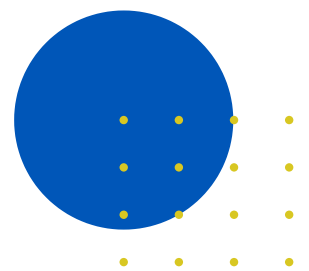


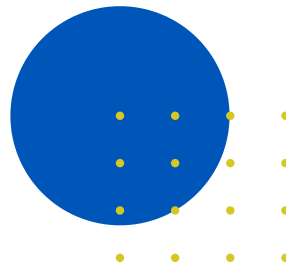


# Ph.D. Student HANDBOOK

WORDEN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE



# Prologue



The Ph.D. Program Handbook serves as a resource for vital program information for Ph.D. students in the Worden School of Social Service. However, it should not be viewed as an exhaustive statement of all School and University policies. It's important to recognize that the policies and procedures outlined in the Handbook may change at the discretion of the Ph.D. Committee. Therefore, they should not be relied upon as a comprehensive representation of the legal terms and conditions of student enrollment and status.

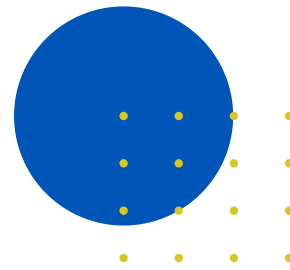
Instead, the Handbook offers a condensed overview of important aspects of the Ph.D. program. Students are also encouraged to consult the Student Affairs and Graduate Student SharePoint site for additional information. All university policies and procedures can be accessed through ConvergentPoint. Additionally, doctoral students can refer to the graduate catalog for details on the course sequence in the Ph.D. program. It is the responsibility of students to adhere to these graduate policies, forms, and procedures.

In cases of conflict between the Handbook and the policies of Academic Affairs, the latter takes precedence. While the Handbook aims to provide accurate and comprehensive information, changes to policy and program requirements may occur. Therefore, students should seek guidance from their advisor, dissertation chair, and the Ph.D. Program Director when uncertain about any matters.

When a new Ph.D. Handbook is issued with significant changes, the Ph.D. Program Director will ensure that all currently enrolled doctoral students receive the updated version along with information about the revisions.



# General Information



## **Address:**

Our Lady of the Lake University  
Worden School of Social Service  
411 SW 24th Street  
San Antonio, TX 78207

## **School Director:**

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Associate Professor  
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## **Ph.D. Program Director:**

Alegnta Felleke, Ph.D., MSW  
Assistant Professor  
210-431-3911  
afelleke@ollusa.edu

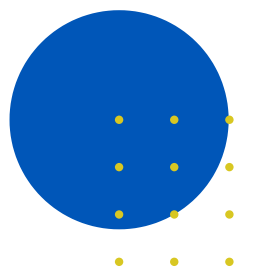
## **Ph.D. Administrative Assistant**

Anna Marie Ramirez  
(210) 528-7102  
amramirez@ollusa.edu

## **The Ph.D. Committee Members**

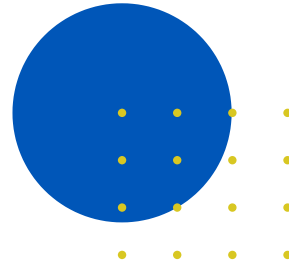
Alegnta Felleke, Ph.D., MSW (Chair)  
Ilan Kwon, Ph.D. MSW  
Joy Patton, Ph.D., LMSW  
Kimberly Gallegos, Ph.D., LSCW  
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# Meet Our Ph.D. Program Director



Welcome to the Ph.D. Program at the Worden School of Social Service, Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU). This Handbook is a comprehensive guide for doctoral students, offering insight from admission to dissertation defense.

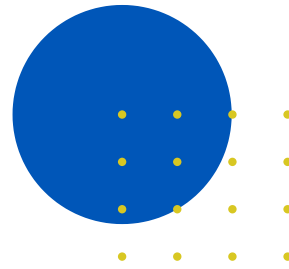
We're thrilled you've chosen our program over others nationwide. Expect intellectual stimulation, enhancing critical thinking, writing, and research skills. Upon earning your Ph.D. in Social Work, you'll contribute to the profession's knowledge base and mentor future social workers. Our faculty and staff are dedicated to your success, offering mentoring and assistance. To thrive:

- Build relationships with faculty, staff, and peers.
- Prioritize doctoral work.
- Embrace learning opportunities and communicate openly with the program director.
- Familiarize yourself with program requirements.
- Utilize academic advisor support.
- Understand setbacks are part of the journey; seek help when needed.
- Maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Our students excel, publishing in journals and presenting at conferences. Many gain experience as GTAs and GRAs, enhancing resumes. Whether aiming for academic, research, or leadership roles, our graduates are prepared. We believe your experience in the Ph.D. Program will be fulfilling, challenging, and rewarding.

Alegnta Felleke, Ph.D., MSW

# About Our Lady of the Lake University



Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) was established by the sisters of the Congregation of Divine Providence (CDP), a religious order founded in 18th century France. The CDP arrived in Texas in 1866, settling initially in Austin before establishing themselves in Castroville in 1868. They remain the university's sponsoring organization to this day.

Educational programs began at the current main campus site in 1895, initially offering a two-year curriculum for women. By 1911, the program expanded to four years, leading to membership in the Texas Association of Colleges in 1919.

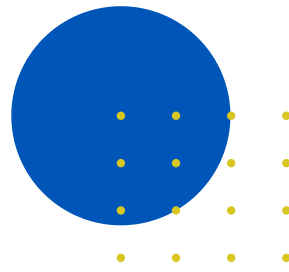
In 1923, OLLU earned regional accreditation from the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, becoming the first San Antonio institution to do so. It also gained approval from the American Association of Universities in 1927.

Graduate programs started in 1942 with co-educational offerings from the outset, transitioning to full co-education in 1969. The institution's name changed to Our Lady of the Lake University of San Antonio in 1975.

Adhering to its mission of providing education to underserved populations, OLLU introduced Weekend College to San Antonio in 1978, expanding to Houston in 1986 and Dallas in 1994. Today, scheduling options include summer sessions, daytime and evening classes in San Antonio, and weekend programs in San Antonio, Houston, and the Rio Grande Valley. The university also has articulation agreements with community colleges in several Texas cities.

OLLU offers bachelor's degrees in 56 areas, master's degrees in 21 fields, and doctoral programs in Counseling Psychology, Leadership Studies, and Social Work.

# The Worden School of Social Service



Located within the College of Professional Studies, the Worden School of Social Service is the hub of Our Lady of the Lake University's social work programs. Pioneering social work education in Texas nearly eight decades ago, OLLU stands as a beacon of excellence, accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and offering degrees at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels.

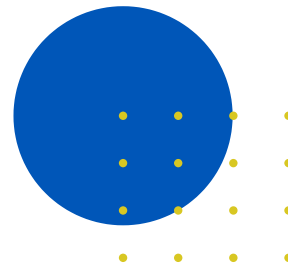
Central to the Worden School's ethos is a profound commitment to cultural and ethnic sensitivity, a cornerstone in serving at-risk populations, particularly Hispanic children and families. At the undergraduate level, students have the opportunity to obtain several certificates: Biliterate, Violence Prevention and Intervention, Dismantling Oppression, and Administration and Leadership. At the graduate level, the curriculum equips students with specialized intervention skills for direct practice, with a dedicated focus on Hispanic children and families. The doctoral program emphasizes advanced social work practice, fostering practitioner-scholars adept at bridging the realms of academic research and practical application. The Worden School garners acclaim for its outstanding contribution to the field of social work education nationwide.

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

In alignment with Catholic principles of social justice, the philosophy of Our Lady of the Lake University, and the goals delineated by the Council on Social Work Education, the Worden School of Social Service is dedicated to:

- Develop competent social workers for specialized intervention in direct practice with Hispanic/Latin@ children and families;
- Prepare social workers for professional practice in culturally diverse settings, especially agencies that serve clients from economically disadvantaged backgrounds; and
- Generate and disseminate knowledge that advances social and economic justice, enhances human well-being, and promotes effective practice with Hispanic/Latin@**3** children and families.

# Program Description



The Ph.D. Program at the Worden School of Social Service is dedicated to cultivating social work scholars. Our program empowers students to actively shape their learning journey through personalized guidance from faculty and collaborative mentorship opportunities. As students progress through the Ph.D. process, they become part of a vibrant intellectual community committed to advancing the principles of the social work profession and promoting scholarly excellence.

