Department of Epidemiology

Doctoral Student Procedures

2021-2022

Table of Contents

Chair's Welcome

Welcome to the Department of Epidemiology at the Robert Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work. Epidemiology is the foundation of public health science that is concerned with the study of patterns and determinants of health and disease in order to identify ways to reduce disease burden and improve population's health. There has always been a critical need for epidemiologists, and this need is projected to increase in the future due to the aging of the population and the growing burden of chronic and degenerative disorders. At the same time emerging infectious diseases, such as COVID-19, have been a wakeup call to epidemiologists worldwide that the battle with infectious diseases is far from being over.

Our PhD program is tailored towards meeting these two main trends in population health as we strive to prepare epidemiologists who can, not only respond to current health problems in the society, but be ready as well to face future challenges to health posed by our ever-changing environment and lifestyles. We pride ourselves on being a student-centered department, where our students not only actively participate in our educational and training activities, but in a real sense continuously inform and shape the evolution of our department and programs to meet their needs, and provide a fulfilling experience for them at our College both professionally and socially.

I am very eager to welcome each of you as you embark on your educational journey at our department. Buckle up and get ready for the ride.

Mary Jo Trepka, MD, MSPH
Professor and Chair

FIU
Robert Stempel College of Public Health & Social Work

Department of Epidemiology
Faculty Profiles

Mary Jo Trepka, MD, MSPH
Professor and Department Chair
Research interests are in the epidemiology and control of infectious diseases, the social determinants of health disparities in HIV/AIDS care outcomes, and the role of patient centered care in mitigating the effects of these social determinants on HIV care outcomes.

Wasim Maziak, MD, PhD
Professor
Research interests are the study of emerging tobacco products, chronic diseases and risk factors, public health in developing countries, and regulatory and policy solutions to public health problems.

Nasar U. Ahmed, PhD, MPS
Associate Professor
Research focuses on health disparities in cancer screening, physician recommendation for preventive health behavior, and interventions designed to address these issues.

Gladys E. Ibañez, PhD
Associate Professor
Research interests are HIV and substance use, Latino and sexual minority health. She also studies intervention development and integrative and complementary health approaches.

FIU
Robert Stempel College of Public Health & Social Work

Department of Epidemiology
Faculty Profiles

Diana Sheehan, PhD, MPH
Assistant Professor
Research interest are in health disparities, HIV, and Latino health. Her current research focuses on disparities along the HIV care continuum, as well as on the effect of neighborhood and social context on health behaviors and outcomes.

Olatokunbo Osibogun PhD, MBBS, MPH
Assistant Professor

Research interests are in tobacco use and preventive cardiology. She is mainly focused on understanding the etiology and progression of dual/polytobacco use behaviors among adolescents and adults, with an additional interest in improving cardiovascular health and recommending solutions through scientific evidence to advance public health.

Melissa Ward, PhD, MPH
Assistant Professor
Research interests include using mixed-methods approaches to examine health disparities and disparities in access to care, with a particular focus on barriers to care for women with opioid use disorder. She also studies women-centered and patient-centered approaches for HIV care.

Vukosava Pekovic, MD, PhD, MPH
Clinical Associate Professor/Academic Public Health Director
Her research interests include aging, health disparities, and public health preparedness.

Miguel Ángel Cano, PhD, MPH

Associate Professor and PhD Program Director

Program of research concentrates on the etiology and prevention of substance use behavior/disorders and mental health; and aims to help understand and reduce health disparities and health inequities affecting Hispanic communities and other socially disadvantaged groups.

FIU

Robert Stempel College
of Public Health
& Social Work

For More Information Please Visit

https://stempel.fiu.edu/research/epidemiology-research-faculty-spotlight/

Introduction and General Description

Epidemiology is “the study of the distribution and determinants of health-related events in human population.” The science of epidemiology is based on two basic concepts: “careful systemic observation of disease phenomena” and “logical interpretation of observation.” Thus, the field of epidemiology requires applying your senses to observe the natural phenomena and logical thinking to interpret these phenomena. It is the science of prediction, prevention, and promotion of health events.

