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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Capella University and your doctoral degree program!

A Capella University doctoral degree program prepares you to achieve the highest level of formal study as scholar-practitioners. Completing your doctoral degree program also represents a new beginning: your entry into the community of scholars within a field of study. Your doctoral studies will empower you to support the discovery of new knowledge and contribute to your professional field through scholarship, practice, and service.

Reading and returning to this manual frequently will help you understand the components and specific requirements of your degree program and maintain satisfactory academic progress. Careful attention to the way your program-specific components work together will inform your decision-making and success throughout your studies.

The entire Capella community is here to support you, and we hope this resource will provide guidance that strengthens your sense of purpose and promotes your scholarly development at each stage of your degree program.

We wish you a rewarding academic journey and great success as you pursue a doctoral degree at Capella University.
OVERVIEW

This document is a resource you should consult throughout your doctoral studies, as a companion to Capella’s University Catalog and university policies. Doctoral-level degrees are represented and organized herein by degree program.

Each section indicates which components are required for your degree program (and specialization, where applicable), helping you proactively navigate its specific requirements. Procedural information related to each of your degree program’s components, and references to other key information, will help you avoid bumps in the road.

Program requirements may include:

- **Coursework**—must you take your courses in a specific sequence?
- **Outside the courseroom learning experience**—does your degree program require you to attend a residency or complete a practicum?
- **Comprehensive assessment of learning**—does your degree program require a comprehensive examination, or will a specific set of course requirements satisfy this requirement?
- **Demonstration and assessment of knowledge**—when and how will you begin working on your dissertation, doctoral capstone, or doctoral project?
- **Specific professional standards**—are there field-specific standards you will be expected to meet?

Where applicable, each of these requirements, and its relationship to the Academic Standing policy and its procedures, is explained in more detail below on a program-by-program basis. Likewise, you will find links to other pertinent documents such as related university policies, other manuals, and Capella’s University Catalog.

While this manual focuses on information essential for successful completion of your doctoral degree program, it cannot be all-inclusive. Consult an academic advisor from your program or other university resources with any questions.

We wish you the very best as you approach and accomplish each stage of your degree program.

DISCLAIMER

Neither the Doctoral Manual, nor any of the information and requirements contained herein, constitute a contract or create any contractual commitments between Capella University and any learner, any prospective learner, or any third party. The information contained in the Doctoral Manual is subject to change.

Doctoral learners should be familiar with all university policies.
DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The following are requirements and pertinent information for doctoral programs at Capella University. Program-specific requirements or exceptions can be found in each degree program and/or specialization section.

Coursework: Capella’s University Catalog is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings. Capella University doctoral programs include a required coursework component.

Program-specific coursework requirements may include:

- **Prescribed sequences**—Courses must be taken in an established sequence for certain doctoral programs and/or specializations. Learners must successfully complete one course prior to registering for the next course in the sequence. Learners who fail to successfully complete a course after two attempts may be administratively withdrawn from their degree program. Any such learner has the right to appeal the withdrawal. Learners who are granted a grade of Incomplete (“I”) in a prescribed sequence course are not permitted to register for the next course in the sequence.

- **Successful completion requirements**—Learners who fail to successfully complete certain course(s) after two attempts may be administratively withdrawn from their degree program. Any such learner has the right to appeal the withdrawal.
  - *Signature Assignments*—Certain courses include signature assignments, which learners must successfully complete to pass the course. Successful completion of signature assignments does not guarantee a passing course grade. Successive signature assignments build on those previously undertaken throughout a degree program.

- **Minimum grade requirements**—Learners may be required to complete specific courses with a grade of “B” or better as a condition of continued enrollment in their degree program.

Pertinent policy information: Learners are assigned their catalog of record upon their admission to Capella University. See university policies 3.01.09 Degree and Certificate Conferral and 4.01.04 University Catalog. For information regarding opportunities to repeat courses, see university policy 2.02.02 Course Registration. For information regarding program-specific requirements and the consequences of failing those requirements, see university policy 3.01.04 Academic Standing. For more information on signature assignments, see university policy 3.04.07 Grading.
Outside the Courseroom Learning Experience: Certain Capella University doctoral programs include an outside the courseroom learning experience in the form of program-specific residency or field experience.

Two attempts at a residency that do not lead to a passing grade will stop the learner’s progress in the program and may lead to administrative withdrawal. See Capella’s University Catalog and the Residencies page on Campus for residency-related specifics.

