



PhD in Planning Design & Construction Graduate Student Handbook

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TABLE OF CONTENT

1

11.5.1	Reading Copies of Dissertation.....	12
11.5.2	Scheduling Dissertation Meetings and Reviews	13
11.5.3	Dissertation Defense Result and Completion.....	13
11.5.4	Deposit of Dissertation in the Library.....	14
12	<i>APPENDIX I - Planning, Design + Construction PhD Timeline</i>	16
13	<i>APPENDIX II</i>	

Welcome to the doctoral program in Gibbs College of Architecture at University of Oklahoma! This handbook provides an overview of the PhD in Planning Design and Construction program and provides overall guidance in planning your course of study in the graduate program. It includes information regarding program goals and objectives, curriculum plan, required and suggested courses, timeline, and additional program resources, policies, and procedures.

This handbook is designed to make your experience in the Gibbs College of Architecture more organized, productive, and enjoyable. Please read all sections of the handbook to become thoroughly familiar with the program and the college. Use this handbook as a guide, but keep in mind that while it is comprehensive, it is not exhaustive. Please consult with your program coordinator, and your committee Chair regarding any questions or concerns you might have.

This handbook supplements the University of Oklahoma Graduate College Bulletin available at <https://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms/bulletin>.

The PhD in Planning, Design and Construction degree is available to students wishing to pursue a specialized research or creative agenda. This program consists of coursework tailored to the student's interests, providing them with an opportunity to deepen their expertise in a particular realm of built environment research. Students work closely with their faculty committee to select courses from across the University to create an individualized educational plan, with a concentration in one of the College's five primary disciplines: Architecture, Construction Science, Interior Design, Landscape Architecture or Regional and City Planning. Students have the opportunity to study with leading scholars in the Christopher C. Gibbs College of Architecture, as well as University-wide fields as diverse as Engineering, Geography, History of Science, and more. Graduates of this program are prepared to continue their work in specialized fields, such as professional researchers, post-secondary educators, and non-profit leaders.

Course requirements include core courses in PDC, core courses in one of the above-mentioned area of concentration, courses in research methods, data analysis, and dissertation research.

Students will complete 90 credit hours plus a dissertation. The check sheet for this program can be found _____. The doctoral degree requirements are available _____.

With approval of the advisory conference committee, the graduate liaison, and the dean of the Graduate College, student can transfer 30-

Students are required to take a minimum of 9 hours of guided research methods or research analysis

Every doctoral student admitted into the program has an assigned doctoral committee Chair, selected through mutual agreement between the student and the chair either before or during admission. The committee Chair will act as the student's advisor and meet with the student as needed during the semester. Together the student and the committee Chair will select an advisory committee composed of faculty members in the fields of study. After the formation of the advisory committee, an [advisory committee conference](#) is to be held to prepare a general outline of course requirements in the fields, to discuss the student's program, and to file an advisory

determine if the rights and welfare of human subjects who volunteer to participate in research studies are adequately protected and to ensure that appropriate informed consent procedures are used. The University of Oklahoma Norman campus policy for the protection of human subjects in research activities and IRB application materials can be accessed at the [OU IRB website](#).

The primary purpose of the residence requirement is to encourage the educational and professional development of individuals seeking advanced degrees. The opportunity for the student to interact with the faculty and other students in the university community, while freely using all the facilities thereof and being in a position to take advantage of a wide variety of cultural opportunities, justifies a relatively extended campus stay. In addition, the university should be in a position to oversee the development of the candidate, especially during the formal stages of the student's final preparation for the general examination.

The student must be in residence at OU for at least two consecutive 16-week semesters during the pursuit of the doctoral degree while enrolled and engaged in coursework or research activities as prescribed by the major academic unit. Refer to Graduate College Bulletin [8.2.1.1 Residence Requirement](#).

A graduate student who finds it necessary to temporarily discontinue the program of study may request an academic leave of absence. For more information, please refer to Graduate College Bulletin [3.6.3 Academic Leave of Absence Policy](#).

Funding opportunities for PDC students include graduate assistantships. Graduate assistantships can be either Teaching Assistantships (GTA) or Research Assistantships (GRA). Gibbs College of Architecture has a limited number of GTA positions, and they are usually assigned to students based on merit.

All PhD students should familiarize themselves with the Graduate College deadlines, the deadlines within their academic unit, and the [University Academic Calendar](#). Any calendar is subject to change when it is determined to be in the best interest of the university to do so. More information on doctoral degree milestone deadlines is available at <https://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms-and-policies/steps-to-degree#doctoral>.

In consultation with the Chair, the student will develop a program statement which will include preliminary research areas and how the student's planned courses allow for mastery of subject area and preparation for the dissertation.

field. The written portion will constitute three sections Research Methods, History and Theory of PDC, and a Topical area exam representing the primary research area(s) of the student. The exam will be completed in a two-week period. The oral component takes place after the student has submitted the written component of the examination and it has been determined satisfactory by the

the Graduate College. This form is due two weeks (10 working days) before the scheduled defense date. The final day to submit this form is four weeks prior to the last day of finals.

The *Report of Reading Copy and Request for Authority to Defend* circulates to the committee member for them to affirm that they have received a copy of the dissertation. Committee members will be required to sign the *Reading Copy and Request for Authority to Defend* online form at least one week (5 working days) before defense and at least three weeks prior to the last day of finals. All doctoral forms can be accessed [https://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms-](https://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms-and-policies/steps-to-degree)

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Refer to Graduate College Bulletin [8.9 Checklist for Doctoral Students](#) to review all requirements. Doctoral candidates are individually recognized and hooded on stage at the university-wide Commencement ceremony. Students who wish to participate in Commencement or in a College Convocation12 6 ish to p.f6n

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Doctoral committees are required by university regulations to review the progress of doctoral students each year. This form is to be used for that purpose. The first section of the form, *Summary of Accomplishments*, is to be completed by the student by _____ of each year, listing the accomplishments achieved in the past Academic Year (AY). Students should then submit the form and attachments to their committee chair. The second section of the form, *Evaluation*, is to be completed by the chair by _____ of each year. The completed form is then distributed to the student, the graduate liaison, Ph.D. program coordinator, and all listed members of the student's doctoral committee.