The borders of epidemiology are always expanding. Modern epidemiology is diverse and can involve the epidemiology of acute and chronic diseases, molecular and genetic aspects of disease, environmental and occupational health conditions, and behavioral and social science to understand the phenomena. Similarly, the sphere of actions expands from observational fields to high-tech sophisticated laboratories and software applications.

Typical Course Offerings

Fall Semester

PHC 6000	Introduction to Public Health Epidemiology
PHC 6002	Infectious Disease Epidemiology
PHC 6003	Chronic Disease Epidemiology
PHC 7017	Advanced Epidemiology of Health Disparities
PHC 7015	Advanced Research Methods: Experimental Design
PHC 7011	Advanced Current Research in Epidemiology
PHC 6591	Reproductive Health
PHC 7606	Tobacco Use: Causes, Consequences, and Control

Spring Semester

PHC 6000	Introduction to Public Health Epidemiology
PHC 6007	Cancer Epidemiology
PHC 6013	Epidemiology II: Observational Design
PHC 6016	Social Epidemiology
PHC 6062	Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis
PHC 6510	Advanced Infectious Disease Epidemiology
PHC 6934	Scientific Writing & Oral Presentations in Epidemiology
PHC 7705	Methods in Evidence Based Public Health

Summer Semester

PHC 6009	AIDS Epidemiology and Control
PHC 6013	Epidemiology II: Observational Design
PHC 6536	Health Demography

Epidemiology Graduate Catalog 2019-2020:

https://catalog.fiu.edu/2021_2022/graduate/Robert_Stempel_College_of_Public_Health_and_Social_Work/GD_Epidemiology.pdf

FIU-University of Miami Exchange Program

FIU Doctoral students can complete up to six credit-hours at the University of Miami (UM) as members of the exchange program between FIU and the UM. The exchange program at UM and FIU allows students to take advantage of the broad educational and research opportunities at both institutions. All students who are fully admitted into a doctoral program and in good academic standing may participate in this program. Students can choose from any course at UM provided the course is not already offered at FIU, is not a limited access course and/or does not have additional fees (i.e. many online courses).

A listing of some public health courses offered at the University of Miami can be found here:
https://graduatestudies.publichealth.med.miami.edu/academic-programs/course-descriptions/index.html

The application form for the FIU/UM Exchange Program can be found here:
https://gradschool.fiu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/WritableFIU-UM-Exchange-Application2020current.pdf

Funding for Doctoral Students

Presidential Fellowship *(*Institutional)
Doctoral student is nominated by the department prior to beginning his/her doctoral studies here. Each program can nominate 2 candidates—mentor plays a key role in this process; newly admitted

- $30,000/year
- 2 years of stipend support from the University Graduate School (UGS)
- 1 additional year of funding support from the fellow's graduate program
- 3 years support via tuition waiver and health insurance from the UGS
- Additional information: https://gradschool.fiu.edu/students/funding/fellowships/

McKnight Doctoral Fellowship (Statewide)
Graduate student applies for and brings the funds with him/her (statewide FEF foundation); newly admitted

- $22,000/year
- $12,000 from the Florida Education Fund for the 1st 3 years
- $10,000 from the University Graduate School for the 1st 3 years
- 2 additional years of funding support from the fellow's graduate program (as a Graduate Assistant)
- 5 years of support via a tuition waiver and health insurance
- Additional information: https://gradschool.fiu.edu/students/funding/fellowships/

FIU McNair Graduate Fellowship *(*National/Institutional)
Must have been an undergrad McNair; applicable to all McNairs nationwide, both Master's and Doctoral; must be newly admitted and nominated by home department/unit.