Pertinent policy information: Learners who fail to successfully complete a residency may be administratively withdrawn from their degree program as a result of failing to meet program-specific requirements. Learners who receive a Not Satisfactory (“NS”) grade will receive an academic standing warning notification. Learners who receive a second NS grade will be notified that they will be withdrawn due to failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing, and will be given the option to appeal. See university policy 3.04.05 Attendance at Residencies for residency-related policy information.

Comprehensive Assessment of Learning: Capella University PhD programs include a comprehensive assessment of learning in the form of a comprehensive examination.

Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge: Capella University doctoral programs include a demonstration and assessment of knowledge component in the form of a dissertation, doctoral capstone, or doctoral project.

- **Dissertation**—In the dissertation phase of the doctoral degree program, the university assesses a learner’s competency in developing, designing, implementing, analyzing, and reporting ethical research projects. Academic standing in the dissertation phase is measured by successful completion of all designated dissertation requirements. Learners are responsible for establishing and maintaining regular contact with the faculty member supervising their dissertation, and for maintaining awareness of requirements and recommendations.

- **Doctoral Capstone**—In the doctoral capstone phase of a doctoral degree program, the university assesses a learner’s competency in applied research. Academic standing in the doctoral capstone phase is measured by successful completion of all designated capstone requirements. Learners are responsible for establishing and maintaining regular contact with the faculty member supervising their doctoral capstone, as well as maintaining awareness of capstone requirement deadlines. Learners must repeat the capstone courses as needed to complete their capstone requirements.

- **Doctoral Project**—Doctoral project courses constitute the culmination of a learner’s efforts to apply the skills of an independent scholar, connect theory to practice within their field, develop as a scholar-practitioner, and demonstrate the subject-matter and methodological expertise needed to solve real-world
problems. Academic standing in the doctoral project phase is measured by successful completion of all designated doctoral project requirements. Learners who successfully complete these courses must possess the ability to understand the literature in the field, engage in critical analysis, communicate effectively, and complete a scholarly project.

Pertinent policy information: The Comprehensive Assessment and the Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge are doctoral program-specific academic standing requirements. Learners who receive a Not-Satisfactory (“NS”) grade are not meeting this program’s academic standing requirements. Certain doctoral programs also include Professional Standards as program-specific requirements. Per university policy 3.01.04 Academic Standing, learners who fail to meet program-specific requirements and standards after two attempts are no longer considered to be in good academic standing and will be administratively withdrawn from their degree program. Doctoral learners who have been administratively withdrawn from the university as a result of failing to meet program-specific requirements are not eligible for readmission to that program, or for admission to any doctoral program at Capella University. Learners who are administratively withdrawn from their degree program have the right to appeal.

Capella University is committed to its institutional responsibility to respect and protect the rights and welfare of human participants and their data in research. Doctoral learners are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of ethical conduct in all phases of their doctoral research and scholarship.

Specific Professional Standards: Certain Capella University doctoral degree programs and/or specializations include additional requirements for doctoral study in a specific professional field.
The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is offered in the following Capella University graduate schools: School of Business and Technology, School of Counseling and Human Services, School of Education, Harold Abel School of Psychology, and School of Public Service Leadership.

**Coursework:**
Capella’s *University Catalog* is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

**Outside the Courseroom Learning Experience:**
*Residency*—Three four-day residencies with a ten-week courseroom component. See Capella’s *University Catalog* and the Residencies page on Campus for residency-related specifics.

*Practicum or internship*
PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision learners are required to complete a minimum of 100 practicum hours and 600 internship hours.

PhD in Education, Curriculum and Instruction learners are required to complete ED8550 and ED8551 as part of their program requirements.

PhD in Education, Leadership in Educational Administration learners are required to complete ED7903 and ED7904 if they choose the District Leadership concentration. Learners who choose the School Leadership concentration are required to complete ED7901 and ED7902.

PhD in Education, Special Education Leadership learners are required to complete ED7554 and ED7555 as part of their program requirements.

**Comprehensive Assessment of Learning:**
*Comprehensive examination*—All Capella University PhD learners complete a comprehensive assessment of learning, most frequently offered in the form of a comprehensive examination. The purpose of the comprehensive assessment of learning is to directly assess the learner’s demonstration of program-level learning outcomes in order to determine their preparedness to design, implement, analyze, and report independent dissertation research and pursue a scholar-practitioner career. Information concerning comprehensive assessment of learning requirements and processes is located in the *Comprehensive Examination Manual* and your program-specific manuals and learner handbooks.

**Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:**
*Dissertation*—Academic standing in the dissertation phase is measured by successful completion of all designated PhD dissertation requirements. Information concerning PhD dissertation requirements and processes is located in the *PhD Dissertation Manual*. 
Specific Professional Standards:

**PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision**
- American Counseling Association (ACA) [Code of Ethics](#)
- [Ethical Standards for School Counselor Education](#)

**PhD Leadership in Educational Administration**
- Minnesota (MN) Board of School Administrators (BOSA) Standards
- Arizona School Administration Standards
- Georgia Professional Standard
- Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL)
- National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP)

**PhD Curriculum and Instruction**
- Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL)

**PhD Special Education Leadership**
- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards
Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

The Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) is offered in Capella University’s School of Business and Technology.

Coursework:
Capella’s University Catalog is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

Outside the Courseroom Learning Experience:
DBA research residency—Two four-day residencies. Capella’s University Catalog and the Residencies page on Campus provide residency-related specifics.

Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:
Applied Dissertation—An application-oriented, standard five-chapter, scholarly document exemplifying the concept of the scholar-practitioner. DB9921 must be taken a minimum of two times to fulfill program requirements. The course can be taken additionally as may be needed.

Applied Business Research Project—A major project-based study of a practical, applied business problem with resulting data collection, analysis, demonstrated scholarly foundation, and the identification of strategies for addressing or resolving the business problem. The selected problem topic must be business administration related and aligned with the learner’s specialization field.

Specific Professional Standards:
No requirement.

More information about DBA requirements and processes can be found on the Capella Doctor of Business Administration website. Learners who started the DBA program before January 1, 2018 can find dissertation information here. Learners who started the DBA program on or after January 1, 2018 can find capstone information here.
Doctor of Information Technology (DIT)
The Doctor of Information Technology (DIT) is offered in Capella University’s School of Business and Technology.

Coursework:
*Prescribed Sequence*—Courses for DIT specializations must be taken in a prescribed sequence.

Capella’s [University Catalog](#) is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

Outside the Courseroom Learning Experiences:
*DIT research residency*—Three four-day residencies.

Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:
*Dissertation*—An application-oriented, standard five-chapter, scholarly document exemplifying the concept of the scholar-practitioner. Each dissertation course can be taken a maximum of three times.

Specific Professional Standards:
No requirement.

More information about DIT requirements and processes can be found in the [DIT Learner Handbook](#).
Doctor of Human Services (DHS)

The Doctor of Human Services (DHS) is offered in Capella University’s School of Counseling and Human Services.

Coursework:
Learners participating in HMSV8700 who fail to successfully complete the course may be administratively withdrawn from their degree program as a result of failing to meet program-specific requirements.

Capella’s University Catalog is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

Outside the Courseroom Learning Experiences:
No requirement.

Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:
Doctoral capstone.

Specific Professional Standards:
No requirement.
Doctor of Education (EdD)

The Doctor of Education (EdD) is offered in Capella University’s School of Education.

Coursework:
Some courses in this program contain signature assignments. Learners can refer to their courseroom and university policy 3.04.07 Grading for more information about signature assignments.

Capella’s University Catalog is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

Outside the Courseroom Learning Experiences:
Course embedded field requirements and/or site-based doctoral capstone work.

Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:
Doctoral project.

Specific Professional Standards:
No requirement.
Doctor of Health Administration (DHA)

The Doctor of Health Administration (DHA) is offered in Capella University’s School of Nursing and Health Sciences.

Coursework:
Learners participating in NHS8701 who fail to successfully complete the course may be administratively withdrawn from their degree program as a result of failing to meet program-specific requirements.

Capella’s University Catalog is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

Outside the Courseroom Learning Experiences:
Practicum—Minimum 100 supervised hours at an approved site.

Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:
Doctoral capstone.

Specific Professional Standards:
Learners will complete a background check prior to registering for their first course, NHS8002.

Failure to maintain these requirements will result in the learner’s inability to progress in the DHA program.
Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)
The Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) is offered in Capella University’s School of Nursing and Health Sciences.

Coursework:
Learners participating in NHS8700 who fail to successfully complete the course may be administratively withdrawn from their degree program as a result of failing to meet program-specific requirements.

Capella’s [University Catalog](#) is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

Outside the Courseroom Learning Experiences:
*Practicum*—Minimum 100 supervised hours at an approved site.

Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:
Doctoral capstone.

