

Candidacy Requirements Effective Fall 2021

Joint Program in Survey Methodology (JPSM) Michigan Program in Survey and Data Science (MPSDS)

To advance to Candidacy, a student must:

1. Complete all course requirements in accordance with their home program's policy,
2. Complete four terms in the Doctoral Seminar,
3. Earn a passing grade on the Qualifying Exam within twelve months of entering the program, and
4. Earn a passing grade on the final paper and final presentation at the end of the last term of the Doctoral Seminar.

Final decisions about Candidacy will be made following the completion of a student's final term in the Doctoral Seminar at the May JPSM/MPSDS faculty meeting. At that meeting, the faculty will determine if a student has met the requirements outlined above. Other circumstances will be considered including work performance (if applicable), professional development and the likelihood that the student will find a dissertation chair. The program directors will communicate the candidacy decision to each student no later than May 31. The department will process the necessary paperwork for approved students to advance to candidacy by the Fall of their 3rd year of doctoral study.

With the approval of the instructors of the doctoral seminar and the student's adviser, a student may progress to candidacy sooner than at the end of year two in their program. In this case, the student will still be expected to complete two years of the doctoral seminar.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students must meet registration requirements based on the requirements of their home program. Students will be provided with these requirements prior to the start of their doctoral program.

DOCTORAL SEMINAR

The Doctoral Seminar is designed to help students:

- A. Gain a thorough knowledge of important literature,
- B. Identify gaps in the survey methodology literature worthy of further investigation,
- C. Formulate research questions and hypotheses centered on the gaps,
- D. Design a research study including planned statistical analyses (experimental, quasi-experimental, observational) for addressing specific research aims, and
- E. Communicate the study's rationale and design in writing as well as in an oral presentation and interaction with faculty and other students.

DOCTORAL SEMINAR: FINAL PAPER AND ORAL PRESENTATION

The Doctoral Seminar is designed to assess whether a student has sufficient knowledge, creativity, and aptitude to develop and complete a dissertation. To that end, each student will develop a final paper to be submitted and presented during their final (4th) term in the Doctoral Seminar.

Students are allowed to consult with any faculty members, including but not limited to Doctoral Seminar instructors, an academic advisor, or (if one has been chosen) a dissertation advisor, about their research ideas and questions. The faculty advice can include 1) whether the topic is suitable for such a paper, 2) pointers to relevant bodies of literature the student may not be aware of, and 3) whether the proposed research is well designed. Advice should not include detailed feedback on theory or design nor editorial assistance for grammar, format, or organization. Individual faculty members will use their judgment to determine what kinds of discussions with the students they feel able to take part in, given these broad guidelines.

Paper Format and Schedule

The final paper in the doctoral seminar will consist of at least three sections: (1) a description of a problem or gap in the literature identified by the student and accompanied by a review of relevant literature, (2) a proposal for a research study that would fill this gap in that literature, and (3) a detailed description of the study design that considers possible outcomes and their implications. The paper must be clearly written. It is expected to be 20-30 double spaced pages (not longer), with 12-point font and one inch margins, not including tables, references, and figures.

The paper should address a problem that would be appropriate for a dissertation. The design of the proposed study should be informed by what is feasible given the resources typically available for dissertation research. Methods of data collection, generation, or analysis should be proposed to investigate the problem.

Students are strongly encouraged to use the final paper from the Doctoral Seminar as the basis of their dissertation proposal (prospectus). While the student may develop a different topic for their dissertation research, this is inefficient and less likely to be successful because it does not build on work already completed and effort already invested.

The student must deliver the paper to the Doctoral Seminar instructors at least 14 calendar days (i.e., including non-business days) before the oral presentation. Failure to submit the paper 14 days prior to the scheduled date will disqualify the student from being examined, barring extenuating circumstances.

Oral Presentation Format and Schedule

The oral presentation is a meeting of the student, instructors of the Doctoral Seminar, and any faculty, students or staff who wish to attend. During the oral presentation, the student will give a brief 15-20 minute introduction to the research topic and then respond to questions raised by Doctoral Seminar instructors as well as faculty in attendance.

The presentation will be scheduled outside of the regularly scheduled time for the Doctoral Seminar and will take place no later than May 1 of the student's second year in the program. The schedule will be determined by the doctoral seminar instructors in order to accommodate the number of second year students in a given year.