- $23,000 /year
- 2 years of stipend support from the University Graduate School (UGS)
- 2 additional years of funding support from the fellow's graduate program (as a Teaching or Research Assistant).
- Additional information: https://gradschool.fiu.edu/students/funding/fellowships/

C.V. Starr Scholarship
The C.V. Starr Scholarship assists students from Latin America and The Caribbean, who are interested in pursuing a doctoral degree in one of the three major disciplines at Stempel College.

- $24,000/year stipend and tuition waiver
- Additional information: https://stempel.fiu.edu/student-life/funding-your-education/

FIU Scholarships

- *Stempel College Scholarships:* https://stempel.fiu.edu/student-life/funding-your-education/
- https://gradschool.fiu.edu/students/funding/
- https://fiu.academicworks.com
- https://fiu.academicworks.com/opportunities/external

Other Funding Sources

- *Public Health Online:* www.publichealthonline.org/scholarships-and-grants/
- *Society for Public Health Education*: http://my.sophe.org/Awards-Scholarships/Awards-Scholarships
- *ASPPH Scholarship Database*: www.aspph.org/study/financing-your-degree/

Suggested Timelines to Complete PhD

Suggested timeline for full-time student entering doctoral program *without* and MPH		
Year 1		
Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**	**Summer Semester**
9 credit hours	9 credit hours **Submit D-1 Form**	9 credit hours
Year 2		
Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**	**Summer Semester**
9 credit hours	9 credit hours	6 credit hours **Submit D-2 and D-3 Forms**
Year 3		
Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**	**Summer Semester**
3 dissertation credit hours	3 dissertation credit hours	3 dissertation credit hours
Year 4		
Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**	**Summer Semester**
3 dissertation credit hours	3 dissertation credit hours	3 dissertation credit hours
Year 5		
Fall Semester	**Fall Semester**	**Spring Semester**
3 dissertation credit hours	3 dissertation credit hours **Submit D-5 Form**	

Suggested timeline for full-time student entering doctoral program *with* an MPH (A maximum of 18 credit hours can be transferred from an MPH or other graduate degree)		
Year 1		
Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**	**Summer Semester**
9 credit hours	9 credit hours **Submit D-1 Form**	6 credit hours
Year 2		
Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**	**Summer Semester**
9 credit hours **Submit D-2 and D-3 Forms**	3 dissertation credit hours	3 dissertation credit hours
Year 3		
Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**	**Summer Semester**
3 dissertation credit hours	3 dissertation credit hours	3 dissertation credit hours
Year 4		
Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**	**Summer Semester**
3 dissertation credit hours	3 dissertation credit hours	3 dissertation credit hours **Submit D-5 Form**

**** 75 credit hours are required (51 credit hours pre-candidacy + 24 dissertation credit hours)***

Robert Stempel College of Public Health & Social Work

Doctor of Philosophy in Public Health with Epidemiology Concentration

http://stempel.fiu.edu

Name:	PID#:	Admitted:

I. Public Health Core Courses - 12 credits of required coursework.

PREFIX	COURSE DESCRIPTION	HOURS	TERM	GRADE	PREREQUISITES
PHC 6091	Biostatistics 2	3			PHC 6052
PHC 6601	Emerging Issues in Public Health	3			
PHC 7705	Methods in Evidence Based Public Health	3			PHC 6065
PHC 7981	Research Concepts and Proposal Development	3			PHC 6091

II. Epidemiology Method Courses - 15 credits of required coursework (‡ denoted required course).

PREFIX	COURSE DESCRIPTION	HOURS	TERM	GRADE	PREREQUISITES
PHC 6099	R Computing for Health Sciences	3			PHC 6052, PHC 6091
PHC 6056	Longitudinal Health Data Analysis	3			PHC 6052, PHC 6091
PHC 6059	Survival Data Analysis	3			PHC 6090, PHC 6091
PHC 6064	Applied Statistical Methods for Discrete Data	3			PHC 6052
PHC 6080	SAS Computing for Health Sciences	3			PHC 6052, PHC 6091
PHC 7011‡	Advanced Current Research in Epidemiology	3			PHC 6000, PHC 6013, PHC 6065
PHC 7015‡	Advanced Research Methods: Experimental Design	3			PHC 6000, PHC 6013, PHC 6065
PHC 7719	Quantitative Multivariate Analysis in Health Sciences	3			PHC 6052, PHC 6091

