Occupational Safety and Health

Degree Offered:
- Doctor of Philosophy, Occupational Safety and Health (Ph.D.)

PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Drawing from the university’s mission, the program mission, and the needs of our constituents, the following educational objectives were developed for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Occupational Safety and Health:

1. Anticipate and recognize hazards and environmental cases requiring the application of safety and health methods in occupational settings.
2. Identify social and epidemiological trends in occupational safety and health issues at the national and international levels.
3. Identify methods of management in application of effective control techniques.
4. To demonstrate understanding of federal, state, and local regulatory agencies as they impact the practice of occupational safety and health.
5. Conduct, disseminate, and publish original research in occupational safety and health.
6. Be qualified to enter the profession as a professor, practitioner, or researcher in occupational safety and health.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

In order to meet the Program Educational Objectives, students of the Occupational Safety and Health Doctoral program must be able to meet the following educational outcomes at the time of their graduation. Students will have acquired the ability:

1. To construct, manage, and evaluate a comprehensive safety and health program for large industry or government agencies.
2. To participate in the safety and health regulatory process as an individual or part of a corporation or university.
3. To critically evaluate research conducted by other individuals or corporations in occupational safety and health.
4. To provide excellent teaching at the University or corporate levels.
5. To participate in activities such as conferences or seminars for continued professional improvement.
6. To actively participate as a leader in the professional organizations that serve the occupational safety and health fields.
7. To demonstrate the highest possible ethical standards in the field of occupational safety and health.

For admission into the Ph.D. program, applicants must meet department admission standards and should have, at a minimum, a 3.4 GPA (or equivalent) in their graduate work. They must also meet all the entrance requirements stated above for the Master's programs. Typically, a Master's degree is required for admission into the Ph.D. program.

Curriculum in Doctor of Philosophy – Occupational Safety and Health

A candidate for the Ph.D. degree with a major in occupational safety and health must comply with the rules and regulations as outlined in the WVU Graduate Catalog and the specific requirements of the Statler College and the Industrial and Management Systems Engineering Department.

Program Requirements

The doctor of philosophy degree with a major in occupational safety and health is administered through the college's interdisciplinary Ph.D. program. The research work for the doctoral dissertation must show a high degree of originality on the part of the student and must constitute an original contribution to the art and science of occupational safety and health.

All Ph.D. degree candidates are required to perform research and follow a planned program of study. The student’s research advisor, in conjunction with the student's Advising and Examining Committee (AEC) will be responsible for determining the plan of study appropriate to the student’s needs. The underlying principle of the planned program is to provide the students with the necessary support to complete their degree and prepare them for their career.

Required core courses for the Ph.D. program are determined by the student’s area of emphasis. The research work for the doctoral dissertation may entail a fundamental investigation or a broad and comprehensive investigation into an area of specialization.

Curriculum Requirements

A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required in all courses

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Select from the following based on degree path: 18
Examinations

QUALIFYING EXAM

All students must take and pass a written qualifying examination. Normally, the qualifying examination is given no later than one semester after completion of eighteen credit hours toward the doctoral degree. This examination is designed to assess the basic competency of students in the occupational safety and health field to determine whether or not they have sufficient knowledge to undertake independent research.

CANDIDACY EXAMINATION

In order to be admitted to candidacy, the student must pass a candidacy exam, which is designed to evaluate the student’s overall ability to engage in high-level research.

A student who has successfully completed all coursework, passed the qualifying examination, and successfully defended the research proposal is defined as one who is a candidate for the Ph.D. degree.

FINAL EXAMINATION

At the completion of the dissertation research, candidates must prepare a dissertation and pass the final oral examination (defense) administered by their AEC.

In order to complete the Ph.D. requirements, a student must pass a final oral examination on the results embodied in the dissertation. This examination is open to the public and, in order to evaluate critically the student's competency, may include testing on material in related fields, as deemed necessary by the AEC. In addition, since the Ph.D. degree is primarily a research degree that embodies the results of an original research proposal and represents a significant contribution to scientific literature, the student must submit a manuscript on this research to the AEC.

Suggested Plan of Study

It is important for students to take courses in the order specified as much as possible; all prerequisites and concurrent requirements must be observed. A typical doctoral degree program that completes degree requirements in three years is as follows.

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Total credit hours: 60

Major Learning Goals

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

1. To construct, manage, and evaluate a comprehensive safety and health program for large industry or government agencies.
2. To participate in the safety and health regulatory process as an individual or part of a corporation or university.
3. To critically evaluate research conducted by other individuals or corporations in occupational safety and health.
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