes as soon as possible, and forward a new letter requesting approval of the new committee. Students are cautioned, however, that changes to the committee may also result in changes to the dissertation with a corresponding extension of writing time.

Faculty members may also elect to withdraw from a Committee. Before doing so, the faculty member must meet with the student and the Chair of the Doctoral Committee to discuss the reasons for withdrawing. In the event that the Chair wishes to withdraw, the Chair and student shall meet with the Department Head. In the event that the Chair of the Doctoral Committee who wishes to withdraw is the Department Head, the Dean of the College shall serve as arbitrator.

After selecting a committee, the student should consult with the Chair and determine the process to be followed in completing the dissertation; the Graduate School should also be consulted to determine the currently-approved format. Formal requirements include an oral defense of the prospectus and an oral defense of the dissertation. Beyond these requirements, individual chairs and committees may determine how and when chapters are to be submitted and approved, and the procedure to be used in the defense. A successful defense of the dissertation requires that three of the four committee members vote to pass.

### **DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS**

Ph.D. students are required to complete and orally defend a prospectus. The exact format for the prospectus shall be determined by the student's Doctoral Committee, with the greatest input usually coming from the Chair of the Doctoral Committee. A prospectus is a written proposal and contract concerning the contents of the Doctoral Dissertation. Typically, a prospectus contains, but is not limited to, the following information:

1. Overview and significance of problem. (Chapter 1: Problem Statement)
2. Review of relevant literature. (Chapter 2: Literature Review)
3. Review of methodology, relevant statistical or qualitative issues, and research hypotheses. (Chapter 3: Methods)

This information is presented in chapter form. In addition, these three chapters become the first three chapters of the dissertation.

The prospectus defense is not only a formal defense of the concept of the proposed dissertation, but also a final opportunity for the student and the Committee to meet and discuss the concept and methodology. A good prospectus defense results in the student receiving approval for the dissertation. At the same time a good defense often results in changes, ranging from the entire conception or mode of attack to new ways of measuring important variables, all of which help to fine-tune the dissertation. Therefore, the student should not be discouraged if changes result; changes are a normal part of the process.

### **Timelines for Prospectus Defense**

Following completion of the prospectus, students are required to defend the prospectus before their Committee. Two weeks prior to the prospectus defense, the Chair of the Committee is to notify all College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology faculty of the defense date and time date, and invite them to attend using the Announcement of Defense form available from the Graduate Secretary. An Announcement of Defense shall also be posted in a public place within the Department so that other students may attend the defense.

Two weeks prior to the prospectus defense, students shall deliver one (1) copy of the prospectus to the Graduate Secretary, who shall make the copy available to any persons who wish to examine the document. Students shall also make one (1) copy for each member of the Doctoral Committee. Students are responsible for the costs of printing, copying and distribution of the prospectus.

### **Prospectus Defense Procedures**

Students are expected to give a short presentation summarizing the prospectus at the beginning of the oral defense. The presentation should usually cover the problem statement, a summary of existing knowledge on the topic, the specific issue to be examined (with hypotheses if appropriate) and the methodology to be used. Following the student's presentation, the Dissertation Committee Chair shall give all professors in attendance the opportunity to question the student on her/his prospectus. Committee members will be given the first opportunity to address questions to the student, followed by non-Committee faculty. If time allows, other members of the audience will be given the opportunity to ask questions.

Once the question and answer period has been completed, the student under examination shall be asked to leave the room temporarily so that the Committee can discuss the prospectus. While all faculty are invited to participate in this discussion, the Committee is solely responsible for making the decision concerning the merit of the prospectus.

Following the discussion of the prospectus by the faculty, the Committee will be polled, and the student invited back into the room and informed of the Committee's decision. The committee decision shall be one of the following:

1. Pass the prospectus with no revisions.
2. Pass the prospectus with minor revisions. (The Chair reviews the revisions and issues approval.)
3. Tentatively pass the prospectus with major revisions in no more than one area. (The Committee jointly reviews the revisions and issues approval to the Chair.)
4. Fail the prospectus.

