

# DISSERTATION

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The following information is a general overview of Ph.D. dissertation. For more detailed information please visit the Ph.D. Handbook, Section 106 Dissertation (<https://catalog.smith.edu/ssw/phd-program/doctoral-program-student-handbook/106-dissertation/>).

The dissertation is a required independent scholarly research project in which students must examine a topic relevant to clinical social work. By completing the dissertation, each fellow demonstrates the capacity to contribute to the development and dissemination of knowledge for the profession. The dissertation is the hallmark of all doctoral-level study and represents the achievement of a high level of professional performance as a practitioner/researcher.

## Required Research Courses

The Ph.D. program supports fellows' development and completion of the dissertation project with a series of required and elective research courses that provide the foundation of knowledge required both to assess prior research and to design and implement one's own research. Our faculty teach core research methods, including advanced statistics, in depth.

## Dissertation Seminar

We offer a dissertation seminar in Session V to support fellows in developing their dissertation proposal. Fellows who are well along in preparation of a proposal may take the dissertation seminar in Session III. SSW assigns a research supervisor to each fellow to assist in identifying and refining an area of study for the dissertation.

## Dissertation Committee

Fellows are responsible for identifying and recruiting a dissertation committee, to assist in the development of their dissertation proposal and in the completion, reporting and defense of the project. The program's director must approve the committee, which must include a chair and at least two more members. At least two of the committee members must be part of the SSW resident faculty (<http://ssw.smith.edu/academics/resident-faculty/>).

## Institutional Review Board

The Smith College Institutional Review Board (<http://www.smith.edu/academics/institutional-review-board/>) is responsible for oversight of projects involving human participants.

## Past Dissertation Titles

Smith College School for Social Work Dissertations, 2009 - present, are available through Smith ScholarWorks ([https://scholarworks.smith.edu/ssw\\_etd/](https://scholarworks.smith.edu/ssw_etd/)) to the Smith community including off-campus access with a current Smith login, anyone on campus and anyone via interlibrary loan.