Key components of our program include:

- Advancement of social work science
- Mastery of scholarly inquiry methods
- Development of effective teaching skills
- Publication and presentation of scholarly work
- Engagement in collaborative scholarship
- Cultivation of an intellectual environment that fosters innovation and discovery
- Upon graduation, our Ph.D. candidates are expected to:

Demonstrate conceptual and critical thinking skills in addressing social work issues  
Apply theoretical and practical reasoning to social work practice and policy development  
Conduct research that contributes to the advancement of social work knowledge.

Students are encouraged to identify potential mentors among our faculty upon enrollment. A mentor is a faculty member whose scholarly interests, methodological approaches, or interpersonal dynamics align with the student's goals. Mentors may include graduate assistant supervisors, dissertation chairs, or other full-time faculty members within the Worden School.

By fostering mentorship and scholarly inquiry, we aim to equip our Ph.D. students with the skills and knowledge needed to make meaningful contributions to the field of social work.



The PhD program in social work is academically rigorous and tailored to prepare students for roles in research, service, and teaching, particularly within minority-serving institutions. Emphasis is placed on pedagogy for diverse student populations, with a program design that prioritizes support for underrepresented scholars through research involvement and mentoring.

Upon completion of the program, students will possess a robust understanding of social work theory and research methodologies, equipping them with the skills needed to conduct meaningful research. Graduates are uniquely positioned to contribute to the knowledge base regarding effective interventions for diverse populations.

This program is well-suited for individuals who aspire to careers in teaching and conducting in-depth research within tertiary-level academic settings. Additionally, it is ideal for those seeking to advance their roles as social work leaders and administrators, particularly within minority-serving institutions.

### **Program Goals:**

- Providing a rigorous curriculum that challenges students to think critically about social work practice, research, and teaching with diverse populations.
- Offering mentoring and support services to strengthen students' professional skills and promote competence and respect in their service to others.
- Contributing to the advancement of the social work profession through the development and dissemination of evidence-based knowledge and services.

Through these objectives, the program aims to empower students to become adept scholars, and educators who can effectively address the needs of diverse communities and contribute to positive social change

## **Student Learning Outcomes:**

Demonstrate critical thinking skills in analyzing social work issues from diverse theoretical and research perspectives, as demonstrated through successful completion of dissertation defense and competency assignments in designated courses throughout the curriculum.

Effectively communicate research findings in written form and contribute to the advancement of the profession through scholarly activities, including presentations at peer-reviewed conferences, publication in peer-reviewed journals, successful dissertation defense, and completion of competency assignments in designated courses throughout the curriculum.

Possess the ability to teach effectively in minority-serving institutions, as demonstrated by successful completion of the pedagogy series, which prepares students for the unique challenges and opportunities present in such educational settings.

## **Communication:**

To ensure effective communication channels, it is mandatory for all doctoral students to furnish the Ph.D. Program Office with current and precise contact details, encompassing their telephone number, mailing address, and email address. It is imperative to highlight that official ollusa.edu email addresses must be utilized exclusively for communication with faculty and staff in the Worden School. Furthermore, students must coordinate with the OLLU IT Help Desk to ensure their email address is added to the automatic distribution list, which serves as the primary mode of communication within the school.

Additionally, doctoral students bear the responsibility of maintaining regular communication with the Ph.D. Program Office, the program director, as well as their academic advisor and mentor. Such regular interactions are vital for academic guidance and support throughout the program.

It is important to note that all communications from the Ph.D. program adhere to Central Standard Time (CST). Hence, students must ensure they adjust meeting times and class schedules accordingly to align with their respective time zones.

## Admission Process:

Admission decisions for the Ph.D. program are vested in the PhD Committee. The application deadline for admission is annually during the fall semester, with the program commencing in the summer. It is advisable to cross-verify the admission dates with the OLLU Graduate Office, as they may vary from year to year.

## The Admission Requirements

- An MSW from a CSWE-accredited social work program.
- A minimum of two years of post-MSW practice experience, unless the applicant demonstrates the ability to fulfill this requirement before completing the PhD program, in which case the requirement may be waived.
- A graduate GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4-point scale.
- Submission of three recommendations from academics or professionals who can testify to the applicant's potential for doctoral-level work. Preferably, recommendations should be from academics.
- Submission of a Curriculum Vitae (CV).
- Crafting a 3-5-page personal statement covering various aspects:
  - i. Educational background.
  - ii. Interest in pursuing the Ph.D. program.
  - iii. Professional experiences and approach to social work practice.
  - iv. Areas of research interest.
  - v. Career plans and how a Ph.D. in social work aligns with those plans.
- Presentation of a writing sample, comprising 5 to 10 pages, double-spaced, in APA format. The writing sample should delve into a current social work topic of the applicant's choice or be an original, scholarly writing that reflects academic and critical thinking skills.
- Participation in an interview with a member of the PhD committee.
- Payment of a non-refundable application fee.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to exercise discretion in selecting a writing sample that best showcases their potential for doctoral-level work and their dedication to social work research.

## Statement on Post-MSW Practice Experience:

According to the requirements set forth by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), faculty members are mandated to possess a minimum of two years of post-MSW practice experience to effectively teach social work practice courses. This criterion ensures that faculty members are adequately equipped to teach across various facets of the curriculum, as typically required at institutions classified under Carnegie as baccalaureate, master's, and R3 doctoral institutions. Such practical experience is indispensable for securing employment within the field. Recognizing the significance of this requirement, the Ph.D. program extends conditional admission to students who intend to fulfill the two-year post-MSW experience during their tenure as doctoral students.

## Key Features of the Ph.D. Program:

The Ph.D. program at the Worden School of Social Service is tailored to accommodate the needs of working professionals. Highlighted below are the salient features of the program, encompassing the degree plan, requirements, and dissertation guidelines:

- A comprehensive 54-credit-hour online program.
- Structured as a four-year endeavor.
- Adopts a cohort model, with the academic year commencing every summer in June.
- Fall and spring courses incorporate a blend of synchronous and asynchronous class sessions.
- Summer courses entail a one-week residency on OLLU's main campus in San Antonio.

## Course Requirements:

Successful completion of the program necessitates fulfilling the 54 credit hours, inclusive of core doctoral courses in the Ph.D. Program and dissertation credits. Advancement to candidacy is contingent upon successfully passing the comprehensive exam. Further details can be found in the graduate catalog.

## **Advising:**

Students are mandated to engage in annual meetings with their advisors to assess their progress against the Ph.D. Student Core Competencies and Expectations (refer to Appendix A). These sessions serve as a formal avenue for advising on program progression and scholarly development. Additionally, students are encouraged to seek supplementary guidance from the Ph.D. program director as needed.

## **Mentoring:**

Mentorship plays a pivotal role in the development of Ph.D. students. They are encouraged to cultivate mentorship relationships with faculty members to foster growth in research, pedagogy, and career guidance within academia. Rather than being assigned formal mentors, students are empowered to seek out natural mentors who provide supportive guidance.

## **Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA):**

The Ph.D. program is committed to nurturing scholars for academic roles in minority-serving institutions, with a focus on developing pedagogical expertise through hands-on learning experiences. Collaborating with the MSW and BSW programs, students may have the opportunity to serve as teaching assistants. These assistantships serve as the primary means of support for many graduate students, allowing them to pursue their degrees while gaining valuable professional experience and contributing to the university's mission.

Graduate Teaching Assistants serve as Instructors of Records (IRs) and bear responsibility for course instruction, including tasks such as grading papers and student meetings. During the first year, GTAs are paired with teaching mentors and may teach one 7-week course per semester, while in the BSW program, they are limited to one 14-week or 16-week course per semester. Each GTA receives a stipend of \$2500.00 per course during the first year while working under teaching mentors. Subsequently, GTAs transition to adjunct professor positions based on recommendations from their mentors, becoming eligible for a \$3,000 stipend per course teaching up to two courses per semester. Doctoral students interested in teaching in the MSW program are required to complete the Teaching Assistantship Intent Disclosure Form (refer to Appendix B) and submit it to the Ph.D. Program Assistant via email.

## Doctoral Student Responsibilities:

Graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and instructors of record (IRs) undertake various teaching-related roles, each reflecting varying degrees of autonomy and direct interaction with students. The allocation of responsibilities to GTAs and IRs is determined by the program in collaboration with the Worden director, PhD program director, and the respective program director (e.g., MSW or BSW). Assignments aim to contribute to the intellectual and professional growth of graduate students. GTAs and IRs are held to the same high standards of conduct as faculty members in fulfilling their academic obligations, expected to uphold professional and ethical norms consistently.

