

**Doctoral Program in  
Parks, Recreation, and Tourism**

**A Student Guide for the Successful Planning and  
Fulfillment of a Graduate Degree in  
Parks, Recreation, and Tourism**



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## PREFACE

Welcome to the PRT graduate program at the University of Utah! Working on a graduate degree can be a challenging yet rewarding experience. We look forward to working with you!

This handbook addresses questions which, in our experience, are frequently asked by graduate students. Included are basic policies and procedures for the department, as well as graduate curricula and degree requirements. However, it may not include all of the information you may find valuable throughout your time as a graduate student at the University of Utah. It is important that you also check information provided by the Graduate School (<https://gradschool.utah.edu/graduate-students/>), including questions you may have about graduate school policies, financial resources, events and opportunities, and a variety of support services.

The information provided in this handbook are not intended to supersede policies or requirements outlined by the Graduate School. Should discrepancies arise, please bring them to the attention of the Director of Graduate Studies. Please retain this copy and utilize it to plan your graduate courses and activities.

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## **PH.D. PROGRAM**

### **Degree Description and Requirements**

The Ph.D. is an academic degree that is awarded for high attainment of the study of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Courses of study that lead to the Ph.D. assist students in developing competence in research and they involve in-depth inquiry into topics within, and related to, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. The Ph.D. program consists of a major in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, an area of concentration, and a research core that includes dissertation research.

The Ph.D. requires a minimum of 67 semester hours of study beyond the master's degree. The exact number of hours and the specific courses to be taken are based on the needs of individual students, taking into account such factors as interests, future aspirations, academic history, and degree of exposure to the study of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. A Ph.D. typically requires at least three full years, and often four, of study beyond the master's degree.

### **Degree Objectives**

- Graduates with doctoral degrees should be capable of effective teaching, scholarship, and research in higher education settings.
- Graduates with doctoral degrees should have special professional preparation that qualifies them for leadership positions in park, recreation, and tourism service agencies or academic institutions.
- Graduates with doctoral degrees should be able to interpret, analyze, and evaluate parks, recreation, and tourism phenomena from a multidisciplinary perspective.
- Graduates with doctoral degrees should be able to produce and publish original research relevant to parks, recreation, or tourism.

### **Variations from Prescribed PRT Core Courses**

While the core courses are generally considered mandatory for graduate students, under rare circumstances deviations from this recommended sequence may be approved by students' supervisory committees.

### **Non-Native English Speakers**

All individuals who are admitted to graduate study in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism and who are non-native speakers of English are required to complete the English "Placement Examination" that is offered through the English Language Institute and to complete the courses that are recommended based on the results of that test.

### **Supervisory Committee**

Doctoral supervisory committees consist of five members. The chair and two other members must be from within the Department Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. The fourth and fifth members represent the student's area of concentration and may be from any department or college. The majority of the members including the chair must be tenure-line or graduate faculty at the University of Utah, and at least one of the members must hold the rank of tenured Associate Professor or higher.

A doctoral supervisory committee should be formed before the student completes 50% of their area of specialization courses. Students initiate the process of forming the committee by completing the relevant **Supervisory Committee and Program of Study\*** form. The completed form must be returned to the office of the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Recommendations for supervisory committee members are subject to approval by the Director of Graduate Studies or the chair of the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism.

### **Program Approval**

Final approval of students' educational programs is the responsibility of the supervisory committee. Students should obtain approval of their program of study during approximately their fourth semester. Following approval of the student's program of study, the student should submit a typed and signed or initialed **Supervisory Committee and Program of Study\*** to the Department for submission to the Graduate School.

### **REQUIRED COURSES & CREDIT HOURS**

<i>Total Semester Credit Hours</i>	67 hours
Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Core	15
Research Core	32
Area of Concentration	20
	<u>Parks, Recreation, &amp; Tourism Core</u>
3	PRT 7000: Seminar in History & Philosophy of Leisure
3	PRT 7010: Behavioral Science Foundations of PRT*
3	PRT 7030: Seminar on Theory Application in PRT*
3	PRT 7100: Theory Development, Trends, & Issues In PRT
2	PRT 7800: Graduate Seminar (1 credit, 2 times)
1	PRT 6950: Great Books/directed readings
	<u>Research Core</u>
3	PRT 7102: Introduction to Research Methods*
3	PRT 7103: Design & Analysis I
3	PRT 7104: Design & Analysis II
3	Elective: Research Tools
6	PRT 7950: Independent Research Hours
14	PRT 7970: Dissertation-Doctoral
20	<u>Area of Specialization/Concentration</u>
	Area of Specialization negotiated with supervisory committee (up to 50% can be approved by advisor)
	Suggested:
	(3) PRT 7820: Seminar in <i>Leisure, Health, &amp; Environments</i>

