



PhD in APPLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

3 TRACKS

- diagnostics
- health outcome
- rehabilitation



AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ALLIED
HEALTH SCIENCES

Department of Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

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The PhD program is of interest to the field of

- *Clinical Laboratory Science*
- *Dietetics*
- *Health Administration*
- *Health Informatics*
- *Medical Illustration*
- *Medical Imaging*
- *Occupational Therapy*
- *Physical Therapy*
- *Physician Assistant*
- *Radiation Therapy*
- *Respiratory Therapy*

Our Mission

- Provide advanced study and research training opportunities in a collaborative manner to comprehensively solve health care issues.
- Prepare interprofessional, research-focused, and clinically-oriented, faculty in the health sciences.
- Produce scholars capable of advancing the discovery, dissemination, and application of new knowledge in the health sciences.



Checklist for Applying to the Applied Health Science PhD Program

Apply via the [ApplyWeb \(CollegeNet\) online system](#)

Program Admission Requirements

- **Application Fee:** \$55
- **Submission Deadline:** February 15 (Fall Entry). Early submission of all application materials is strongly advised.
- **Minimum Degree Requirement:** A Bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. university.
- **GPA Requirements**
 - An overall undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of a 3.0 a 4.0 scale.
 - All undergraduate coursework must be included in the computation.
 - For repeated courses for credit, each attempt is included.
 - Applicants with an overall undergraduate GPA less than 3.0 may be given special consideration if they submit documents showing evidence of outstanding professional leadership, practice or scholarships.
- **GRE Requirements**
 - GRE is not required.
- **TOEFL Requirements**
 - The official Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) test scores are required for applicants who are not U.S. citizens.
 - The TOEFL is waived for non-citizens who earned at least a bachelor's degree at an accredited U.S. university.
 - The TOEFL exam must be taken within 2 years of the date of application.
 - The Augusta University institution code for submission of TOEFL scores is 5406. Please do not select a department code.
 - The minimum scores are:
 - 213 computer-based
 - 79 internet-based
 - 550 paper-based (PBT) for test takers who took the PBT prior to October 2017 and were scored on the old scoring scale of 310-677
 - No minimum for the revised paper-delivered test (PDT) taken on or after October 2017, and scored on the new scoring scale of 0-30 for each section (Listening, Reading and Writing)
 - [Additional requirements for International students >>](#)
- **Official Transcripts**



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- Official transcripts from all U.S. universities and colleges ever attended must be submitted to the Augusta University's Office of Academic Admissions.
- To remain official, all transcripts must remain in the original, unopened, sealed and stamped/signed envelope from the Registrar's office of the issuing institution. Alternatively, Augusta University will accept official electronic transcripts from the registrar's office from your prior institution. Electronic transcripts should be sent to admissions@augusta.edu
- Transcripts from international colleges/universities requires an official course-by-course transcript evaluation (see below).
- **Transcript/Credential Evaluation of Foreign Transcripts**
 - An official, professional course-by-course evaluation based on official transcripts and documents is required for all foreign educational transcripts and documents.
 - We accept credentials evaluation services from *only the following three agencies*:
 - Josef Silny & Associates, Inc.
 - World Education Services (WES)
 - Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc. (ECE)
 - Silny and WES are recommended
 - Evaluation of foreign educational transcripts must show that degree(s) earned are the U.S. equivalency of degree(s) required by the program.
- **A Letter Outlining Your Academic and Professional Goals**
 - Include the following information (write as much as you like).
 - Why you are interested in the program.
 - Your research topic. Be as detailed as you can.
- **Letters of Recommendation**
 - Submit the following as part of your application to the Admissions office.
 - Recommendations (which include a reference form and letter of recommendation) from three individuals.
 - They should be qualified to critically assess the applicant's prior academic (usually college professors), employment, artistic, research and/or clinical experience (clinical or research supervisor/manager) and qualifications (as applicable) as well as the applicant's potential as a graduate student in the field/program selected.
 - Recommendations are to be submitted online only. Within the application, you will provide the names and current email addresses for three individuals you have asked to serve as your recommenders. Once your application is submitted, each recommender will receive an email notification directing them to the online site where they can submit their recommendation.
 - If you need to change a recommender after your application has been submitted, log in to your ApplyWeb (collegeNet) account and make updates. Status updates of your recommenders' submissions will be provided to you directly from ApplyWeb (CollegeNet).