While nurturing graduate students' development as educators is integral to doctoral training, the Worden School of Social Service prioritizes balancing teaching commitments with other essential components of doctoral education. No TA is tasked with instructional duties exceeding 20 hours per week, with students limited to teaching a maximum of two classes per semester.

Key day-to-day responsibilities of GTAs and IRs include:

- Facilitating the assigned curriculum
- Guiding class discussions and addressing student inquiries
- Assessing student assignments, including essays, projects, tests, etc.
- Maintaining accurate records of student progress and grades

## Graduate Teaching Assistant Responsibilities:

- Allocate 12-20 hours per week (averaged over the term) to TA duties.
- Approach teaching as a complement to broader graduate education.
- Adhere to University policies on academic integrity, safety protocols, diversity, and registrar procedures.
- Develop proficiency in course content and teaching methodologies.
- Manage TA responsibilities alongside academic pursuits, meeting deadlines and progressing through academic milestones.
- Regularly engage with faculty supervisors for feedback and continuous pedagogical growth.
- Hold regular office hours.
- Respond to student inquiries within 48 hours.

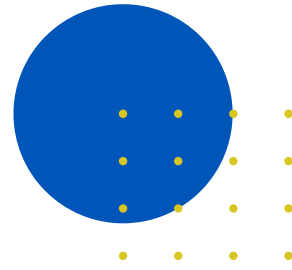
## The Summer Residency

The summer residency is a crucial component of the Ph.D. program, necessitating all students' participation in a week-long session held at OLLU's main campus in San Antonio, Texas. This intensive classroom setting offers invaluable opportunities for faculty mentoring and integration into the academic community essential for success as a social work educator. It serves as a platform for cohort members to establish bonds with peers and faculty, explore the campus's historical significance, and receive orientation for the upcoming academic year.

Attendance at all summer residency sessions is obligatory for doctoral students, and residence in the dormitories is mandatory. In the event of extenuating circumstances preventing attendance, students must promptly contact the Ph.D. program office, providing a clear explanation of their situation. The Ph.D. program director will assess these requests and determine their approval or denial. Students granted permission to forgo in-person attendance must watch session recordings and submit essays reflecting on the lessons learned, with detailed instructions provided upon approval. It's important to note that remote attendance options will not be offered by the Ph.D. program.

Furthermore, even students excused from attending in person are still obligated to pay the \$550 fee associated with the residency

# Academic Policies



## The Ph.D. Committee:

The Ph.D. Committee plays a crucial role in guiding the Ph.D. program under the leadership of the Ph.D. program director. Comprising five members, including the program director (Chair) and faculty appointed by the Worden director in consultation with the Ph.D. program director, the committee assumes various responsibilities. These include admission of Ph.D. students, oversight of the Ph.D. curriculum, and revision of program policies and procedures. Additionally, Ph.D. student representatives from each cohort serves on the committee for one academic year, subject to annual reevaluation. While student representatives are non-voting members, they may be excused from meetings involving confidential matters.

## Faculty Requirements for Ph.D. Committee Membership:

Preference is given in the following order:

- Doctorate in social work with tenure
- Doctorate in a non-social work field with tenure
- Doctorate in social work without tenure
- Doctorate in a non-social work field without tenure
- (Note: Master's level faculty are ineligible for Ph.D. committee service).

## Responsibilities of Ph.D. Committee Members:

- Regular attendance at biweekly or monthly Ph.D. Committee meetings
- Review of all application materials and participation in admissions decisions
- Conducting applicant interviews to inform admission choices
- Collaboration on curriculum revisions
- Discussion and voting on program policy, procedure, and curriculum changes
- Assistance in document development for the Ph.D. Program Office
- Support for additional tasks as assigned by the Ph.D. program director.



## Course Load and Continuous Enrollment

Maintaining continuous enrollment is imperative for program progression. This policy is particularly pertinent to students who have completed coursework but have yet to finalize their dissertations. Such students must remain enrolled each fall and spring semester until dissertation completion. In cases where the dissertation remains unfinished during designated dissertation courses, enrollment in a one-credit-hour dissertation course is required until completion.

## Leave of Absence

Students enrolled in the doctoral program may request a leave of absence for one term (Fall or Spring) for a maximum duration of one year. Circumstances such as illness or injury, active military service, or caregiving responsibilities for a family member may impede active participation in the degree program. OLLU follows the University's guidelines in this regard. For further details, please refer to OLLU's Student Handbook.

## Deferment Policy

The Ph.D. program does not grant deferment of admission to the Ph.D. program. Students who are unable to begin their studies at the University as planned will need to submit a new application for consideration.

## Disability Services

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion cultivates an environment conducive to learning, preparing students to thrive in a diverse and complex society. Accessibility Services provides reasonable accommodations to ensure that students with disabilities can fully participate in and benefit from campus life, programs, and activities.

Students with disabilities covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amended or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act who require assistance are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services at (210) 431-4010, email [ada@ollusa.edu](mailto:ada@ollusa.edu), or visit the office located in the Walter Student Service Center, Suite 206, Room 211. Alternatively, students can apply for services online.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Our Lady of the Lake University is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all qualified applicants and employees, irrespective of race, color, ancestry, religion, gender (except where gender is a bona fide occupational qualification), sexual orientation, age, national origin, veteran status, disability, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by federal or Texas law. The University ensures that all aspects of employment, including recruitment, hiring, training, education, promotion, and other employment actions, are administered in accordance with these principles for the benefit of all employees.

## **Statement of Positive Learning Environment**

Our Lady of the Lake University upholds the core values of community, integrity, trust, and service, striving to foster an educational environment free from sexual harassment, misconduct, violence, or discrimination. Faculty members are designated as "responsible employees" mandated to promptly report any incidents of sexual misconduct within 72 hours of awareness. If you are a student who has experienced sexual harassment, misconduct, violence, or discrimination, please visit the Title IX website to contact a Deputy Coordinator: [www.ollusa.edu/titleix](http://www.ollusa.edu/titleix).

## **Academic Dishonesty & Plagiarism**

Academic dishonesty encompasses actions by students in academic assignments or settings that contravene the standards of the academic community. This includes acts such as cheating or plagiarism. Our Lady of the Lake University distinguishes between academic dishonesty, managed by the Academic Affairs Division, and other breaches of the Student Code of Conduct, handled by the Office of Student Life. Consequences for academic dishonesty range from expulsion or suspension to grade reduction or failure in the affected course, depending on the severity of the infraction.

## **Grading System & GPA**

Students must demonstrate mastery of course objectives to earn credit, with faculty employing various evaluative methods such as exams, papers, presentations, and projects. While faculty may use plus or minus grades, these distinctions do not impact the GPA. Grading scale: A = 100 - 90, B = 89 - 80, C = 79 - 70, D = 69 - 60, F = 59 or below.

## Incomplete Grades

In exceptional circumstances, it may become necessary for an incomplete grade to be assigned. The decision to assign an incomplete grade rests solely with the instructor. An incomplete grade can only be given when more than 75% of the coursework has been completed. Students are allowed to enroll in courses in the semester immediately following the assignment of an incomplete grade, but they must resolve the incomplete before registering for subsequent semesters.

## Transfer of Credits

Doctoral coursework from other institutions is not eligible for transfer.

## Academic Standing

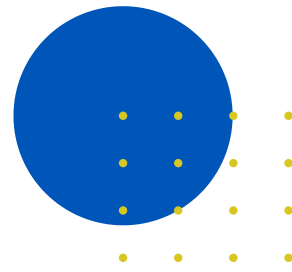
To maintain satisfactory academic standing, students must uphold a minimum GPA of 3.0 and achieve a grade of at least "B-" in all courses. Grades "C" and below ("D" and "F") are not applicable towards doctoral degrees. Students who fail to meet these minimum requirements will be placed on academic probation, and their continuation in the program will be subject to review by the Ph.D. program director, in consultation with the doctoral faculty and the director of the Worden School of Social Service.

## Academic Grievance

Our Lady of the Lake University offers a structured process for students to address academic grievances. An academic grievance refers to an allegation of a violation of existing University academic policy or established practices, or an inherent injustice. Academic grievances may include complaints regarding alleged breaches of academic policies (e.g., application of grading policies), unfair treatment in policy application (e.g., accusations of plagiarism or cheating), or other academic concerns.

Evaluation of a student's academic performance, when conducted by a faculty member, is presumed valid unless there is evidence indicating significant prejudice (bias against the student individually or as part of a group) and/or capriciousness (unjustifiable departure from accepted academic standards or procedures, or from explicit agreements established through the course syllabus). Students must adhere to each step of the Academic Grievance Procedure outlined for review.