\*These courses may be substituted given the student's background and previous graduate level (MS implied) coursework at the discretion of the supervisory committee and the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

## **APPLICATION OF MS COURSES FROM UNIVERSITY OF UTAH TO PH.D.**

Parks, Recreation, and Tourism courses that students have taken as a part of master's degree programs in the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism may be applied to the requirements for doctoral degrees. Doctoral students, however, must complete a minimum of 67 total hours within the doctoral program. In the case in which a doctoral student has completed one or more of the core courses while working toward a master's degree, he or she must substitute appropriate electives. The electives chosen are subject to the approval by the student's supervisory committee.

## **DEFENSES AND WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS**

### **Comprehensive (Qualifying) Examination**

**Comprehensive examinations may be held only between August 15 and May 15 since many faculty members are only on 9-month contracts and are not available during the summer months.**

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to assess the ability of students to synthesize concepts and knowledge gained through course work in a context of particular situations, problems, or professional issues. Students must attain a mark of "acceptable" on each question to pass the exam.

1. Comprehensive examinations should be taken during the semester in which the student is within 6 credit hours of completing all non-dissertation course work.
2. The student works with the Department Administrative Assistant to plan the examination. The student presents a transcript of academic work to date to the Administrative Assistant and selects an examination date that is at least five weeks in the future. The Administrative Assistant requests questions from members of the student's graduate supervisory committee.
3. Students have five weeks to complete the exam. Exams are to be picked up from and returned to the student's committee chair or the Department Administrative Assistant. During that five week period, students may draw on any resources available to them to address questions, but the responses must be their own work, with appropriate reference citations.
4. All responses must be submitted electronically. APA editorial style must be followed on all responses unless otherwise noted.
5. Student responses to each question will be evaluated by the individual who submitted the question. Feedback to the student may include narrative comments and a global rating of accept/unacceptable. This global rating will represent a composite of each evaluator's judgments concerning the effectiveness of the student's synthesis of concepts of knowledge.

6. Students may schedule a meeting with the chair of their supervisory committee to discuss faculty feedback from their comprehensive examinations. Alternately, feedback may be given directly by individual committee members.
7. Students will rewrite all questions that receive an "unacceptable" rating. They will have one week to do so. If the student fails to make acceptable ratings for each question of the second examination, the student's supervisory committee shall meet to determine the appropriate course of action to be followed. Examples of actions which might be recommended by the committee include additional or remedial course work followed by a third examination, an oral examination, or discontinuation of the student's involvement in the doctoral program. The specific recommendation will be determined by the student's needs and circumstances, as perceived by the supervisory committee.

### **Proposal Defense**

*Developing a dissertation topic and conducting research is a multi-step process. It is important to begin the process early.*

**Proposal defenses may be held only between August 15 and May 15 since many faculty members are only on 9-month contracts and are not available during the summer months.**

The initial defense is of the dissertation proposal to the student's supervisory committee. This is a formal defense and as such, a polished proposal and professional quality presentation should be the standard. Copies of the dissertation proposal must be in the hands of the student's supervisory committee a minimum of two weeks before the proposal defense. Proposals must meet the standards for theses and dissertations as presented later in this document.

### **Final Oral Examination**

**Final oral examinations may be held only between August 15 and May 15 since many faculty members are only on 9-month contracts and are not available during the summer months.**

The second defense is of the final dissertation itself. When the student and the supervisory committee consider the dissertation to be complete, the supervisory committee will conduct the final oral examination of the dissertation. This is the final formal defense and as such, a polished document and professional quality presentation should be the standard. Copies of the dissertation must be in the hands of the student's supervisory committee a minimum of two weeks before the final defense. Dissertations must meet the standards for theses and dissertations as presented in Appendix A of the Graduate Bulletin.

During the defenses, students, faculty, or other interested parties may be in attendance. However, only those who have read the document may ask questions during the defense. Defenses must be open to the public and publicly announced two weeks prior to the defense date; an electronic version of the document must also be made available at this time.