A successfully defended prospectus requiring no revisions shall be immediately placed in the student's file. Students who pass with revisions will provide the final revised and approved copy of the prospectus to the Department Head and to all Committee members. The Chair of the Committee is to notify the Department Head of the result of the defense in writing. Students who successfully defend their prospectus proceed to the dissertation.

A failed prospectus may be revised and defended one more time. In this circumstance, the student would be wise to make sure that each committee member tentatively approves a final draft of any new prospectus *prior to* attempting a second defense. Students who are unable to successfully defend a second prospectus will be dismissed from the program.

## THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation is an original research project that meets the proposal contained in the prospectus. As an original research project, the dissertation is expected to contribute to the base of knowledge of the field of juvenile justice (or criminal justice or criminology). The term research above should not be narrowly construed; theoretical, historical, and artistic works are all permissible. While there is no specific imposition of length, a general guideline is that a dissertation is normally a book-length project. Questions concerning University policy and procedures should be directed to the Graduate School.

### Content of the dissertation

A “normal” dissertation is one that is an empirically-driven investigation of a substantive issue in the field. This style of dissertation is usually composed of five (5) chapters: problem statement, literature review, methodology, analysis and conclusions. There are instances in which more than five chapters are appropriate and the student, in consultation, with his or her Chair should determine the best mode, given the topic and the analytical approach. A five-chapter dissertation guide is located in Appendix A

Since a dissertation normally focuses on a single issue, the format should be seen as that of a book. In its traditional form, however, the dissertation has “chapters” which tend to follow an article format. This is often misleading, especially since articles do not have chapters within them. An examination of any lead article in a major social science journal will find a logical flow from section to section. That flow generally establishes a problem, reviews the literature on that problem, determines the best way to proceed in analyzing the problem, presents new evidence on the problem and, finally, discusses and offers conclusions based on the analysis. This applies to an article whether or not it is empirically-based (i.e., theory or research). Further, the length of a dissertation is not a crucial consideration (however, keep in mind that book publishers will not be interested in manuscripts of less than 150 pages because of binding limitations).

**Style of Writing:** A dissertation should be written in a clear and concise manner. The use of “jargon” and “spoken English” should be avoided whenever possible. While these comments should not be construed to mean that a thesis is best written in a style which is fully understandable by laymen, it does mean that the student has the responsibility of writing in a style which is neither overly technical nor obtuse. Every sentence should be clear in its meaning and logically follow the preceding sentence. Headings and subheadings should be liberally used throughout.

### Format of the Dissertation Citation and Bibliography

The faculty has determined that the style of the dissertation, including headings, footnotes, and referencing, shall be compatible with the style manual of the American Psychological Association. However, the Graduate School may produce guidelines that supersede the APA style. All dissertations must meet Graduate School guidelines; therefore, doctoral students are encouraged to contact that office for a list of format requirements, if any, to be followed in preparing the final copy of the dissertation. The number of copies of a completed dissertation to be provided the University is determined by the Graduate School. In addition to that number of documents, one copy must be provided to the Department Head and one copy to the Dissertation Committee Chair. *The process of submitting the dissertation is complete when all fees are paid and necessary forms have been completed and submitted.*

### Format of the Dissertation Figures and Tables

All figures and tables in the dissertation are also governed by the APA Style Manual. In general, however, necessary figures and tables should be uniform and placed as close as possible to the point in the text at which they are referenced. Figures and tables that are informative, but not necessary to the understanding of the argument or analysis should be placed in an appendix (or in multiple appendices if necessary). Similarly, permissions, full versions of instruments and scales, questionnaires, and other data-gathering instrumentation or relevant materials should be placed in appendices rather than in chapter text.

