



# Ph.D. in Public Affairs/Community Development Advising Guide

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Note: this document may be revised from time to time. Check the program's website to ensure you have the latest version.

Program website: <https://dppa.camden.rutgers.edu/degrees/phd/>

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## **Program Governance**

The Ph.D. program in Public Affairs/Community Development is administered by the Department of Public Policy and Administration (DPPA). As such, the faculty of the Department and especially the Ph.D. Program Director are responsible for the program. The Doctoral Studies committee has the responsibility to oversee the program. Substantive changes in the program rules must be approved by the full faculty. Exceptions to the program rules can be approved for good cause on a case-by-case basis by the Ph.D. Program Director. Nothing in this document overrides or supersedes the general rules governing graduate study at Rutgers-Camden.

Current governance structure as of the date of this document:

DPPA Department Chair: Lori Minnite (effective 7/1/2016)

Ph.D. Program Director: TDB

Doctoral Studies Committee: The Doctoral Studies Committee consists of the Department Chair, the PhD Director, and other faculty members of DPPA. The current membership of the Committee may be found on the program website.

## **Admissions**

Applicants who have completed a Master's degree are preferred; however, students with a Bachelor's degree and outstanding credentials are eligible to apply. Apply online at <http://gradstudy.rutgers.edu/>. The following information is required:

- A transcript of all undergraduate and graduate coursework completed or in progress.
- Evidence of the ability to succeed in quantitative methods courses, such as prior courses in statistics, research methods, or economics.
- Three (3) letters of recommendation that indicate your potential for succeeding in the Ph.D. in Public Affairs program. At least two (2) of the letters should be from persons familiar with your work in an academic setting, preferably at the graduate level.
- Personal statement indicating your motivation to earn a Ph.D. and what assets you will bring to the class of students. (Describe your background and experience and how a Ph.D. will benefit your future.)
- A résumé. (Relevant professional experience may also be considered.)
- A writing sample.
- Test scores. GRE preferred, especially for applicants seeking funding. LSAT and GMAT accepted.

Applications will be reviewed by the Rutgers–Camden Office of Graduate Admissions and the Department of Public Policy and Administration. Admission decisions will be made by March 1 for students receiving assistantships.

## **Requirements**

### **A. Advising**

Doctoral students will be assigned a faculty advisor. Students should consult with their assigned advisor or the Ph.D. Program Director before registering for courses each semester. To achieve a better match of substantive interests, students can request a different advisor by consulting with the Ph.D. Program Director. Upon forming a dissertation committee (see below), students should regard the chairperson of the committee as their primary advisor.

### **B. Course Requirements**

Students should focus on core curriculum courses in their first two years. Each student should fill out a degree plan which should be updated each semester. The degree plan is the record of courses taken, milestones achieved, and exceptions granted. A copy of the student's degree plan will be kept on file in the program office.

#### **1. Core curriculum required courses (33 credits)**

##### *(i) Theory and Content Courses (15 hours):*

- 824:701 Theory and History of Community Development
- 824:710 Planning, Markets, and Community Development
- 824:704 Alternative Development Strategies for Distressed Cities
- One international or comparative course from this list:
  - 834:606 Poverty Alleviation Strategies
  - 834:556 International Negotiations
  - 824:670 International Conflict and Conflict Resolution
  - 834:605 International Economic Development\*
- One economic development course:
  - 824:705 Regional Economic Development
  - 834:605 International Economic Development\*

\*Note 834:605 can satisfy only one requirement.

*(ii) Methods Courses (15 hours):*

- 824:703 Logic of Social Inquiry
- 824:702 Quantitative Methods I
- 824:709 Quantitative Methods II
- 824:714 Qualitative Research
- 824:713 Research Design

Quantitative Methods I covers probability, descriptive statistics, and inferential statistics. Quantitative Methods II covers the bivariate and multiple regression models. Students may request exemption from one or more methods classes based on documented prior course work. Alternatively, an exemption exam may be taken in lieu of the required coursework if approved by the program director.