Specific Professional Standards:
Learners will complete a background check prior to registering for their first course, NHS8002.

Failure to maintain these requirements will result in the learner’s inability to progress in the DrPH program.
Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) is offered in the Department of Nursing in Capella University’s School of Nursing and Health Sciences.

Coursework:
Some courses in this program contain signature assignments (GuidedPath) or assessments (FlexPath). Learners can refer to their courseroom and university policy 3.04.07 Grading for more information about signature assignments and assessments.

Capella’s University Catalog is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

Outside the Courseroom Learning Experiences:
Practicum—Minimum of 1,000 post-baccalaureate hours.

Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:
Doctoral project.

Specific Professional Standards:
Throughout their program, learners are required to maintain a current, unrestricted nursing license in the state in which their practicum takes place.

Learners will complete a background check prior to registering for their first course, NHS8002.

Failure to maintain these requirements will result in the learner’s inability to progress in the DNP program.
Doctor of Psychology (PsyD)

The Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) degree program is offered in Capella University’s Harold Abel School of Psychology.

Coursework:
Capella’s University Catalog is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

Outside the Courseroom Learning Experiences:
Residency—Year-in-residence. Capella’s University Catalog and the Residencies page on Campus provide residency-related specifics.

Practicum or Internship—A minimum of 1,000 total practicum hours and 2,000 pre-doctoral internship hours are required. Learners must successfully complete all year-in-residence courses and pass the Practicum Readiness Evaluation prior to registering for practicum courses and successfully complete practicum and the Clinical Competency Examination (CCE) prior to registering for internship and dissertation courses.

Comprehensive Assessment of Learning:
The Practicum Readiness Evaluation (PRE)—This occurs during the second extended seminar of the year-in-residence and is a three-part evaluation that includes the clinical knowledge assessment (CKA), clinical skills demonstration (CSD), and the professional portfolio presentation (PPP). The goal of the PRE is to assess readiness to begin practicum and, along with other requirements, a passing score on all three parts of the evaluation is required in order to be approved for practicum training.

The Clinical Competency Examination (CCE)—A written examination that students work on both within and outside of the practicum course, and an oral examination. Learners are eligible to submit their written CCE following their second quarter of practicum and once their other requirements are met, including successful completion of at least 75 percent of the practicum hour requirements and successful completion of all hour requirements. The CCE is evaluated by a committee comprised of the learner’s mentor and two additional clinical psychology faculty members. Successful completion of both the written and oral components of the CCE is required for internship. The CCE contains the following sections:

- Identifying Data and Referral Information
- Problem Identification and Case Conceptualization
- Individual and Cultural Diversity
- Assessment Competence
- Intervention Competence
- Crisis Intervention
- Professional Identification, Training and Limitations
- Ethical and Legal Obligations
- Scholarly Application of Psychological Principles
Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:
Clinical Dissertation. After completing all coursework and program requirements except internship, learners in the Clinical PsyD specialization demonstrate their competence in scholarly inquiry and their ability to integrate theory, research, and practice by completing the clinical dissertation. Learners can choose from several options for their clinical dissertation:

- Quantitative research
- Qualitative research
- Mixed methods study
- Meta-analysis
- Program development
- Program evaluation
- Community needs assessment
- Applied theoretical paper

Specific Professional Standards:
Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC), American Psychological Association (APA), and National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology (NCSPP) standards—Capella embraces the principles and guidelines set forth by the Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC) related to professional psychology programs in that the faculty, training staff, supervisors, and administrators in the PsyD Clinical Psychology specialization have a professional, ethical, and potentially legal obligation to ensure, insofar as possible, that all learners have the competence to manage professional relationships in an effective and appropriate manner and that they possess the emotional maturity, interpersonal stability, and intellectual judgment required to work with vulnerable populations. Personal suitability and fitness for the profession includes but is not limited to demonstration of sufficient interpersonal and professional competence; self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-evaluation; openness to processes of supervision; and resolution of issues or problems that interfere with professional development or functioning in a satisfactory manner. Throughout the graduate training of each learner, faculty and staff are responsible for educating and assessing learners with regard to their personal suitability and fitness for the profession.
Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in School Psychology

The Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in School Psychology degree program is offered in Capella University’s Harold Abel School of Psychology.

Coursework:
Capella’s [University Catalog](#) is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

Outside the Courseroom Learning Experiences:
Graduate teaching instructor residencies—Capella’s [University Catalog](#) and the [Residencies](#) page on Campus provide residency-related specifics.

