

Outlined below is a timeline that leads to your dissertation defense.

- **Intrdepartmental Review:** The intradepartmental review (IDR) examines the student's coursework to ensure that their remaining semesters are used to appropriately prepare them for graduation. **The IDR will take place early during the second semester of the second year** and is conducted by a committee of three faculty members, including the student's doctoral advisor. The committee reviews the student's CV, educational record, and dissertation idea and recommends additional coursework and direction for the duration of the doctoral training period. The committee also ensures that the student has met or has a plan to meet all requirements of the doctorate, including teaching, ethics, and writing training.
- **Comprehensive Examination:** The attached summary of competencies is an example of the core areas in which you need to have command of the content (A-skill level) or working familiarity (B-skill level) by the time you graduate. Major course texts will be your initial sources of readings for review. Supplemental references and relevant PDF articles will also be suggested. Exam questions will be similar to those taken during the core epidemiology coursework. **Taken at the end of second spring semester.**
- **Qualifying Examination:** Student must be in good academic standing (GPA ≥ 3.0) and must have passed the comprehensive examination. The qualifying exam is the oral defense of your dissertation proposal and can be considered to be the contract that the student and committee agree upon for the work to be done for the dissertation. The examining committee is the student's dissertation committee. On satisfactory completion of the oral examination, the student will be admitted to candidacy. **Schedule within 3-6 months after Comprehensive Examination.**
- **Oral Dissertation Defense:** Candidates for the PhD in Epidemiology must present an acceptable dissertation that adds to or modifies the body of knowledge. Professional achievement must be evident and should include presentation of research at one or more national meeting(s). Prior to dissertation defense the student **MUST** have at least one first-authored publication submitted to a peer-reviewed scientific journal. The doctoral dissertation will include: critical review of the literature, a methods chapter to include hypotheses tested and methods applied, two to three manuscripts intended for publication, and a summary chapter with proposed next research steps in the field.