Committee members may issue additional comments which become part of the record. These should be sent to the student, the graduate liaison, all other supervisory committee members, and to the Ph.D. program coordinator.

_____ — _____ .

Exam components are distributed to the student and collected by the committee utilizing the university's course management systems (CANVAS) or via email.

The oral component takes place after the student has submitted the written component of the examination and it has been determined satisfactory by the committee. The student briefly presents the main arguments in all responses and the presentation is followed by a question and discussion with the student and the members of the Doctoral committee. During the discussion, Doctoral committee members may ask the student questions about all responses submitted, their relationship to the student's statement of interest, and their relationship to a potential dissertation proposal and dissertation. The University of Oklahoma's Graduate College provides information governing the exam process and results.

<https://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms-and-policies/graduate-college-bulletin#8.5>

The chair of the Doctoral committee, working with the Division's Graduate Liaison and /or PhD program coordinator is responsible for notifying the student and Graduate College of the results.

The _____ should summarize the proposed dissertation research, including:

- A concise review of the relevant literature, describing the historical and theoretical context
- Descriptions of the theoretical questions and hypotheses
- Descriptions of the methods to be used
- Descriptions of the likely analytic techniques to be used
- Descriptions of the possible outcomes and their theoretical implications
- Discussions of potential problems that may be encountered, and how they will be dealt with
- A tentative timeline for the conduct of the research

Note that each student should consult their primary research advisor for discussion on any specific content or format for the proposal that might be well-matched to the project itself. The proposal for the dissertation research might not include any data collection or data analysis. The collection and analysis of data will be dictated by the underlying research questions. The only formal requirement for the proposed research is that it be approved by the Doctoral committee.

Specifically, a typical prospectus will include the following:

What is the problem you wish to study and what is its interest or significance in current thinking? State clearly and concisely how you presently conceive this problem and how you suppose it can be resolved.

What work has, and has not, been done in this field and on this problem? Discuss relevant scholarship critically. It is not necessary to criticize specific failings; but show what is understood to be the merits and limitations of relevant works. How do you propose to develop, challenge, or depart from existing positions or themes in historical literature?

Outline an approach to the subject. If the conception has theoretical aspects, discuss them critically. Have scholars in other fields developed concepts of potential interest to the topic? How does your topic fit within the larger scholarly conversation around the issue; e.g., what is the history of this topic, on what existing scholarship will your work be building, etc.? Think about method and theory, even if there is a decision not to engage much with external perspectives and theory. The faculty neither encourages nor discourages such engagement but cautions that original historical work should not simply illustrate other people's ideas.

What methods and methodology will you use for the study design, data collection, data analysis, and the interpretation of findings? Provide a clear rationale for anticipated decisions to be made at each stage of the research process. What do you expect to find? What is your specific role if the research is taking place in a team environment or in partnership with your advisor?

Please see the guiding questions below for discussing the study design and data analytic strategies when considering the analysis of qualitative or quantitative data. Guiding Questions for Design of Qualitative or Quantitative Data Analysis.

: What method will you use to select your sample? Why is this appropriate for this question? What are the potential limitations with regard to your sample? Have you investigated whether your sample size will impact the applicability of your results?

What data do you plan to collect from your sample? What are your independent and dependent variables? What kinds of collection tools or measurements will you be using? What statistical methods will you use to analyze your data? Are the necessary assumptions and conditions for your chosen statistical method likely to be met by your data, given your data collection plan (e.g., quantitative versus qualitative data)? How will you verify assumptions (e.g., normality) that must be assessed after data collection? How will you determine whether any data points should be excluded from your analysis?

What is your plan if your research does not produce statistically significant results? Have you discussed this possibility with your advisor? How will you present your results? If you are using tabular or graphical formats, what are the disciplinary standards for formatting the table/graph and discussion of the table/graph within the narrative? To what extent can you realistically generalize your data, given your sampling and analysis?

What is your sampling strategy? Why is this an appropriate strategy? How will these participants help you to explore your research question(s)? In other words, why them and not others? What are the potential limitations or constraints with regard to your participants? If selecting a site or other cohesive subject area to analyze (injury reports from a job/company, communication between designers/contractors/clients, review of a neighborhood in terms of architectural styles/use patterns, simulating the environmental effects of a hazard event using previous data and software, etc.), providing some detail about how your research about the site/cohesive subject area is related to an established scholarly subject area and helps to provide additional knowledge about the problems, issue, site.

What is your methodology or overall research design? (e.g., ethnography, case study, phenomenology, grounded theory, content analysis, hermeneutics) What are your data sources? What data collection method(s) will you use? What is the protocol for your methods? What are ethical issues that need to be considered regarding your method(s)? What are potential limitations of your method(s)? How will you organize, analyze, and interpret the data?

What are the major themes, issues, concepts, etc., that you found in the data? How will you represent these findings? What are the limitations of the findings? How did you achieve trustworthiness in your data? What are the connections between your findings and the scholarly literature/disciplinary field including contributions and gaps? How do your findings contribute to your conceptual or theoretical framework? What are the larger implications of your findings? What are suggestions for future research, based on your findings?

Draft a tentative chapter outline and schedule of tasks and stages for the writing of the dissertation. Allow time for research, travel to collections (if applicable), writing, and revision.