# The Ph.D. Curriculum



This section outlines the curriculum framework and expectations of the PhD program, detailing the list of courses in the curriculum. Designed to be academically demanding, the PhD social work program equips students for roles in research, service, and teaching, especially within minority-serving institutions. Notably, the program places significant emphasis on pedagogical strategies tailored to diverse student demographics. Upon completion, graduates emerge equipped with a comprehensive understanding of theory, a wealth of knowledge, and proficient research skills. This section offers an exhaustive catalog of courses along with detailed descriptions for each.

## SUMMER I

### **SOWK 9301: Introduction to Pedagogy**

Focusing on social work curriculum policy and issues, course development and content, teaching techniques, and classroom management. Emphasizing skill as well as conceptual content and theory. Students will identify and develop a variety of specific concrete strategies for teaching and evaluating the practice of teaching course will cover several considerations for developing these strategies to address the complex system of concerns including multiple learning styles, developmental needs of students, and diversity. Evaluating and teaching will be addressed as a strategy for scholarship. On-campus residency required. Course fee: \$550

## FALL I

### **SOWK 9308: Epistemology and Theories**

Covers the conceptualization, development, and application of social work theories. Philosophical, theoretical, and empirical underpinnings of different social work practice theories will be studied with an emphasis on understanding and critically analyzing the philosophical assumptions and scientific basis of various theories. Students will become familiar with the historical context of different theories covered and research on their effectiveness within social work. Since social work has relied on other social science disciplines for much of its theoretical base, major theories will be covered from diverse disciplines.

### **SOWK 9311: Pedagogy of Distance Education**

Applying what has been learned in Introduction to Pedagogy to the online environment covering curriculum development, working with instruction designers, implementation, and evaluation, integrating technology across the curriculum, classroom environments and management, critical issues in distance education paradigms and developing community and student engagement. Includes guest teaching lecture requirements.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of SOWK 9301 (Introduction to Pedagogy).

## **SPRING I**

### **SOWK 9315: Statistical Methods I**

The course is designed to provide a basic introduction to the conceptual and quantitative tools used to analyze, describe, and interpret data in social work research. Students will learn how to select, calculate, and interpret appropriate statistics applicable to common data analysis situations in social work research. The course provides students with the opportunity to acquire personal computer skills in SPSS statistical software to calculate statistics and present results. Subjects include univariate and bivariate analysis, hypothesis testing, inferential statistics, and regression.

### **SOWK 9319: Qualitative Research**

Introduction to qualitative research paradigms, their epistemologies, theories, and methods. The major focus is to survey qualitative methods of inquiry including research designs, specific data collection methods, and analytic and interpretive procedures. A major portion of the class time is distributed toward a qualitative field experience where students work on a qualitative research project with a faculty member.

## **SUMMER II**

### **SOWK 9321: Scholarly Writing and Publication**

To prepare students to develop and improve skills in scholarly writing and proposal development and providing students with both scholarly and practical knowledge on writing and publishing scientific manuscript in peer reviewed social science related journals. It will cover techniques for writing clear and well-organized manuscripts and ethical issues involving manuscripts preparation and publication. Emphasis will be placed on writing, editing, reviewing, revise and submit, and other applicable skills. At the end of this course, students will submit their paper publication. On-campus residency required. Course fee: \$550

## FALL II

### **SOWK 9325: Statistical Methods II**

Students apply complex research designs building upon Statistical Methods I. Students will study pre-analysis data screening and multivariate techniques in social work research. The focus is on advanced and multivariate statistical methods. Subjects include pre-analysis data screening, ANCOVA, MANCOVA, Path Analysis, Regression, Discriminant Analysis, and Factor Analysis. Prerequisite: Successful completion of SOWK 9315 (Statistical Methods I).

### **SOWK 9330: Quantitative Research**

This course provides students an in-depth understanding of the quantitative research process and the competence necessary to design a quantitative research study. This process includes ethical research practices, problem formation, developing hypotheses and research questions, experimental and observational research designs, measurement, sampling strategies, and data collection methods. Prerequisite: Successful completion of SOWK 9315 (Statistical Methods I)

## SPRING II

### **SOWK 9335: Mixed Methods Research**

Provides an overview of mixed methods research, with an emphasis on its application in social work research. Students are expected to have a basic understanding of quantitative and qualitative research methods prior to beginning this course. "Mixed methods" refers to the intentional mixing of quantitative and qualitative approaches within one study or across a program of research. Engagement in mixed methods research is intended to enhance that researcher's ability to study complex social phenomena holistically, while minimizing some of the limitations posed by mono-method (qualitative or quantitative) designs. The foundation for conducting mixed methods research in social work is laid by exploring the historical, philosophical, and epistemological, roots of this emerging research methodology. Methods for collecting, analyzing, and presenting data will also be discussed. Prerequisite: Successful completion of SOWK 9319 and SOWK 9330.

### **SOWK 9337: Social Welfare Policy**

Overview and analysis of social welfare systems in the United States as a response to social problems with special attention to the history of social work. Emphasizes on analysis of policy and programs aimed at addressing poverty and social justice. **18**

## SUMMER III

### **SOWK 9342: Grants and Proposals**

This project-based course covers the complete process of grant proposal development: identification of achievable and fundable project, research and assessment of viable funding sources, funder relations, proposal writing, budget development, preparation of a full proposal package for submission, and post award or rejection follow-up with funders. Students gain an understanding of the academic research funding environment and become familiar with tools and resources available to assist them as they seek funds for their projects/ institutions. Students must have a specific project or fairly-well developed idea that they build upon as the basis for their coursework and final grant proposal. On-campus residency required. Course fee: \$550

## FALL III

### **SOWK 9345: Comprehensive**

Designed to help students demonstrate knowledge in the substantive issues, key research questions, theory, empirical evidence, and implications in their area of specialization. The equivalent of three lecture hours a week for one semester. Offered on the credit/no credit basis only. Prerequisite: Successful completion of all courses prior to Fall III in the course sequence.

### **SOWK 9352: Decolonized Pedagogy**

This course is theoretically grounded in writing studies and academic literacy from a (de) colonial and anti-racist framework. This course prepares students to conceptualize approaches from a decolonized perspective. The course will address ethical debate and conversations on the current state of the academic job market, including the challenges and controversies of the profession, and lesson plans and teaching strategies from a decolonized perspective. Prerequisite: Successful completion of SOWK 9311 (Pedagogy of Distance Education).

### **SOWK 9164: Dissertation I**

Selecting dissertation committee chair, forming dissertation committee, engaging in literature review, select dissertation topic, and approval of the dissertation topic. Pass/fail.

## SPRING III

### **SOWK 9366: Academic Leadership**

Colleges and universities are unique institutions, but they increasingly resemble the complex organizations typically found in business and public administration. However, their special missions of teaching, research, and service put them in a distinct category where collegiality and university traditions of academic freedom introduce powerful crosscurrents of equality. The course critically examines the theory and practice of leadership and management in academia. Students work to master leadership theories and apply them within higher education settings. The course emphasizes the conceptual framework and skills, as well as the values and beliefs, which inform effective leadership in academic institutions.

### **SOWK 9367: Proposal Development**

Designed to provide on-going support and feedback concerning the process of developing the area of focus and the various components of the proposal. Designed to maximize progress on the paper. Unlike other courses in the doctoral sequence, this course focuses more on the process of developing this document than on the mastery of content from lectures and readings. The writing assignments should support the objectives of the proposal. Students responsible to complete the various sections leading to the final document and the various writing assignments are meant to facilitate the process. Prerequisite: Successful completion of SOWK 9164 (Dissertation I)

### **SOWK 9167: Dissertation II**

Completion of student's literature review, theoretical underpinning, and the draft of the first three chapters of the dissertation proposal. Pass/fail. Prerequisite: Successful completion of SOWK 9164 (Dissertation I)

## SUMMER IV

### **SOWK 9369: Dissertation III**

Completion of student's literature review, theoretical underpinning, methods sections of dissertation, and defending the dissertation proposal. Pass/fail. On-campus residency required. Course fee: \$550. Prerequisite: Successful completion of SOWK 9167



## FALL IV

### **SOWK 9372: Dissertation IV**

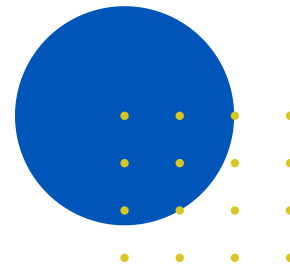
Engaging in data collection and/or data analysis for approval of dissertation study. Pass/fail. Prerequisite: Successful completion of SOWK 9369

## SPRING IV

### **SOWK 9183: Dissertation V**

Engaging in data analysis and finalizing all dissertation chapters for the approval of dissertation study. Pass/fail. Prerequisite: Successful completion of SOWK 9372. May be repeated for credit if students do not transition to candidacy.