III. Epidemiology Content Courses - 12 credits of required coursework.

PREFIX	COURSE DESCRIPTION	HOURS	TERM	GRADE	PREREQUISITES
PHC 6000	Introduction to Public Health Epidemiology	3			
PHC 6001	Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology	3			PHC 6000, PHC 6315
PHC 6002	Infectious Disease Epidemiology	3			PHC 6000, PHC 6065
PHC 6003	Chronic Disease Epidemiology	3			PHC 6000
PHC 6007	Cancer Epidemiology	3			PHC 6000
PHC 6008	Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology	3			
PHC 6009	AIDS Epidemiology and Control	3			
PHC 6013	Epidemiology II: Observational Design	3			
PHC 6014	Behavioral Epidemiology	3			PHC 6000
PHC 6016	Social Epidemiology	3			PHC 6000
PHC 6020	Clinical Epidemiology	3			PHC 6000, PHC 6065
PHC 6062	Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis	3			PHC 6000, PHC 6065
PHC 6251	Disaster and Emergency Epidemiology	3			PHC 6000, PHC 6065
PHC 6443	Ethical Issues in Public Health	3			
PHC 6536	Health Demography	3			PHC 6065
PHC 6934	Scientific Writing & Oral Presentations in Epidemiology	3			PHC 6000, PHC 6065
PHC 7017	Advanced Epidemiology of Health Disparity	3			PHC 6055, PHC 6065
PHC 7162	Grant Writing in Public Health	3			PHC 6091, PHC 7705, PHC 7981
PHC 7606	Tobacco Use: Causes, Consequences, and Control	3			
PHC 7982	Public Health Pre-Dissertation Research	-			

IV. Secondary Courses - 12 credits of advised graduate secondary courses.
These courses must be approved by the Graduate Program Director or Major Professor.

PREFIX	COURSE DESCRIPTION	HOURS	TERM	GRADE	APPROVED BY

V. Dissertation - 24 credits of required coursework.

PREFIX	COURSE DESCRIPTION	HOURS	TERM	GRADE	APPROVED BY
PHC 7980	Dissertation	24			

Graduation Requirements:

1. Satisfy all requirements for Ph.D. of Public Health in Epidemiology.
2. Must earn a grade of B or better in each course.
3. Complete a minimum of 75 credit hours of graduate level coursework in approved program.
4. 9 credit hours must 7000 level courses.
5. Earn a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 in all coursework completed.
6. Complete Forms D1-D5 (Dissertation Approval Forms) as per University Graduate School guidelines and deadlines. Forms can be accessed at gradschool.fiu.edu
7. Meet with Faculty Advisor to receive Graduation Check prior to final semester.
8. Apply for graduation at the Registrar's Office during registration of final semester (See University Catalog for most current deadlines).

Competencies for PhD in Public Health with Epidemiology Concentration

1. **Conceptualize an epidemiologic research question from identifying and critically appraising the literature to the formulation of a valid research question and hypothesis.**
    a. Review and critically evaluate the literature.
    b. Synthesize available information about a public health issue.
    c. Apply appropriate causal inference.
    d. Identify meaningful gaps in knowledge.
    e. Formulate an original and key hypothesis or statement of research problem.

2. **Apply and interpret the results of appropriate statistical analysis for different types of epidemiologic data and understand their limitations**
    a. Create and explain appropriate graphical and numerical presentations of epidemiological data.
    b. Calculate and interpret p-values, statistical power and significance level.
    c. Prepare and interpret commonly utilized confidence intervals.
    d. Given a set of data or research question, choose, conduct and interpret appropriate statistical test.
    e. Choose and defend the choice of an appropriate multivariate analyses and accurately interpret the results.