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- A letter of commitment from a Major Advisor. The letter *must* state that the faculty agrees to be your Major Advisor. This faculty will be your primary doctoral mentor for the duration of your doctoral training. They will serve as the chair of your doctoral committee. Choose an Advisor based on your research interests. Take the time to decide who you want to work with as your Advisor. This person is the most important faculty in your doctoral training. Their role is to train you. They help you select courses pertinent to the objectives of your training, plan your research project, prepare and administer your Comprehensive Exam, review of your research progress and grade your dissertation oral defense.
 - The Advisor should have the research background and track record to fulfill these roles.
 - The Advisor must have a full (not associate) graduate faculty appointment in The Graduate School at Augusta University.
- Resume
 - Submit a resume listing your educational qualifications, credentials, work experience, and research accomplishments.
- Samples of scientific writing skills
 - Writing is a big component of the PhD program. Submit samples of your writings (e.g. research papers) which demonstrate your scientific writing skills as well as English proficiency. Contact Dr. Raymond Chong @ rchong@augusta.edu if you have questions about submitting your writing samples.

Applicants who have submitted all required documents and meet the minimum standards will be given priority for admission to the program.

Augusta University is an equal opportunity educational institution based on the student's academic preparation and ability. The admission decisions are made regardless of sex, gender, color, race, national origin, religion, marital status, age, disabilities or creed. The University follows the policy of not engaging in discrimination or harassment against any person regardless of sexual orientation, race, origin, religion, sex, unfavorable discharge from the military, or status as disabled veteran of the Vietnam period and fulfill with all federal and state nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and regulation.



Frequently Asked Questions

QUESTIONS RELATED TO ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENT

When can I apply to the program?

August 1st, for entry into the PhD program in the fall of the following year.

When is the application deadline?

February 15th, for entry into the PhD program in the fall of the same year. Your application will be given full consideration after all material have been submitted before this deadline. Please note that if you apply early but did not submit all required material until after the deadline, your application will be considered as a late application.

I understand that I need to identify a faculty who is willing to serve as my primary doctoral Advisor. Can you elaborate?

A PhD Advisor is the main person who is vested in your doctoral training. Like many programs, we have a limited pool of faculty who can serve as Advisors. Doctoral students frequently spend their first year in limbo trying to find an Advisor. We want to avoid putting our students in such a situation. Thus, the identification of an Advisor during your application not only makes you more competitive but it may also help you to complete the program and graduate in a shorter period.

Note that your doctoral advisor is not a consultant or counsellor who gives you "advice" when you feel like it but is someone with research experience and is the main person who will train you.

Can I wait until I am accepted to the program to identify a primary doctoral advisor?

We do not accept applicants who apply to the program without a letter or email from a faculty stating that they will be willing to serve as your primary doctoral advisor. There are two main reasons:

1. Starting the first semester of the program, many courses require that you work on assignments that are within your chosen area of research in the doctoral program.
2. More importantly, you need to find out whether or not there is a faculty who is qualified and willing to be your primary doctoral advisor when you apply to the program.

Do you offer financial aid such as graduate assistantship or tuition waiver?

We do not offer financial aid or tuition waiver within our Applied Health Science PhD program.

If you are an employee of the university system, you may qualify for tuition waiver under the tuition assistance program (TAP). Information is posted here

<https://www.augusta.edu/hr/leadership-development/tap.php>

Please contact their office for questions. We do not give advice in this regard.

What is the minimum number of credits I must take per semester?

To be certified as a full-time student, you must be enrolled for at least 9 credits per semester. A part (half)-time student is one who is enrolled in at least 5 credits per semester.

We do not approve students to enroll for less than 5 credits per semester (i.e., less than half-time status).



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Make sure to check with your financial aid agency about the minimum credits you must take per semester to maintain eligibility.

Please note that it will be difficult to eradicate your status as a chronic student if you repeatedly enroll in minimum credits.

International students must be enrolled in the program as a full-time, i.e., must take 9 credits every semester. There is no part-time option.

OTHER QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE PHD PROGRAM

What makes your PhD program unique?

Like many PhD programs, we also like to think that our curricula is special. However, if you take the time to shop around, you will see that our program has qualities that are not common in other programs. Here are some of the ones that we think are relevant to you and why our program may be an attractive option for you to pursue doctoral training:

- The typical demography of our student population is that of a working professional between 30-55 years old who wants to earn a doctoral degree. If you are also a working professional, you will have a supportive network of fellow students who are like you.
- Required pedagogic courses which teaches you to be an effective educator.
- Required inter-professional courses designed to help you appreciate the interdisciplinary approach to functioning in the real world.

Where can I go to learn more about your program?

Although there are several places in the university website in which you may have come across our program, we highly recommend that you visit our program website here

<https://www.augusta.edu/alliedhealth/ihs/phd-ahs/index.php>

to thoroughly familiarize yourself with our program. The information in our website is self-guided and contains all the information you need to know about our program. Make sure to also click the sandwich icon (3 horizontal lines) at the top left of the main page for more information.

Is there anything I can do to prepare myself for the PhD program?

You can get instructor permission to take the *Biostatistics 1 and 2* courses and transfer these two courses to the PhD program. You may be able to take other courses in our program and transfer them over but these two statistics courses are the ones which we usually recommend to prospective students. You may also consider doing some research-related work to lay the foundation for your doctoral dissertation.