# The Comprehensive Examination



The Ph.D. program at Worden School establishes overarching policies governing the social work doctoral program. One crucial requirement set by the program is the successful completion of a comprehensive examination, a test tailored to assess students' progress at Our Lady of the Lake University. The primary aim of this examination is to allow students to demonstrate their ability for independent and methodical scholarly work, aligning with the educational goals of the doctoral program. Moreover, the examination serves as a benchmark for evaluating the student's readiness to embark on their doctoral dissertation. While the objectives of the examination may differ from those of the dissertation, there's recognition that, at times, the interconnectedness between the two can enhance the student's comprehension of issues relevant to their dissertation research problem.

The comprehensive examination within the Ph.D. program comprises both a written proposal and an oral examination. In terms of timing, students are required to submit their comprehensive examination proposal by their third year of study and complete the examination process by the conclusion of the spring semester. Should revisions be necessary, students will be requested to submit the revised proposal accordingly. It is expected that all students will have successfully passed their comprehensive exam by the culmination of their third year in the program.

## The Comprehensive Exam Committee

The comprehensive exam committee consists of three full-time tenured or faculty members holding doctoral degrees (either Ph.D. or DSW) from the Worden School of Social Service. Among them, one faculty member assumes the role of chair (a full-time tenured or tenure track Worden faculty), while the remaining two serve as reading members. It's important to note that each faculty member can chair a maximum of three comprehensive exam committees per cohort.

## The Comprehensive Examination Proposal

The comprehensive examination centers on a chosen issue of significance within the realm of social work. Students collaborate with their chairs to select the comprehensive exam topic. The comprehensive examination proposal is crafted with guidance from the mentor/advisor. While students may express preferences for members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee from among Worden faculty, the Ph.D. program director retains discretion in finalizing the committee.

It's important to clarify that the comprehensive examination proposal is distinct from a dissertation proposal. At this stage, the purpose of the proposal is to ascertain the suitability of the topic for examination, ensuring its relevance to the field of social work. The proposal, limited to 15 pages (excluding title and reference pages), should articulate a case for a substantive area of interest central to social work. Given the constraints, the proposal should justify the inclusion or exclusion of specific content in each section. For instance, if space limitations preclude addressing all relevant theories or policies, the proposal should delineate the selected theories and policies, along with the rationale for these choices.

### The comprehensive exam proposal should encompass the following areas:

- A. Statement of the substantive/problem area
- B. Analysis of theoretical frameworks for examining the problem area
- C. Review of key policy approaches in the problem area
- D. Critical review of relevant research
- E. Conclusion and Implication (including the research question(s) that emerged from the literature)

All proposals must adhere to scholarly standards, including APA format, scholarly language, and grammatical accuracy. Once completed, the proposal should be submitted to the comprehensive exam committee. The committee will have two weeks to review and provide written feedback, highlighting strengths and offering critiques. The feedback is then returned to the student. Subsequently, the student and the chair schedule an oral examination within two weeks of receiving faculty feedback, if the student passes the written examination.

Except for the chair, members of the Comprehensive Exam Committee function solely as reviewers, evaluating the final examination proposal without consultation. The chair provides active consultation during the proposal's preparation phase but assumes an administrative role once the proposal is accepted. Their responsibility as chairperson is to advise the student and ensure a fair hearing, adhering to established criteria.

While general consultation on logistics or structure is permitted, faculty members, excluding the chair, should refrain from offering content-related consultation on the exam itself. Furthermore, no faculty member, other than the advisor, should review any part of the proposal before it is submitted to the comprehensive exam committee.

Given that the comprehensive examination is an individual assessment, students must ensure that their proposal represents solely their own work.

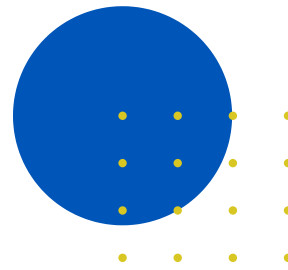
### **The Oral Comprehensive Examination**

The oral comprehensive exam serves as a forum for students to address critiques and respond to questions raised by the readers regarding their comprehensive exam proposal. This examination typically lasts around ninety minutes.

Attendance at the comprehensive exam oral meeting is mandatory for both the student and all members of the Comprehensive Exam Committee, either in person or virtually. The committee determines the student's performance through a majority vote, with options limited to pass or fail.

Following the oral examination, the advisor is responsible for completing and submitting the "Comprehensive Examination Report Form" to the Ph.D. Program Office within two days (See Appendix C). In the event of failure, the student may undertake the examination process a second time, with only two attempts permitted before withdrawal from the Ph.D. Program.

# The Dissertation Requirements



## Introduction

The completion of a dissertation stands as a major requirement in any Ph.D. program. Specifically, the Worden Ph.D. program at OLLU mandates the satisfactory completion of a dissertation within the realm of social work. This dissertation, a scholarly work, originates from collaborative efforts between the student and their dissertation committee. It serves as an original research endeavor, tasked with upholding the highest standards of scholarship while significantly contributing to the knowledge and practice within the realms of social welfare and social work.

The dissertation requirement aims to provide students with a platform to showcase their capabilities in various domains: conducting proficient research in social work, structuring materials coherently, articulating ideas clearly, and deriving sound interpretations and conclusions from presented facts. Moreover, it emphasizes a student's ability to contribute meaningfully to the field.

The supervision of dissertations within the Ph.D. program operates under a committee-directed approach. Although the specific methodologies and procedures may vary between candidates and committees, the foundational principles necessitate active involvement from all committee members in decision-making processes and checkpoints. Collaboration among committee members throughout the dissertation process is paramount. Additionally, to ensure equitable application of policies, the Ph.D. program director may assume a role in reviewing and endorsing decisions should concerns arise.

## The Dissertation Committee

When selecting a dissertation committee members, students are advised to seek guidance from their advisor and the Ph.D. program director. Committee composition should align with the candidate's requirements for substantive consultation, research methodologies, and statistical analyses. Typically, committees consist of members with whom the student has established working relationships, faculty possessing specialized knowledge relevant to the research topic, and experts in research methods or statistics pertinent to the proposed research. Notably, faculty members approached to serve on a dissertation committee retain the prerogative to accept or decline the invitation.

Dissertation committees consist of either three or five members; a committee comprising four members is not permissible. In a committee of three, two members must be full-time doctorate faculty within Worden, while the third member should be either a doctorate faculty or a subject matter expert external to Worden. For a committee of five, four members, including the chair, should be full-time doctorate faculty within Worden, with the fifth member being a doctorate faculty or content expert external to Worden. It is recommended that students select their chair first and consult with them before inviting additional committee members. Once formed, doctoral students are responsible for submitting the Dissertation Committee Declaration Form to the Ph.D. program office, adhering to university dissertation procedures (see Appendix D).

### Faculty serving on Dissertation Committees must meet specific criteria:

- **Dissertation Chair:** This role is reserved for a Worden faculty member holding a doctoral degree and maintaining full-time tenure or tenure track status.
- **Dissertation Committee Member:** Any member of the committee must hold a doctoral degree.
- **External Committee Member:** This position may be filled by a faculty member holding a doctoral degree and an expert in the field external to Worden.
- **Internal Members:** These members must be doctoral faculty of Worden.

*Additional points to note:* Students have the option to request a non-tenure track, full-time Worden faculty member to serve as committee chair. Such requests necessitate strong justification and approval from the Ph.D. committee.

A faculty member may chair a maximum of three committees per cohort. However, **26** there are no limitations on a faculty member serving as an internal member

## Responsibilities of the Dissertation Committee Chair

The chair is chosen based on their content expertise, which may include proficiency in the topic area, subject matter knowledge, experience in dissertation supervision, or expertise in research methodologies. The responsibilities of the Dissertation Chair encompass various aspects:

- **Guidance and Support:** Throughout the dissertation journey, the chair is tasked with advising the candidate, starting from the proposal stage and extending to the final defense of the dissertation. This includes assisting the candidate in selecting appropriate committee members and establishing a feasible timeline for completing the dissertation.
- **Evaluation and Progress:** The chair is responsible for assessing the candidate's progress each semester in the dissertation phase, determining whether it meets the standards of successful advancement or requires intervention.
- **Quality Assurance:** Ensuring the dissertation maintains high standards of technical and ethical quality is paramount. The chair supports the candidate in crafting a well-developed dissertation proposal, navigating the approval process, and establishing clear expectations for timely completion.
- **Methodological Guidance:** Providing guidance on the structure, formatting, and content of the research proposal, as well as aiding in the selection of appropriate methods and procedures for data collection and analysis, falls within the purview of the chair's responsibilities.
- **Defense Preparation:** The chair assists the candidate in preparing for both the dissertation proposal defense and the final dissertation defense, including navigating the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval process, facilitating data collection and analysis, and ensuring readiness for the defense proceedings.