*(iii) Practicum (3 hours)*

- 824:706 Practicum in Community Development

The Ph.D. Program Director must approve any exemptions or substitutions from required courses. Requests should be submitted in writing and approvals must be contemporaneously documented in the student's file in the program office.

2. Elective Courses (18 credits)

*(i) Three (3) courses from the School of Law, the School of Business, or graduate programs other than DPPA in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.*

*(ii) Three (3) courses from any graduate program at Rutgers-Camden.*

Students should consult with the Program Director to get suggestions for and approval of the courses outside DPPA, and are responsible to contact the instructor of those courses for permission to enroll.

3. Dissertation (15 Credits)

- Dissertation Hours (15 credits)

4. Transfer and Transient Credit Courses

Up to 21 hours of course work from other Rutgers schools or campuses or other accredited graduate institutions may count toward the total hours requirement, contingent on certification by the Registrar. Coursework from other Rutgers schools or campuses are transient credits; course

work from non-Rutgers accredited graduate institutions are transfer credits and approval of the PhD Director is required. A grade of “B” or better, or the equivalent, is required for all transfer and transient credits. Transfer credits automatically count as free electives. Substitutions for core courses, methods electives, or the law and business requirements may be approved on a case-by-case basis by your graduate advisor and/or the Ph.D. Program Director. A copy of the class syllabus may be required. For the quantitative methods class, a placement test may be used to determine whether a student may substitute transfer credits. The required 9 hours of courses from the Rutgers Camden Schools of Business and Law do not count toward the maximum of 21 hours of transfer or transient credit course work.

*(i) Transfer Credit Rules*

- Credits cannot be transferred until 12 credits of work at the Graduate School- Camden (GSC) are completed. Grades must be a “B” or better.
- Credits should not have been taken more than six years prior to the transfer request. Students can appeal this rule with a written statement.
- No more than one third of credits needed for the degree may be transferred in.
- Quarter credits are converted to semester credits by reducing the total by one third.

Additional information about transfer credit requirements can be found at [www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/transfer\\_credit.pdf](http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/transfer_credit.pdf).

Additional information about transient credit or intra-university registration can be found at:

[http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/cam-grad\\_current/pg44.html](http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/cam-grad_current/pg44.html)

### **C. Comprehensive Exams**

Students must successfully complete two comprehensive exams, which serve to integrate and consolidate the material from the core curriculum. The exams are given in the Fall semester in a student’s third year, although exceptions may be approved by the Ph.D. Program Director. There are two separate exams: 1) research methods and 2) community development theory and practice. Each is described further below.

For full-time students, the examinations must be taken in the Fall semester of the third year. For part time students, the examination is taken once the core curriculum requirements have been met and students are within 6 hours of completing all course requirements. Sample examination questions and a recommended reading list for both exams will be provided by May 15.

#### **1. Research Methods Examination**

The research methods examination covers material from Logic of Social Inquiry (824:703), Quantitative Methods I and II (824:702 and 824:709), and Research Design (824:713).

Beginning with students in the 2016-2017 cohort, Qualitative Methods (824:714) is also included. The exam is open book and open note but not take-home.

The exam is not simply a replay of the final exams in the covered courses, but rather an attempt to measure the extent to which students have integrated the material into a cohesive understanding of the research process. Students are expected to be able to discuss conditions for causal inference, the strengths and weaknesses of different designs and research approaches, and threats to internal and external validity. Students could be asked to propose a design to answer a specified research question or to critique a proposed design. Students are expected to be familiar with issues related to qualitative research, experimental design, and quasi-experimental design.

Students are expected to be able to compute various descriptive measures from raw data and to be able to compute confidence intervals and conduct standard hypothesis tests, such as a difference of means  $t$  test. They should be able to explain how the meaning of these tests depends on how the data were collected. An applied regression question will typically require students to answer questions about an Ordinary Least Squares regression table from a published journal article, testing their ability to interpret regression results and use them to draw substantive conclusions.

Sample examination questions will be provided by May 15. The exam is scheduled for the last Friday of September. Students will have some choice of questions to answer.