Practicum and Internship—A minimum of 400 total practicum hours and 1500 internship hours are required. Learners must successfully complete six graduate teaching instructor residencies prior to registering for practicum courses.

Comprehensive Assessment of Learning:
Comprehensive examination, professional presentation and multiple-choice examination, final portfolio—At the conclusion of all coursework, Capella University provides its PsyD learners a comprehensive assessment of their competence in research, theory, and application of knowledge. The comprehensive examination is a combination of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination course (PSY9919), the professional presentation and multiple-choice examination that are completed during the sixth graduate teaching instructor (GTI) residency (PSYR8596).

Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:
Praxis II: School Psychologist (Praxis) examination—Learners in the Doctor of Psychology program in School Psychology are required to take the Praxis II: School Psychologist (Praxis) examination and obtain a passing score, as determined by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and required, in part, for applicants to be a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP). The Praxis is required of learners graduating from programs accredited by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the National Council on the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as an indicator of program effectiveness. The Praxis is a two-hour, 120-item, multiple-choice test that includes questions on five content areas: diagnosis and fact finding (30 questions), prevention and intervention (30 questions), applied psychological foundations (24 questions), applied educational foundations (14 questions), and ethical and legal considerations (22 questions).

Doctor of Psychology in School Psychology Integrative Project—The Doctor of Psychology in School Psychology Integrative Project course is the final course required to earn the PsyD through the School Psychology Program. This course focuses on the expectations of those that regulate the field like NASP and NCATE. In order to be able to work effectively in the field, learners must have an understanding of the many areas in which school psychologists are involved. Therefore, in this course learners will be expanding on their knowledge of interventions, supervision skills, interpretation of assessment information,
and problem solving, among other skills. During this course, learners will be focusing on three major projects: the development of a professional portfolio aligned with the NASP domains, a supervision plan for school psychologists in a school district, and a case study requiring several interventions. These projects will help learners connect the topics of focus from the numerous parts of their doctoral program of study. The activities learners engage in while registered in this course give them an opportunity to display a variety of skills essential for professional practice at the doctoral level.

**Specific Professional Standards:**

*National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)*—Capella embraces the principles and guidelines set forth by the National Association of School Psychologists Standards for Practice (NASP) related to professional counseling programs in that the faculty, training staff, supervisors, and administrators in the PsyD in School Psychology degree program have a professional, ethical, and potentially legal obligation to ensure, insofar as possible, that all learners have the competence to manage professional relationships in an effective and appropriate manner and that they possess the emotional maturity, interpersonal stability, and intellectual judgment required to work with vulnerable populations. Professional standards include but are not limited to demonstration of sufficient interpersonal and professional competence; self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-evaluation; openness to processes of supervision; and resolution of issues or problems that interfere with professional development or functioning in a satisfactory manner. Throughout the graduate training of each learner, all faculty and staff are responsible for educating and assessing learners with regard to their personal suitability and professional standards.

Learners are expected to maintain the professional standards of their profession, as described in the *NASP Principles for Professional Ethics* (NASP 2010) and further described in the Learner Manual for the Doctor of Psychology in School Psychology program.
The Doctor of Public Administration (DPA) is offered in Capella University’s School of Public Service Leadership.

Coursework:
Prescribed Sequence—PSL7010, PSL7020, and PSL7030 must be taken in a prescribed sequence.

Capella’s University Catalog is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

Outside the Courseroom Learning Experiences:
Residency—Two four-day residencies.

Learners attending a Professional Doctorate Research Seminar, PSL-R8941 or PSL-R8942, who fail to successfully complete the seminar may be administratively withdrawn from their degree program as a result of failing to meet program-specific requirements.

Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:
Doctoral capstone.

Specific Professional Standards:
No requirement.
Doctor of Social Work (DSW)
The Doctor of Social Work (DSW) is offered in the Department of Social Work in Capella University’s School of Public Service Leadership.

Coursework:
*Prescribed Sequence*—Courses for the DSW program must be taken in a prescribed sequence.

Learners attending a Professional Doctorate Research Seminar, PSL-R8941 or PSL-R8942, who fail to successfully complete the seminar may be administratively withdrawn from their degree program as a result of failing to meet program-specific requirements.

Capella’s *University Catalog* is the official record of requirements for the university’s academic offerings.

Outside the Courseroom Learning Experiences:
*Residency*—Two four-day residencies.

Demonstration and Assessment of Knowledge:
Doctoral capstone.

Specific Professional Standards:
No requirement.