3. **Interpret epidemiologic associations within a comprehensive causal framework**
    a. Identify criteria for the assessment of causation, use epidemiologic reasoning, and apply causal criteria to epidemiologic studies.
    b. Examine data for confounding, effect modification, and interaction and handle these issues appropriately.
    c. Interpret data analysis results and assess appropriate inference based on results; generalization, validity (internal, external), and limits/strengths of the study.
    d. Understand proximal and distal causal factors and comprehensive causal frameworks.
    e. Critique an epidemiologic paper (for adequacy of study design, appropriate epidemiologic and statistical methods, and interpretation of results and their implications).

4. **Synthesize epidemiologic knowledge to advance public health interventions and policy.**
    a. Apply the principles of evidence-based public health to a specific problem.
    b. Explain how epidemiological evidence can be used to inform and spur policy initiatives.
    c. Summarize multi-disciplinary and stakeholders approaches to evidence translation and policy making.

5. **Comprehend ethical and legal principles pertaining to epidemiological data collection, maintenance, and dissemination**
    a. Apply concepts of human subjects protection and confidentiality to epidemiologic research questions.
    b. Explain the nuances of informed consent especially in vulnerable populations and diverse cultures.
    c. Understand the ethical and legal aspects of using human subjects data.

Candidacy Examination Guidelines

Examination Procedures

All doctoral candidates must pass a candidacy examination (a.k.a. comprehensive exam or qualifying exam) before they can advance to candidacy and begin enrolling in dissertation credits. The candidacy exam can be taken once the candidate has successfully completed all graduate coursework required for his/her program. Once the student has successfully passed the candidacy exam, the student may register for dissertation credits. The student must be registered during the semester in which the exam is given.

Based on the dissertation proposal submitted to the dissertation committee members, questions for the candidacy examination will be formulated. The student will undergo an *oral candidacy exam* to assess the six concentration competencies in epidemiology. To assess each concentration competency, members of the dissertation committee will submit questions to the Chair of the dissertation committee prior to the date of the candidacy exam. The exam will have a minimum of one question for each concentration competency and have a minimum of 10 questions total.

The candidacy exam will occur after the student presents the dissertation proposal. The dissertation committee will then meet with the student in private, which will be closed door to conduct the candidacy exam and evaluate the student on the concentration competencies for epidemiology that they will need to advance to doctoral candidacy. The competencies are available on page 13. The candidacy exam will be approximately 45 minutes to an hour long.

Examination Committee

The Doctoral Candidacy Examination Committee will be comprised of the dissertation committee.

Exam Assessment

Response for the candidacy exam will be evaluated using the following scoring rubric: (0) Does Not Meet Expectations; (1) Partially Meets Expectations; (2) Meets Expectations; and (3) Exceeds Expectations.

For a grade of “pass,” the student must score an average of 2.0 or higher on each competency to pass the candidacy exam. Although the dissertation committee may make recommendations for additional coursework, readings, or research training that they believe will help the student as he/she completes his/her dissertation research, advancement to candidacy is not contingent upon the student following the recommendations. If students pass the candidacy examination, they may advance to Doctoral Candidacy.

Students that do not pass the candidacy exam may be allowed to retake the examination at the discretion of the committee. If so, the committee will delineate specific recommendations for further coursework, readings, etc., to complete before re-examination. The re-examination must be scheduled within 12 months of the date of the first exam. Students may be re-examined one time only. If they fail a second time, the student’s status as a PhD student will be terminated.

Candidacy Examination Procedures

PhD in Public Health with Epidemiology Concentration

Instructions: To assess the six concentration competencies, members of the dissertation committee will submit questions to the Chair of the dissertation committee prior to the candidacy exam. Exam questions must be relevant to the dissertation proposal and the science of epidemiology to evaluate each competency. The Chair of the dissertation committee will document the exam questions using the table and format below. After completion of the candidacy exam, the Chair of the dissertation committee must submit the candidacy exam questions and the competed evaluation rubric to the graduate program director.