## 2. Community Development Theory and Practice Examination

The community development theory and practice examination draws broadly from several courses from the core curriculum, including the required theory and content courses. Questions on the exam will cover the community development legacy of theory and practice. We will look to the body of overlapping ideas, including community participation, community organization and community work that has run alongside the notion of community development. Topics could include: community participation and debates concerning social capital, capacity building and sustainable development, community social planning and economic development, community development and organization, and community action and social justice. The community development theory exam is normally given the first Friday of October. Students write essays drawing on the course content, recommended readings, and the student's experience with and knowledge of community development. This exam is also open book and open notes but not take-home. Students will have some choice of questions to answer.

## 3. Grading of the Examinations

The community development and quantitative committee exams are graded by the Comprehensive Examination Committees. The possible outcomes are *Pass with Distinction*, *Pass*, *Fail*, and – in rare circumstances – *Decision Deferred*. Students receiving a *Decision Deferred* in any examination will be asked to complete additional work; for example, they may

be asked to complete an essay or to retake a course and pass with a grade of “B” or better. If the additional work is completed satisfactorily in the opinion of the Committee, the grade is changed to *Pass*. To move to the dissertation stage, a student must pass both examinations.

Students receiving one grade of *Fail* may retake that examination in the following year. Students receiving more than one failing grade, either on two different tests or twice on the same test, will not be advanced to doctoral candidacy. If the student has completed the core curriculum and meets the requirements for the degree, a terminal Masters degree will be conferred.

#### **D. Dissertation Requirements**

##### **1. Dissertation Committee**

Students are expected to form a dissertation committee as soon as possible after passing the comprehensive exams. The committee consists of not less than three and not more than five faculty members. The chair must be a tenured member of the Department of Public Policy and Administration. Students *may* have a full-time faculty member from the Law School, the Business school, or another Rutgers-Camden department serve on their committees. One member may be from outside the university faculty, either from a university, government agency, or non-profit organization, subject to the approval of the Ph.D. Program Director. External members may serve on a committee with the approval of the Program Director, but may not chair a committee, per the GSC Bylaws. Exceptions to these requirements need to be approved in writing by the Ph.D. Program Director.

Students are free to approach any tenured member of the program faculty to be the chairperson of their committee or to consult with the Ph.D. Program Director or the PhD Committee to determine a suitable faculty member. Students are encouraged to approach faculty members whose research interests are congruent with their own. Faculty members are not obliged to accept a request to chair a student’s committee. The student and the Chairperson select the remaining members with the advice and consent of the Program Director.

##### **2. Dissertation Proposal and Proposal defense**

The dissertation proposal defines the student’s doctoral project. It should contain the student’s rationale for conducting the research, research hypotheses, a preliminary literature review, and a proposed research design and workplan. It should also identify the data to be used in the dissertation, either an existing data source or a procedure for developing new data. If possible, preliminary results may be reported but this is not an expectation. The student presents the proposal to the committee; the defense is open and advertised, and may be attended by other faculty and students. After the presentation and an open question and answer period, the committee deliberates in private and then informs the student of the result of the proposal

defense. The student's proposal may be passed as is, passed with specified revisions, or not passed.

A proposal that has been passed, with revisions or not, forms a contract between the student and the program. If the student competently carries out the research outlined in the proposal and presents the results of such research according to professional standards, then the student will have passed the dissertation requirement whether or not the student's original research hypothesis is confirmed.

### 3. Dissertation

Upon successful passage of the comprehensive examinations, students are promoted to doctoral candidacy. It is at this stage that the student may begin to take dissertation hours with the chair of his or her committee.

The **Capstone, Thesis and Dissertation Style Guide: The Graduate School-Camden** ([www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/info/thesis-style-guide.pdf](http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/info/thesis-style-guide.pdf)) states that the doctoral dissertation must conform to accepted scholarly standard for format, style and general writing procedure. It goes on to prescribe specific standards for the abstract, margins, pagination, and so forth. It is imperative that students follow these guidelines closely. It is also imperative that the dissertation, as with other student work, conform to the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy ([www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/Academic-integrity-policy.php](http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/Academic-integrity-policy.php)).