### Role of the Dissertation Chair

The Dissertation Committee Chair has primary responsibility for supervising the dissertation process. All questions regarding the topic, process, form and format, and specific procedures should first be discussed with the Chair. While there are general requirements concerning prospectus defense, dissertation formatting and dissertation defense, all other decisions are likely to fall within the purview of the Chair.

The Chair also has the role of assisting the student during the writing process. This includes, but is not limited to, assisting in the conceptualization of the general project, the conceptualization and measurement procedures to be used with variables, the structure and number of chapters, issues that may arise during the analysis, and conclusions to be drawn. Dissertation committee members also are expected to make contributions in these areas. It is not within the purview of the Chair or committee members, however, to write the dissertation (or any portion of it) for the student.

Finally, the Chair acts as a mediator. In the event of differences in opinion between committee members and/or the student, the Chair determines which direction the dissertation shall take. In all instances, it is the Chair who acts as the final arbiter and decision-maker. To further this end, committee members should receive drafts of dissertation chapters only after the Chair has reviewed and commented on the materials. While not an express requirement, one chapter at a time should be provided to the Chair and committee members.

### **The Dissertation Process**

For the sake of brevity, please note that the same general rules applying to the prospectus and prospectus defense also apply to the dissertation with the following exceptions:

1. In addition to notifying the faculty of the College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology two (2) weeks prior to the dissertation defense, the student defending a dissertation must file the appropriate forms concerning announcement of defense with the Graduate School a minimum of two weeks prior to the day of the defense. The defense must take place at least one (1) week prior to the last day of classes in which the student expects to graduate. The student must meet all other requirements of the Graduate School, such as the completion of an application for graduation by the date specified in the Graduate Catalog, payment of any parking or library fines, the completion of a Dissertation Abstract, and the payment of any additional fees.
2. Students should familiarize themselves with the rules and requirements of the Graduate School. These guidelines may detail standardized format criteria (e.g., kind of paper, number of copies, page number placement, etc.) dissertations must meet in order to be accepted by the University.
3. Students must submit all copies of the completed dissertation signed by the dissertation committee and the Dean of the College of Juvenile Justice & Psychology to the University Library by the established deadline (contacts the Graduate School or consults the Academic Calendar).
4. Students must complete a National Research Council's *Survey of Earned Doctorates* when they submit their dissertations, as well as a dissertation abstract.

Please note that all fees incurred in the copying, preparation and completion of the dissertation are the student's responsibility.

### **THE DISSERTATION DEFENSE**

Having met the other requirements for the degree, students who successfully defend their dissertations and complete the submission process are granted the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the commencement ceremony immediately following. Students who are required to submit revisions shall be similarly granted their degree upon completion of those revisions, approval by the Committee or Committee Chair, and submission to the Graduate School.

The decision of the Committee may be one of three.

1. The Committee may vote to pass and sign the document as it is.
2. The Committee may vote to pass and all but the chair sign the document pending minor changes.
3. The Committee may vote to fail the defense, thus requiring that a different topic be used or that major revisions take place before another defense.

If a second defense is required, a second decision by the Committee to fail the dissertation shall result in the student's dismissal from the program.

Defense Failure Note: Students should note that it is in the best interest of Dissertation Committee members not to allow students to defend a prospectus or dissertation that the Committee members believe will not be approved. Likewise, it is also in the student's best interest for Committees to refuse to allow the defense of a prospectus or dissertation that is likely to fail to meet the appropriate criteria for well-crafted, original research. Indeed, faculty is expected to keep students from defending a prospectus or dissertation that does not meet the standard for well-crafted, original research contributing to the knowledge base of juvenile justice. The majority of students who reach the prospectus and dissertation phases of their education should be capable of completing the program of study leading to the Ph.D. Faculty is encouraged to identify and counsel students whom they feel will be unable to complete the prospectus or dissertation; this should be done as early as possible in the student's graduate career. In this way, students and faculty do not make a major commitment of their time to an attempt to complete a Ph.D. where such an outcome is unlikely.