Exam Question	Target Competency	Question Provided By
1. Can you explain the difference between mediation and moderation? Why do you hypothesize that "*variable z"* functions as a moderator instead of a mediator?	Competency #2	Dr. John Doe
2. Based on your findings, what are the key implications/recommendations for the design or modification of interventions?	Competency #5	Dr. John Doe

Candidacy Examination Rubric

PhD in Public Health with Epidemiology Concentration

Student Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Instructions: Following the dissertation proposal, the student will undergo an oral candidacy exam to assess competencies for the PhD in public health with epidemiology concentration. Members of the dissertation committee must submit exam questions to the Chair of the dissertation committee before beginning the candidacy exam. Exam questions must be relevant to the dissertation proposal and the science of epidemiology to evaluate each competency. Using the scoring rubric below, each dissertation committee member must evaluate the student on each of the following six competencies. The student must score an average of 2.0 or higher on each competency to pass the candidacy exam. After completion of the candidacy exam, the Chair of the dissertation committee must submit the candidacy exam questions and the competed evaluation rubric to the graduate program director.

Scoring Rubric:
(0) Does Not Meet Expectations
(1) Partially Meets Expectations
(2) Meets Expectations
(3) Exceeds Expectations

Dissertation Committee Member Name	**Competency 1:** Conceptualize an epidemiologic research question from identifying and critically appraising the literature to the formulation of a valid research question and hypothesis.	**Competency 2:** Apply and interpret the results of appropriate statistical analysis for different types of epidemiologic data and understand their limitations.	**Competency 3:** Interpret epidemiologic associations within a comprehensive causal framework.	**Competency 4:** Synthesize epidemiological knowledge to advance public health interventions and policy.	**Competency 5:** Comprehend ethical and legal principles pertaining to epidemiological data collection, maintenance, and dissemination.
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
	Mean Score:	**Mean Score:**	**Mean Score:**	**Mean Score:**	**Mean Score:**

Dissertation Proposal Guidelines

Formatting Notes: Use Arial 11-point font, minimum 0.5-inch margins; Maximum 10 single-spaced pages for Sections II – VI; Maximum 1/2 single-spaced page for Section VII; Maximum 1/2 single-spaced page for Sections VIII & X; Maximum 1/2 page for essential figures or tables. Maximum 3 pages for Section IX.

1. **Title Page**: Project title, student's name, chair of committee, committee members, and date. If your committee is not yet formally constituted, indicate potential committee members you are considering, including a Chair, who must have been selected.

2. **Specific Aims & Rationale**: List the research immediate aims in terms of hypotheses to be tested or research questions to be answered. The purpose of the research should be specified, in order to indicate the long-term importance of the specific information being sought through this study. This section must not exceed 1/2 to 1 page in length and often can be shorter.

3. **Background and Significance**: Describe the scientific context for the study, briefly summarizing previous related research. This should NOT be an extensive literature review. Keep references to a minimum by citing only the most relevant. This section should focus on the gaps in knowledge the proposed research will help to fill. This section should not exceed 4 pages in length.

4. **Methods**: The format of this section may be tailored to meet the needs of the specific study being proposed. However, the following sub-headings usually apply. This should be the longest section of the proposal and can be up to 5 pages in length.
   a) **Study design**: Define a) the study design, b) the primary exposures to be evaluated (or interventions to be implemented), c) how the primary exposures would be assessed and quantified (if applicable), d) outcomes to be assessed and their definition, and e) the key covariates and their definition.
   b) **Study setting**: Describe the location, organizational context, clinical site(s), or other setting in which the research will take place.
   c) **Study subjects**: Indicate the source(s) of study subjects, criteria for eligibility, and the anticipated number to be studied.
   d) **Data collection**: Describe the sources of key data items. When applicable, the sequence of data collection activities for a typical subject should be given. A diagram can be helpful when data will come from several sources or when multiple observations are to be obtained over time. If there are plans to monitor and assure data quality (such as duplicate data for some or all subjects, cross-checks of one data source against another), briefly describe them.
   e) **Data analysis**: Describe how the data will be organized to address each of the specific aims and/or hypotheses mentioned in Section A. Specify the statistical techniques to be used. Dummy tables or figures are recommended.
   f) **Study Power**: Summarize the results of statistical power or sample-size calculations.