**\*Defenses and Examinations may be held only between August 15 and May 15 since many faculty members are only on 9-month contracts and are not available during the summer months.**

## **DISSERTATION EVALUATION CRITERIA**

- The method and design of the research must be of publishable quality for a top-tier journal, as judged by the majority of members of the student's supervisory committee, including two of the three members from inside the Department.
- Pilot tests are the norm. Exceptions to this policy may be fairly frequent, as in the case of dissertations that focus on analysis of extant data, in replications of previous investigations, and in situations in which extremely compelling reason exists to believe that the methods that are proposed will be effective. A situation in which a pilot test is not planned due to inconvenience or expense to the student is not considered sufficient for a supervisory committee to waive the pilot test requirement.
- Pilot test results will be presented as part of the dissertation research.
- As part of their deliberations at students' defenses, supervisory committees collectively decide on the grade that is awarded for the 14 dissertation credits. Grades assigned are based on a scoring rubric that has been developed by our directors of graduate studies and approved by our graduate faculty.
- Thorough reviews of the history of investigation in the students' area of inquiry must be included as part of the literature review, along with intensive evaluation of seminal works in that area.
- The literature review must be characterized by synthesis and evaluation. It must also conclude with statements of assumptions, propositions, and hypotheses to guide the investigation.

## **CHECKLIST OF STEPS FOR COMPLETING THE PH.D. DEGREE**

- [ ] 1. Receive letter of acceptance to the graduate program from the University Admissions Office.
- [ ] 2. Prior to registration for classes, consult the director of graduate studies or your assigned academic advisor for initial direction related to content awareness, matriculation status, and courses to be taken the first semester.
- [ ] 3. Establish supervisory committee and complete the Program of Study form (available on PRT Graduate Student Canvas page), before completing 50% of your area of specialization courses. The student must circulate this form to his or her supervisory committee at least one week in advance of the scheduled committee meeting. Submit two copies of the completed form, with committee members' initials indicating their



willingness to serve and their approval of your program of study, to office of the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism.

No more than 9 hours of non-matriculated course work may appear on the "Program of Study" form and all classes must be numbered 5000 or higher. No prerequisite courses may appear on this document and up to six semester hours of transfer credit may be accepted by students' supervisory committees if "A" or "B" grades were received for that work.

- [ ] 4. Satisfy residence requirements: Two consecutive semesters in attendance as a full time student.
- [ ] 5. Arrange and take written qualifying examination after consultation with supervisory committee chair during last semester of class work. Arrangements for date of the examination should be made through consultation with the administrative assistant of the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Passed exams will be entered into the graduate tracking system by the Health, Kinesiology, and Recreation Graduate Program Manager following notification by the Department's administrative assistant. Note: arranging a qualifying examination date initiates submission of your official program of study to the graduate school.
- [ ] 6. After passing the qualifying examination, a student may present his/her research proposal. If students have not already consulted *A Handbook for Theses and Dissertations* from the Thesis Office, they should consult this document prior to proposing.\*\*
- [ ] 7. Secure approval of dissertation proposal at graduate supervisory committee meeting. Only students who have successfully passed their comprehensive examination are eligible to have their proposals considered for approval by their graduate supervisory committees.
- [ ] 8. Obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval if the dissertation research will involve collection of data from human subjects. This process can take two or more months and requires on-line training prior to submission.
- [ ] 9. After the research study is complete and deemed ready for defense by the committee chair, the meeting must be scheduled and announced to the public. The thesis document must be made available in advance to all interested parties.
- [ ] 10. Complete the final examination of the dissertation before the student's supervisory committee and graduate faculty within the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Passed defenses will be entered into the graduate tracking system by the Health, Kinesiology, and Recreation Graduate Program Manager upon notification by the student and his/her chair.
- [ ] 11. Submit the following forms to the Thesis Office.

**Supervisory Committee and Program of Study\* and Final Reading Approval\*\*** It is often best to take copies of these forms to your final thesis defense so that your committee can sign them if they are satisfied with the student's defense and written document work.

**Permission to Quote Copyrighted Material and Multiple Author Release\*\*** (if necessary)

Note: A thesis release from the thesis office is required for graduation.

- [ ] 12. Submit a list of the semesters in which you were enrolled for dissertation (PRT 7970) hours to the chair of the student's supervisory committee to enable him or her to remove "T" grades for those hours. The student's supervisory committee will be responsible for assigning grades for these hours.
- [ ] 13. Following completion of the dissertation, the student and his or her supervisory committee chair are expected to co-author a professional journal article and/or abstract. This professional paper must be submitted for publication. Publication of the professional paper, however, is not required for the degree. A copy of the professional paper, along with submission date and title of publication, is to be placed on file with the Health, Kinesiology, and Recreation Graduate Program Manager.
- [ ] 14. All students are required to complete an application for graduation the semester before they intend to graduate. (<http://registrar.utah.edu/graduation/index.php> )

\*Supervisory Committee and Program of Study form is available on the PRT Graduate Student Canvas page.

\*\*Thesis Office Forms are available at <http://gradschool.utah.edu/thesis/>