Are you an online program?



Frequently Asked Questions

No. Nevertheless, about 80% of the required courses do not require a physical presence in the classroom. Many of these courses are research-related, in which you work with your advisor and/or doctoral committee to carry out your research-related activities. The other 20% of the courses are foundation courses which meet in class every week. These courses are critical to your doctoral training. Classroom presence is important in these foundational courses because a large chunk of the time is spent on student presentations and discussions.

Is it feasible to keep my day job while enrolled in the PhD program?

This is a very important question to ask. *Please read this section carefully.*

- Students are expected to follow the first 2 years of the full-time curriculum. The reason is that many courses run in sequence and therefore cannot be taken out of order.
- While it is difficult enough to manage work and family life, adding doctoral school to the mix increases the challenge of managing your existence exponentially. It takes plenty of sacrifice on your part. We prefer to call it an investment in your future. *Conditioning your loved ones to support your aspiration to earn a PhD degree is equally important.* You cannot do it alone. We highly recommend that you involve and get the support from your loved ones.

FEEDBACK FROM OUR STUDENTS

How much time do you allot for schoolwork during a week? 10-12 hours

On a scale of 1-10 how stressful is your life since starting the Ph.D. program and how do you manage it?

- 5-6/10
- Time management – in other words, a lot of discipline

Do you feel like you miss out on a lot of family activities because of your schedule? What do you do to make up for a lost family time? Do you feel guilty for missing out? You don't, and you won't (miss out and feel guilty), IF you "condition" your family. In other words, they are part of your decision to do a Ph.D. and everything that comes along with it.

How many people are in your support network/how many do you recommend having to help with kids/home life? That's a case-to-case basis. I guess the more, the better. At a minimum, if you have kids and a spouse, your spouse has to do a lot of heavy lifting when it comes to your kids.

How long had you been out of school before starting the Ph.D. program? Are there any courses/areas that you would recommend reviewing (or even taking a refresher course) before starting the program?

- A decade from my graduate degree and about two decades from my undergrad
- Basic statistics (STAT 7010 & STAT 7020) and academic writing

Did you have any research experience before starting this program? Yes, but very minimal. I participated in a few studies only in the capacity of data collector. That's how I got interested in research.



Frequently Asked Questions

I know organization and time management (among other things) are going to be essential in order to be successful in this program. How do you stay organized and manage your time? Again, condition not just yourself but your family. Time management can only go so far. You need to make (find) time. That includes waking up extra early, staying late, and studying on weekends. Making those times available will not happen unless your family is on board -- that they understand and willing to make that happen. That's not giving you the right to eliminate precious family time, especially with your kids. To mitigate that, you need to be creative. In my case, I used to bring my kids to campus almost every weekend so we can all study together. They do their homework or projects while I work on whatever is due for class Monday. We might not be out doing usual family stuff on weekends, but at least we are together.

How much sleep do you get on an average weeknight? Six to seven. Here's how it works: I finish work at 5 pm. Then I start Ph.D. work from 5-8 pm. I bring dinner with me, so I take a half-hour break from 7-7:30 pm (2 ½ hours for study). I'll get home around 8:30 pm. Clean up and be ready to go to bed by 9 pm. I will catch up with my kids before they go to bed at 9:30 pm. Then I chat with my wife until 10 pm. I am out by 10 pm. Then I wake up at precisely 4:30 am to make my coffee and catch up with current events (aka news). I spend a solid hour doing this. I like taking my time making coffee – grind beans, measure, tamp, make excellent espresso with lots of crema, steam milk, etc., all while listening to the news. You get the point – this is my “me” time. Then I get ready for work. Leave by 6:30 am and be at work by 7 am. I don't start until 9 am so I have at least 2 hours to catch up with emails or prep before work begins. It's like clockwork. To this day, I continue doing it even months after I graduated from Ph.D.

What areas of your life, if any, have you had to give up or let slide due to lack of time? As you can see from above, almost none. Well, maybe travels like vacations which my family and I love. But I never missed important events like birthdays and anniversaries—just no travel.

Since starting the program, have you encountered anything you weren't prepared for - any surprises (good or bad)? Sure, that you can never be prepared for everything. For the most part, a great adviser and a relationship with other cohorts (especially those ahead of you) are your best tools to be prepared. That tool is their experience and wisdom they can share to learn from, so your journey becomes relatively easy.

Anything you feel a student needs to know or wish someone would have told you before entering the program? That Ph.D. is simply training - train to become a scientist. I was under the impression that it is all intense studying that will get you your Ph.D. The truth is, the training is what will make you earn your degree. In other words, it is what and how you will learn from your mentor(s) that will make you into a scientist. With that said, I cannot overemphasize the value of your mentor or adviser.