## Responsibilities of the Dissertation Committee Members

The responsibilities of committee members are integral to ensuring the production of high-quality scholarship by the candidate. They must adhere to a minimum 14-day timeframe for reading manuscripts, offer substantive and/or editorial suggestions, and provide clear rationale for their support and critiques. Any committee member identifying significant flaws that may jeopardize the candidate's defense should promptly discuss these concerns with the candidate and chair.

The specific responsibilities of committee members include:

- Collaborating with the chair to advise the candidate throughout the dissertation process.
- Offering subject matter expertise as required by the chair or candidate.
- Providing comprehensive feedback on drafts at various defense stages.
- Assisting the candidate in selecting appropriate methods and procedures for data collection and analysis.
- Collaborating with the candidate on data collection and analysis, if necessary.
- Engaging in correspondence with the chair and candidate to address methodological issues during the dissertation process (exclusive to Methodologists).
- Methodologists, if separate from the chair, should be chosen based on their expertise aligned with the candidate's research methodology, whether quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods.

## Responsibilities of Doctoral Students

As for the doctoral student, proactive engagement in the dissertation process is expected from the outset of the doctoral program. Responsibilities include selecting a topic, submitting polished drafts to the chair, adequately preparing for meetings, and thoroughly understanding university dissertation policies and procedures. Regular communication with the chair, conducted in a respectful and professional manner, is essential.

Maintaining consistent contact with the chair throughout the dissertation process ensures alignment with the agreed-upon plan. It is the candidate's duty to keep the chair informed of progress and to promptly communicate any significant personal or professional changes that may affect program completion. Virtual meetings with the chair, methodologist, or the entire committee can be arranged as needed.



## The Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal is a major document that demands substantial research and careful construction. Typically encompassing the initial three chapters of the dissertation, it delineates the research focus, conceptual framework, literature review, and study design and methods. Various research designs necessitate different proposal formats and emphasize diverse information types. However, across all formats, the proposal should present a coherent, systematic, and theoretically grounded overview of the intended study, elucidating why and how the study will be executed and its integration within scholarly literature.

The doctoral student collaborates closely with the dissertation chair throughout the proposal's development. While the candidate may seek input from other committee members regarding specific queries, their involvement in reviewing intermediate drafts is usually limited.

When selecting a topic, students should consider the following:

- The subject's relevance to social work theory, knowledge, practice, or research methodology, or its potential contribution to synthesizing or analyzing existing social work knowledge.
- The problem's temporal context, whether past or present, and its utilization of library or field materials, which may derive from primary or secondary sources.
- The feasibility of the study in terms of program timelines and available resources.

## The Structure of the Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation serves as an original scholarly endeavor, showcasing the student's research capabilities in addressing significant issues within social work or social welfare. It demands the utmost rigor and scholarly excellence. After passing the comprehensive examination, students embark on the development of a written dissertation proposal in collaboration with their dissertation chair. This proposal represents a crucial precursor to commencing dissertation research.

The proposal must furnish comprehensive details regarding the study's purpose, objectives, and methodology, ensuring clarity on its appropriateness and feasibility. Adherence to APA style (7th edition) and OLLU's Writing Guidelines for Dissertations and Theses is mandatory. Below are the recommended structural guidelines for crafting the proposal, though adjustments may be made at the discretion of the dissertation chair or committee members:

### **I. Cover Page**

- Ensure adherence to university formatting guidelines.
- Refer to the sample dissertation title page required by the university.

### **II. Abstract**

- Clearly state the problem's significance.
- Describe the affected individuals or context.
- Explain the research methodology, including data collection and subject sampling.
- Provide a brief overview of supporting theories.
- Address the potential implications of the research on social work practice, theory, research, or welfare policy.

### **III. Table of Contents**

- List all chapters and major sections in APA style.
- Include all tables and figures in APA style.

### **IV. Chapter 1: Introduction/Statement of the Problem**

- Provide background information on the topic's importance, supported by literature.
- Describe the affected individuals or context, if applicable.
- Discuss the prevalence of the problem and its historical context.
- Formulate a problem statement, identifying the gap in existing literature.
- Define terms (for quantitative studies).
- Explain the relevance of the topic and supporting theories.
- State the purpose and the researcher's stance explicitly.
- Introduce central research aims.
- Conclude with a transitional statement outlining the proposal's organization and objectives.

## **V. Chapter 2: Literature Review**

- Describe historical issues or policy context.
- Discuss conceptualizations of the problem by others.
- Review previous research, significant findings, and current studies.
- Introduce factors or variables explaining the problem.
- Thoroughly explore theories supporting the research.
- Address gaps in the literature.
- Summarize the literature review, reiterating the research question/purpose.

## **VI. Chapter 3: Methods**

- Explain the research method and design, with supporting literature.
- Detail data collection techniques and instruments.
- Provide operational definitions, sampling methods, and sample size for quantitative methods.
- Outline statistical data analysis.
- Discuss ethical considerations and IRB concerns.
- For qualitative methods, discuss context, participant recruitment, sample size, and data analysis procedures.
- Outline a tentative timeline, including time for the IRB process.

## **VII. References**

- Follow APA formatting guidelines.
- Ensure all listed sources are cited in the proposal.

## **Evaluating the Dissertation Proposal**

Upon completion, each student submits an electronic copy of the dissertation proposal to the dissertation committee. Committee members are expected to provide written feedback within two weeks of receiving the proposal, forwarding it to both the dissertation committee chair and the doctoral student. However, students submitting proposals during holiday or summer breaks must coordinate with their chair and faculty readers to ascertain committee member availability, as faculty presence during these times cannot be presumed. Consequently, the two-week feedback window may extend for these students.

Within two weeks following the distribution of feedback, an oral defense of the proposal convenes, with all committee members in attendance. Similar to proposal submission, students receiving feedback during holiday or summer breaks must coordinate for extended scheduling, as faculty availability may vary. The dissertation proposal meeting is typically conducted virtually and lasts approximately 90 minutes. However, students may opt for an in-person defense at OLLU or a hybrid defense with some committee members attending virtually, in which case the Ph.D. program office will arrange a suitable venue.

The oral dissertation proposal review aims to address any deficiencies identified in the proposal. Attendance is restricted to individuals on the examining committee. An approved proposal sets the standard for assessing the adequacy of the student's completed dissertation. In evaluating a student's proposal, the dissertation committee examines the relevance of the research to social work, the clarity of the study's purpose, research questions, and specific aims, the rigor and originality of the proposed study, and the feasibility of the overall proposal.

Once the dissertation chair and student schedule a meeting of the dissertation committee, the primary objectives are to discuss the document, seek clarification, and evaluate the proposal's viability as the foundation of a dissertation. Approval of the proposal hinges on the majority "Pass" decision by the dissertation committee members.

A student is granted up to three defenses to secure approval of the dissertation proposal. In the event that the proposal fails to garner approval after three oral defenses, the student may choose to dissolve or reconstitute their committee and initiate the process anew. This process can be repeated as necessary, or until the university's doctoral study timeline is exhausted, which is 10 years.

Upon satisfaction with the problem formulation and study design, the Dissertation Proposal Approval Form is completed (See Appendix E). This form entails written endorsement of the student's dissertation proposal by the committee members. Subsequently, the dissertation chair assumes responsibility for submitting the approval form within one week from the defense date.

## Conducting Research and Writing the Dissertation

The dissertation chair assumes the primary responsibility for coordinating the student's work in completing the dissertation. However, active involvement of all committee members in decision-making and checkpoints is crucial. Any deviations from the approved dissertation proposal require consultation with the committee members, and subsequent changes must obtain committee approval. Depending on their expertise, certain committee members may play a more significant role in specific sections of the research process. For instance, a methodologist may contribute more substantially to aspects such as research design and sampling plans than to substantive sections.

Writing the dissertation necessitates adherence to the most current version of the APA publication manual for formatting and procedural instructions. Additional formatting guidelines for the dissertation can be accessed through the OLLU Graduate Student SharePoint site.

For research involving human subjects, students must complete the Application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. The OLLU Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversees all human subject research to comply with university regulations and federal guidelines. If a dissertation involves human subject research, applying to the OLLU IRB is mandatory.