5. **Limitations**: Briefly describe the most important factors limiting conclusions to be drawn from the study and, the ability to adequately test the primary hypotheses.

6. **Timeline**: Provide an approximate timeline for completing the project. Indicate the current status of the project, including plans for funding.

7. **References**: Provide citations to literature references used in the proposal.

8. **Data Collection Requirement**: If applicable, describe how the requirement of original data collection will be met by this project. Student's conducting secondary data analysis may state so in this section.

9. **Human Subjects**: Describe the human subjects and ethical issues to be addressed in this project.

10. **Student's Role**: Describe your role in the project (e.g., idea, funding, design, data collection, data management, analysis). If the student is using data already collected by another professor or faculty, he/she must state their role in coming up with the dissertation research project.

Students are also required to prepare an abbreviated proposal for the University Graduate School. Guidelines for the University Graduate School are available at:
http://gradschool.fiu.edu/documents/Proposal_Guidelines.pdf.

Sample dissertation proposals can be found here:
http://gradschool.fiu.edu/thesis-dissertation/

Proposal Defense Rubric

PhD in Public Health with Epidemiology Concentration

Student Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Instructions: Using the scoring rubric below, each dissertation committee member must evaluate the student's dissertation proposal on each of the following five content areas. The student must score an average of 2.0 or higher on each content area to pass the dissertation proposal defense. The completed evaluation form must be submitted to the graduate program director.

Scoring Rubric:
(0) Does Not Meet Expectations
(1) Partially Meets Expectations
(2) Meets Expectations
(3) Exceeds Expectations

Dissertation Committee Member Name	**Content Areas**				
	Project Summary: (1) Clearly state the purpose and objectives; (2) The intellectual merit of the project is clearly stated; and (3) Broader impact of the research clearly stated.	**Introduction to Problem:** (1) Describe the scientific problem; (2) Provide the context to the problem; (3) Explain the relevance of the problem being addressed; and (4) Describe previous research relevant to the problem.	**Methodology:** (1) Describe and use concise definition of methods; (2) Describe the potential sources of errors; and (3) Provide a clear timeline to carry out the project.	**Organization, Illustrations and Tables:** (1) The proposal is clearly organized as described in the guidelines; and (2) All illustrations and tables are labeled in a systematic manner.	**Budget and Budget Justification:** (1) Items are prioritized and realistic and well justified; (2) Describe all items necessary for the project; and (3) Provide a clear justification of all items needed for the project.
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
	Mean Score:	**Mean Score:**	**Mean Score:**	**Mean Score:**	**Mean Score:**

Dissertation Requirements

Dissertations can be completed using one of two formats; however, the major professor determines which of the following formats the student will use. Major Professors are encouraged to use the manuscript format.

Manuscript Format (preferred format)
PhD students in public health with a specialization in epidemiology are expected to write three cohesive manuscripts related to the dissertation project.

1. Three manuscripts should be publishable and submitted for peer-review.
2. Two of the three manuscripts must be published, in press, accepted for publication, or have received positive peer-review by the time the candidate submits the dissertation to the Chair of the committee for final signature.
3. The choice of journals to which the manuscripts are submitted will be made in consultation with the candidate's dissertation committee.

