

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
SCHOOL OF NURSING

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE  
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

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**TITLE OF POLICY:** ASSIGNMENT OF THE ACADEMIC ADVISOR AND SELECTION OF THE DISSERTATION CHAIR

**ORIGINAL DATE:** FEBRUARY 2008

**LAST REVIEWED/REVISED:** FEBRUARY 2017

**POLICY:** Doctoral students in the PhD Program in Nursing will be assigned an Academic Advisor based on an assessment of their research interest as conveyed in their application to the PhD Program and their application interview. Once assigned, the Academic Advisor will be responsible for the doctoral student's initial program planning and will provide guidance for the student's exploration of research opportunities in the School of Nursing and the University.

Academic advisors will also advise doctoral students to meet with faculty with whom the students have common research interests with a goal of identifying a focused area of research for the dissertation and of identifying a faculty member who agrees to assume the role of the student's Dissertation Chair. Formal declaration of the student's Dissertation Chair should be submitted to the PhD Program Coordinator at the time that the application form for the Preliminary Examination is completed.

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**PROCEDURE:**

1. Assignment of the Academic Advisor will be documented on the Status Form for Graduate Programs under Doctoral-Milestones.
2. The PhD student will meet with faculty members with whom he/she shares common research interests with a goal of identifying a focused area of research for the dissertation and of identifying a faculty member who agrees to assume the role of the student's Dissertation Chair.
3. The student will negotiate agreement with the faculty member who will become their Dissertation Chair.
4. The Dissertation Chair will notify the PhD Program Director on/or before the time the application form for the Preliminary Examination is submitted that they will serve as the Chair.

Reviewed: 07-08, 10-11, 13-14, 02-17

Revisions Approved by Total Faculty: 07-08, 10-11, 02-14