### 4. Final Dissertation Defense

The completed dissertation must be presented and defended at a public meeting of the dissertation committee. In order to encourage student and faculty attendance, the time and place of the defense must be posted by the chair of the committee at least ten calendar days in advance of the presentation. Normally the Departmental secretary works with the students and committee chair to publicize the time and date of the defense.

Final approval of the dissertation is the jurisdiction of the dissertation committee before which the candidate defends the dissertation.

It is wise to have prepared in advance of the defense the required dissertation signature page and to have it at the defense so the committee, if it is ready, can sign at that time. Per the Graduate School- Camden policies, possible outcomes (based on a unanimous decision) are: *pass with distinction; pass with a satisfactory dissertation; pass, pending a revision of the dissertation; decision deferred; and fail.*

## 5. Submission of Dissertation

The Graduate School-Camden requires approved dissertations to be submitted in electronic format to the RUetd- Rutgers University Electronic Theses and Dissertations via <http://etd.libraries.rutgers.edu.login.php>.

### **Miscellaneous**

#### **A. Student Status**

Information about policies that affect doctoral students can be found at:

[http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/cam-grad\\_current/pg34.html](http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/cam-grad_current/pg34.html)

##### 1. Full-time vs. part time

Doctoral students are considered full-time if they carry a 9 credit load or higher during the current semester.

##### 2. Academic progress

Doctoral students are considered to be maintaining satisfactory academic progress if they maintain a Grade Point Average of 3.5 or above and have no more than one incomplete.

##### 3. Policy regarding incompletes

A grade of Incomplete (IN) may be used by the instructor when the student is unable to fulfill the course requirements by the end of the regular term. In agreement between the instructor and the student, the student will complete the coursework in a reasonable time after the end of the course as determined by instructor. The student will submit the completed work, and the instructor will change the grade to a regular letter grade. To change the grade from an IN to a letter grade, the instructor must submit an Electronic Change of Grade. Once this is done, the regular letter grade will appear on the student's transcript and the grade will be factored into the student's GPA. Unlike undergraduate IN grades, graduate IN grades do not convert to an F. They will remain as an IN indefinitely until the instructor submits a change of grade.

##### 4. Academic Integrity Policy

The Rutgers University Policy on Academic Integrity states:

As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity.

Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. This academic integrity policy is designed to guide students as they prepare assignments, take examinations, and perform the work necessary to complete their degree requirements.

The University administration is responsible for working with faculty and students to foster a strong institutional culture of academic integrity, for providing effective educational programs that create an understanding of and commitment to academic integrity and for establishing equitable and effective procedures to deal with allegations of violations of academic integrity.

The faculty shares with the administration the responsibility for educating students about the importance and principles of academic integrity. Faculty members are expected to inform students of the particular requirements regarding academic integrity within their specific courses, to make reasonable efforts to minimize academic dishonesty, and to respond appropriately to violations of academic integrity. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to provide a statement concerning academic integrity and a link to the Academic Integrity Policy on their course syllabi.

Students are responsible for understanding the principles of academic integrity and abiding by them in all aspects of their work at the University. Students are also encouraged to help educate fellow students about academic integrity and to bring all alleged violations of academic integrity they encounter to the attention of the appropriate authorities.

Specifics about the Academic Integrity Policy, levels of violations, enforcement, penalties, and other matters are found at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/policy-on-academic-integrity>. And for the Camden campus: <http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/Academic-Integrity-Policy.php>.

## **B. Financial Support**

### **1. Graduate Assistantships**

Graduate Assistantships are awarded on the basis of academic performance. Contact the Ph.D. Program Director for availability and procedure for applying. Continued support will be made based on a GPA of at least 3.5 and sufficient progress in the program.

## 2. Other Sources of Support

Other sources of financial support are available for doctoral student research and travel. Consult the Ph.D. Program Director and Graduate School-Camden for information. ([www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/grad\\_travel\\_and\\_research/php](http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/grad_travel_and_research/php)).

### **C. Students with Disabilities**

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey provides student-centered and student-inclusive programming in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1998, and the New Jersey Law against Discrimination. Doctoral students with disabilities should contact the Rutgers-Camden Coordinator for Disability Services; contact information for the office may be found at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/contact-ods>.