Traditional Format
Alternatively, PhD students in public health with a specialization in epidemiology can use the traditional dissertation format. Below is an outline of the traditional format. More details on the traditional format can be found here: http://gradschool.fiu.edu/thesis-dissertation/

Traditional Format Outline

- Title Page
- Dedication (optional)
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Abstract
- Table of Contents
- Chapter 1
    - Introduction
- Chapter 2
    - Literature Review
    - Specific Aims and Hypotheses
- Chapter 3
    - Methods
- Chapter 4
    - Results
- Chapter 5
    - Discussion
- References
- Vitae
- Appendices

Dissertation Defense Rubric

PhD in Public Health with Epidemiology Concentration

Student Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Instructions: Using the scoring rubric below, each dissertation committee member must evaluate the student's dissertation defense on each of the following three content areas. The student must score an average of 2.0 or higher on each content area to pass the dissertation defense. The completed evaluation form must be submitted to the graduate program director.

Scoring Rubric:
(0) Does Not Meet Expectations
(1) Partially Meets Expectations
(2) Meets Expectations
(3) Exceeds Expectations

	Content Areas		
Dissertation Committee Member Name	**Dissertation Implementation:** (1) Describe clearly the instruments used for measurement of epidemiologic variables; (2) State the data collection process including the subject recruitment and retention; (3) Provide quality control measures; (4) Describe methods used to adhere to the protocol; (5) Describe the statistical analysis carried out for the study; and (6) Elaborate on the ethical issues relevant to the study.	**Written Dissertation:** (1) Describe the scientific context; (2) Describe the scientific content in detail; and (3) Explain the technical aspects of the dissertation and publications.	**Oral Defense:** (1) Technical aspects of presentation {e.g., opening, delivery, word choice, timing, summary, conclusions}; (2) Quality of visual aids {e.g., number/sequence of slides, effectiveness, simplicity and legibility}; and (3) Scientific content and organization {e.g., logic, significance and relevance, originality, responses to audience and defense committee}.
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
	Mean Score:	**Mean Score:**	**Mean Score:**

Compliance & Integrity | Ethical Panther

The FIU Community can make reports when misconduct or unethical behavior is witnessed or suspected, online or by phone.

These reports can be made in an anonymous and confidential way. These reports are intended to address misconduct in the workplace or classroom setting due to mismanagement of funds, fraud, abuse or other violations of law or University policy.

To file a report please visit (https://compliance.fiu.edu/hotline/) or call (1-844-312-5358).

Student Agreement | PhD in Public Health with Epidemiology Concentration

By signing this student agreement, I acknowledge that I was provided a copy of the "PhD in Public Health with Concentration in Epidemiology." I also acknowledge that understand the Florida International University policy number 380.044 which states the following:

Academic Dismissal:

1. Failure to maintain good academic standing will result in placement on academic warning, probation or dismissal.

Warning:

1. A graduate student whose cumulative graduate GPA falls below a 3.0 will be placed on warning, indicating academic difficulty.

Probation:

1. A graduate student on warning whose cumulative graduate GPA remains below 3.0 in the following semester will be placed on probation, indicating serious academic difficulty. The College or School of the student on probation may indicate the conditions which must be met in order to continue enrollment.

Dismissal:

1. A graduate student on probation whose cumulative and semester GPA's fall below a 3.0 will be automatically dismissed from his or her program and the University. A graduate student will not be dismissed prior to attempting a minimum of 12 hours of coursework as a graduate student. The student has ten working days to appeal the dismissal decision.
2. A student may be dismissed for failure to make satisfactory progress toward degree completion or failure to complete all the requirements for a graduate degree within the time limits for degree completion.
3. A student may be dismissed for non-compliance with the continuous enrollment policy for doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy or master's students with an approved research proposal.

Examples of unsatisfactory progress toward degree completion include: not completing a Fall or Spring student evaluation, not achieving the SMART goals on two consecutive semesters.

_____	_____	_____
Student Name (Print)	Student Signature	Date

_____ _____

Mary Jo Trepka, MD, MSPH — Date
Professor and Department Chair
Department of Epidemiology

_____ _____

Miguel Ángel Cano, PhD, MPH — Date
Associate Professor
Director, Epidemiology Doctoral Program
Department of Epidemiology