### **The IRB conducts three levels of review for research involving human subjects:**

1. Exempt: Studies meeting specific criteria may qualify for Exempt status, requiring no further review or yearly follow-ups after initial IRB determination. However, this does not imply no IRB review; it signifies agreement between the researcher and the IRB that further review is unnecessary. Common exempt projects include anonymous online surveys.
2. Expedited: Studies involving minimal risk to subjects may undergo Expedited review, which does not require a full IRB meeting. Most qualitative projects fall under this category.
3. Full Review: Studies posing greater than minimal risk to human subjects necessitate review by the full IRB with the involvement of outside experts if required. Such reviews are rare on campus.

The IRB review process requires electronic submission via the OLLU online IRB system. Various documents typically need to be attached to the online application, including CITI Ethics & Compliance Training Certificate, informed consent documentation, data collection instruments, permissions for copyrighted materials, recruitment materials, and outreach templates.

### **Submission, Review, and Approval Timelines**

Upon confirmation of completeness by the IRB Coordinator, your application undergoes routing for electronic signatures from various individuals, including the principal investigator, faculty advisor, co-investigators, department chair, dean, and IRB Coordinator. Once the signature process concludes, applications proceed to review within the indicated timeframe as outlined below. For detailed information on the IRB process, refer to the IRB Manual.

#### **Expedited Review:**

- Risk Level: No more than minimal risk
- Final Review to Approval: 15 OLLU business days\*

#### **Exempt Review:**

- Risk Level: No personal risk of physical, psychological, or social harm
- Final Review to Approval: 5 OLLU business days\*

#### **Full Board Review:**

- Risk Level: More than Minimal Risk
- Final Review to Approval: Protocols must attain 'complete' status two weeks before the next scheduled IRB board meeting to be placed on the agenda.

\*The review time begins upon the IRB coordinator deeming the application complete (after receiving signatures) and forwarding it for final review.

## Follow-Up Forms & Notices

### Protocol Change:

Any alterations to an approved study necessitate submission online by the principal investigator using the IRB Protocol Change Form available on the OLLU IRB page. Changes encompass additions or eliminations of investigators, modifications to forms, supportive materials, questionnaires, surveys, interview scripts, etc. Upon approval, the principal investigator receives an amendment approval email listing the sanctioned changes, which cannot be implemented until receipt of the approval email. Protocol Change reviews may take up to 10 OLLU business days.

### Continuing Review:

If research activities associated with a protocol extend beyond one year past the official approval date, the principal investigator must submit an online Request for Continuing Review per Federal Regulations. Continuation Request reviews can take up to 10 OLLU business days; thus, it is advisable to apply approximately three weeks before study expiration. Missing this deadline necessitates resubmission of the study for IRB approval.

### The Dissertation Defense

Before scheduling the dissertation defense, the complete dissertation draft undergoes review by the dissertation committee for comments and recommendations. Candidates are required to revise the manuscript to meet the satisfaction of all committee members before proceeding with scheduling the defense. Following revisions, the final draft is submitted to the committee members for a second review, with the defense date scheduled approximately two weeks thereafter. It is the student's responsibility, in consultation with the dissertation chair, to schedule the oral examination.

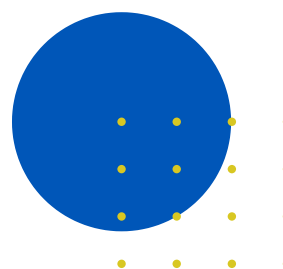
The dissertation must be in the possession of the examining committee at least two weeks before the scheduled examination, unless an alternative timeline is agreed upon by the committee members. The dissertation chair formally confirms the date, time, and location of the examination in writing to each committee member. While the examination is open to individuals not on the examining committee, their role is clarified by the dissertation committee chair if they attend. During deliberations, committee members use breakout sessions, with non-committee members prohibited from voting or expressing opinions on the dissertation's quality. If time allows, the audience may pose questions about the dissertation once the committee has concluded its questioning and discussion.

The dissertation defense meeting is typically conducted virtually. However, if the student prefers an in-person defense at OLLU or a hybrid format with some members attending virtually, the Ph.D. program office arranges the venue.

The dissertation chair bears the responsibility for ensuring the examination's professionalism and providing the student with a fair opportunity to defend their dissertation. The chair facilitates participation from each voting member of the examination committee, maintains the examination's quality within appropriate bounds, and votes on the committee's recommendation to pass or fail the doctoral student based on their academic expertise. The decision to pass the candidate's dissertation hinges on the majority vote of the Dissertation committee members.



# Campus Resources



## OLLU Student Handbook

The link below will direct you to key University resources including the Our Lady of the Lake Student Handbook.

**Website:** <https://myollu.ollusa.edu/UniversityResources/Pages/default.aspx>

## Graduation Catalog

The link below will direct you to the University Graduate Catalog. In the event that there is a conflict between Worden policy and University policy, University policy supersedes Worden Policy.

**Website:** [http://catalog.ollusa.edu/index.php?catoid=18&\\_ga=2.104109827.2050523148.1638538239-2132857741.1632236591](http://catalog.ollusa.edu/index.php?catoid=18&_ga=2.104109827.2050523148.1638538239-2132857741.1632236591)

## Sueltenfuss Library

To get information on the library hours, services as well as online services and much more, please visit their website.

**Website:** <https://library.ollusa.edu/library> Phone: 210-431-3923

## The Mary Francine Danis Writing Center

The Writing Center staff help people overcome writer's block, offer suggestions for focusing and organizing assignments, and provide a "second pair of eyes" for a nearly finished piece of writing. The staff works with students at all levels and in all subjects. Consultations are available in person or over the phone.

**Website:** <https://www.ollusa.edu/academics/academic-support/academic-center-for-excellence/index.html>

**Phone:** 210-528-7160

## Registrar Office

The Registrar's Office handles information regarding the academic calendar dates as well as information on graduation and commencement. For more info, please visit their website. Website: <https://www.ollusa.edu/registrars-office/index.html>  
Phone: 210-434-6711 EXT. 2316 TOLL FREE: 800-436-6558

## Financial Aid

Our Lady of the Lake University understands the economic realities of financing a college education. It is part of the OLLU mission to provide resources and options that make a quality, private education affordable for all families. Visit their website for further information.

Website: <https://www.ollusa.edu/costs-aid/index.html>  
Phone: 210-434-6711 EXT 2299

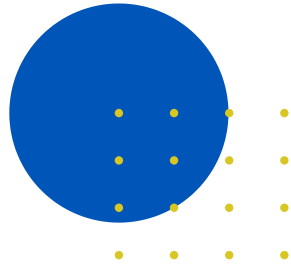
## Phi Alpha

“Through knowledge - the challenge to serve” is the motto of the Phi Alpha National Honor Society for social work students. Membership in the Worden School of Social Service Delta Delta chapter of Phi Alpha is open to all graduate and undergraduate social work students who have demonstrated excellence in academic achievement and are willing to promote social work goals and ideals through volunteer activities in the local San Antonio community. The Delta Delta Chapter accepts applications for membership twice per academic year accepting applications in the beginning of the Spring and Fall school semester. PhD of Social Work students are eligible for active membership after achieving:

- o A minimum of one semester (or six credit hours) of coursework.
- o A minimum grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale.

Students entering the program may apply for provisional membership for the first semester, until such time they meet the membership requirements or are deemed ineligible due to failure to meet eligibility requirements.

Students will receive the email address of the President of the Phi Alpha Honor Society. Students (online and on –campus) that are eligible are encouraged to contact (staff advisor for Phi Alpha), at [phi.alpha@ollusa.edu](mailto:phi.alpha@ollusa.edu) if interested in joining the Honor Society.



# Appendices

# Appendix A

## PhD Student Core Competencies and Expectations

This document is designed to aid Ph.D. students in cultivating core competencies and fulfilling expectations for the successful completion of their doctoral education. The suggested activities listed below can either be undertaken in collaboration with a mentor or independently as part of the student's research pursuits.

Throughout their time at OLLU, students will encounter various opportunities beyond those highlighted below. We urge students to collaborate with their mentors to:

1. Strike a balance between these additional opportunities and their professional development expectations.
2. Develop strategic approaches to integrate practice, service, teaching, and research-related endeavors.

Examples of such additional opportunities include:

- Engaging in service activities such as committee work or assuming leadership roles.
- Providing editorial assistance, such as aiding a mentor in organizing edited volumes or assisting with journal editor responsibilities.
- Delivering guest lectures outside of pedagogy classes.
- Crafting op-eds.
- Participating in community service and advocacy initiatives.
- Engaging in community-based activities linked to research, professional development, or leadership.
- Exploring learning opportunities beyond the Worden School of Social Service, both within and outside OLLU.