### **STEPS IN COMPLETING THE DISSERTATION**

A summary of steps in completing the dissertation includes:

1. Consultation with a proposed committee chair and agreement from that person to serve as chair.
2. Consultation with the Department Head and proposed committee chair and selection of proposed committee members.
3. Formal letter of request to the Department Head, naming the proposed committee.
4. Secure formal approval of committee by the Department Head.
5. Schedule prospectus defense at least two weeks before anticipated date; announce prospectus defense date and topic to faculty.
6. Have the report of successful defense placed in the student's file.
7. File for graduation with University and notify Graduate School.
8. Schedule dissertation defense no later than two weeks prior to the last week of classes; announce dissertation defense date and topic to faculty. (Note: the announcement should be made two weeks prior to the anticipated defense date.)
9. Have copies of dissertation to all committee members one week prior to the dissertation defense date.
10. Successfully defend dissertation before the dissertation committee; have the report of successful defense placed in the student's file and multiple original copies of dissertation signed by all members of the committee.
11. Clear the final copy with the Graduate School and University Library.
12. Pay all appropriate fees and notify dissertation chair so that a grade or change of grade can be initiated.

### **RESEARCH AND DATA AVAILABILITY**

Faculty in the College can help identify datasets that can be made available to graduate students wishing to either practice research skills or use in a dissertation. A large number of criminal/juvenile justice datasets, originally collected by the National Institute of Justice, are available from that source. Faculty continue to develop research data as part of their own research projects, therefore, interested graduate students should consult with individual faculty to determine the availability of additional data. Finally, there are numerous research opportunities with local, regional and national criminal justice agencies, particularly where the goal of the research is policy development.

**Appendix A**  
**Graduation Checklist**

The following checklist is provided to assist students in gauging their progress in the program:

- Resolution of any outstanding conditions of admission
- Completion of all required courses with grade of “B” or better**
  - JJUS 7661 Juvenile Justice Statistics Lab
  - JJUS 7943 Advanced Research Methods I
  - JJUS 7953 Advanced Research Methods II
  - JJUS 7963 Advanced Statistical Techniques I
  - JJUS 7973 Advanced Statistical Techniques II
- Substantive Courses in Juvenile justice (9 semester hours)**
  - JJUS 7113 Juvenile Justice Issues and Practice
  - 6 area hours of juvenile justice
  - 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- Substantive Courses in Delinquency Theory (9 semester hours)**
  - 9 area hours of delinquency theory
  - 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- Completion of all area and elective hours**
  - 12 hours of electives
- Receipt of favorable progress evaluations from Doctoral Committee
- No more than one “C” grade in elective courses
- Comprehensive examination (passed all sections)
- Admission to candidacy – complete forms
- Concept Paper
- Complete Concept/approval form
- Constitute dissertation committee
- Complete dissertation committee form
- Agreement Understanding between student and chair form
- IRB form



- All committee members agree in defense - Approval of prospectus defense
- Schedule prospectus defense
- Passed defense of prospectus
- Registration for no fewer than 18 hours of dissertation coursework
- All committee members agree in defense
- Approval of dissertation defense
- Agreement of Understanding Approval Dissertation Defense form
- Scheduled defense of dissertation
- Passed defense of dissertation
- Complete on-line application for graduation (before graduation application deadlines)
- Correctly formatted copies of dissertation to Graduate School and Library for review
- Binding of dissertation - only after approval from Graduate School review and approval of chair
- Payment of all required fees

**Appendix B**

University Policies (listed below) - refer to PVAMU Graduate Catalog <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/231.asp>

**GRADING/CLASS RELATED APPEALS**

**UNIVERSITY POLICY: ACADEMIC HONESTY**

**OFFENSES and APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

**PROCEDURES in ACADEMIC DISHONESTY CASES\***

**STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN ACADEMIC DISHONESTY CASES**

**ATTENDANCE**

**GRADING**

**CHANGE OF MAJOR**