In the following pages, you will find the details of the core competencies in the Ph.D. program for each year and competency domain. These core competencies and activities are designed to guide Ph.D. students through their academic journey, ensuring they develop essential skills and knowledge in writing, research, career development, and pedagogy each year of their program.

# Core Competencies and Expectations:

## Year 1

### Writing:

- Disseminate ideas through professional written and oral communication.
- Submit an abstract for presentation at a regional or national conference.
- Attend Cafecitos relevant to writing core competency.

### Research:

- Complete IRB training.
- Develop expertise in beginning data analysis.
- Attend Cafecitos relevant to research competency.

### Career Development:

- Join professional social work organizations (e.g., CSWE, SSWR, NASW).
- Network at professional conferences.
- Attend a workshop on professional development.

### Pedagogy:

- Culturally informed pedagogy course (required).

# CORE COMPETENCIES AND EXPECTATIONS:

## YEAR 2

### Writing:

- Submit a co-authored paper in a professional journal.
- Submit an abstract for presentation at a national conference.
- Attend Cafecitos relevant to writing core competency.

### Research:

- Develop expertise in intermediate, multivariate data analysis.
- Participate in primary data collection.
- Qualitative Methodology II.
- Quantitative Methodology.
- Develop and submit an IRB proposal.
- Attend Cafecitos relevant to research competency.

### Career Development:

- Develop and maintain a curriculum vitae.
- Order business cards.
- Establish profile online.
- Develop individual development plan in collaboration with mentor.
- Network at professional conferences.
- Attend a workshop on professional development.

### Pedagogy:

- Guest lecture (optional).
- AI position (optional)

# CORE COMPETENCIES AND EXPECTATIONS:

## YEAR 3

### Writing:

- Submit a first-authored paper for publication.
- Submit an abstract for presentation at a national conference.
- Write a full grant proposal based on a published RFP.
- Gain experience in grant proposal development.
- Attend Cafecitos relevant to writing core competency.

### Research:

- Begin dissertation research.
- Develop expertise in advanced, mixed-methods analysis.
- Create and submit an IRB application for dissertation study.
- Actively seek opportunities to advance learning and research skills.
- Attend Cafecitos relevant to research competency.

### Career Development:

- Update and maintain a curriculum vitae.
- Attend Cafecitos relevant to career development competency.

### Pedagogy:

- Pedagogy in Distance Education course (required).
- Fully developed online social work elective course built in Blackboard (required).
- Guest lecture (optional).

# Core Competencies and Expectations:

## Year 4

### Writing:

- Successfully defend and submit dissertation.
- Attend Cafecitos relevant to writing core competency.

### Research:

- Finalize dissertation research.
- Attend Cafecitos relevant to research competency.

### Career Development:

- Develop a research statement.
- Participate in mock interviews.
- Attend Cafecitos relevant to career development competency.

### Pedagogy:

- Develop a teaching philosophy statement.
- Guest lecture (optional).
- AI position (optional).



# APPENDIX B

Our Lady of the Lake University  
Worden School of Social Service

## TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP INTENT DISCLOSURE FORM

The mission of the PhD program at the Worden School is to prepare scholars for academic appointments in minority serving institutions. An important component of this is expertise in pedagogy. In partnership with the MSW program, there may be an opportunity to serve as a teaching assistant. This provides students with the opportunity to gain experience in teaching at the University level while under the mentorship of Worden faculty. The teaching assistantship also offers the student a stipend of \$2,500.00 per course.

Expectations will be reviewed in detail during summer residency; however, please be aware of the basic requirements below:

- Courses are a 7-week, asynchronous, fast-paced format
- Post a weekly video and announcement
- Respond to emails and forum questions within 24 hours
- Post grades within 7-10 days; a minimum of 2 assignments are submitted weekly
- Instructors must be available for the entire term of the course
- To express interest, please submit this form to [amramirez@ollusa.edu](mailto:amramirez@ollusa.edu). Questions about the teaching assistantship can be emailed to the Ph.D. Program Office.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of Research Interest(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Course Preference(s): \_\_\_\_\_

- I would like to be considered a teaching assistantship for one term in \_\_\_ spring semester. (TA's are assigned one course either in term A or term B)
- Spring Fast Track A for MSW Program start/end date \_\_\_ Spring Fat Track B for MSW Program start/end date \_\_\_ Fall BSW online start/end date \_\_\_
- Spring BSW online start/end date \_\_\_

# APPENDIX C

OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY  
WORDEN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE  
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION REPORT FORM

This form should be completed by the comprehensive exam committee chair and submitted to the Ph.D. Program office. It is intended exclusively for use by the Ph.D. Program Office to monitor the progress of doctoral students as they transition to candidacy following the successful completion of their comprehensive exams. It is imperative that the completed form is delivered to the Ph.D. Program Office within one week of the oral examination date.

## Student Information

Candidate's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ I.D. Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Title of the Comprehensive Exam

Proposal \_\_\_\_\_

Defense date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Comprehensive Exam Outcome (Check)

Written examination successfully completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Oral examination successfully completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Written examination failed and must be rescheduled: \_\_\_\_\_

Oral examination failed and must be rescheduled: \_\_\_\_\_

## To Be Completed by the Comprehensive Exam Committee

We hereby certify that the comprehensive exam proposal has undergone a thorough review for both form and content. Consequently, we recommend that the doctoral student commence the development of the dissertation proposal.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (Chair)                      Signature (Committee Member)      Signature (Committee Member)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name                      Date                      Name                      Date                      Name                      Date

# APPENDIX D

**OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY  
WORDEN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE  
COMPREHENSIVE & DISSERTATION COMMITTEE DECLARATION FORM**

The Comprehensive Exam Declaration Form and the Dissertation Committee Declaration Forms are both electronic documents. Therefore, please utilize the provided links to declare your committees. utilize the provided links to declare your committees.

## **The Comprehensive Exam Committee Declaration Form**

As you approach your comprehensive exam, we strongly encourage you to initiate the formation of your comprehensive exam committee. Starting this process early allows ample time for developing your comprehensive exam proposal. Crucially, ensure you reach out to the faculty members of your choice beforehand, confirming their willingness to serve on your committee. This step is essential before submitting their names via the provided form.

**LINK:** <https://forms.office.com/r/UmmXWnCvxU>

## **The Dissertation Committee Declaration Form**

The dissertation committee is composed of three or five members. A dissertation committee of four members is not allowed. Minimally three are voting members, including the dissertation chair (student's advisor). In the case of a committee of three, two of the faculty members should be full-time doctorate faculty in Worden while the third member should be a doctorate faculty or content expert outside Worden. In the case of a committee of five, four of the faculty, including the chair should be full-time doctorate faculty in Worden while the fifth member should be a doctorate faculty or content expert outside Worden. Students are encouraged to choose the chair of their dissertation first and meet with their chair for advisement prior to inviting other committee members. Once dissertation committee is formed, doctoral students are responsible to submit Dissertation Committee Declaration Form.

**LINK:** <https://forms.office.com/r/AHL6n4bsp7>

# APPENDIX E

OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY  
WORDEN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE  
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

To be signed at the dissertation defense meeting. This form must be submitted to the Ph.D. Program Office no later than one week after the dissertation proposal defense date.

## Student Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Defense Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Dissertation Title: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Institutional Review Board Status

The dissertation chair must check one of the following indicating whether the proposed study requires IRB approval.

\_\_\_\_ Yes – The proposed study involves the use of human participants. [Evidence of IRB approval must be submitted with the final dissertation defense approval].

\_\_\_\_ No – The proposed study does not clearly involve the use of human participants (e.g., meta-analysis of publicly available research studies, computer and mathematical simulations, analysis of public records or policies).

\_\_\_\_ Unsure- It is unclear whether this study require IRB approval (e.g., analysis of archival data). In this case, consult IRB and get its approval when needed. Submit either IRB's confirmation that the study does not require IRB review or evidence of IRB approval with the final dissertation defense approval form whichever is applicable.

## Dissertation Proposal Status

\_\_\_\_ Pass: The candidate may proceed or may proceed after making revisions specified by the committee

\_\_\_\_ Deferred: There were significant concerns about the proposal, and the committee will conduct a follow-up meeting to evaluate the proposal after substantial revisions are made. A new Dissertation Proposal Approval form shall be filed after the follow-up meeting.

\_\_\_\_ Fail: The candidate does not meet the committee's expectations.

