

College of Information | University of Maryland, College Park

InfoLeaderDoc (ILD) Student Handbook

Academic Year 2026-2027



COLLEGE OF
INFORMATION

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Table of Contents

I	Introduction	2
	<i>Land Acknowledgement</i>	2
	<i>Relationship between the Handbook and the University's Graduate Catalog</i>	2
	<i>Process for Updating the Doctoral Program Handbook</i>	2
II	Program and INFO College Overview	3
	<i>Program of Study</i>	3
	<i>Evaluation and Assessment</i>	5
	<i>Residency</i>	5
	<i>Program Administration</i>	5
III	Academic Integrity	6
	<i>Code of Academic Integrity</i>	6
	<i>Penalties for Violations of Academic Integrity</i>	6
	<i>Students in Academic Difficulty</i>	7
IV	Academic Advising, Mentorship, and Inquiry Groups	8
	<i>Academic Advising</i>	8
	<i>Mentorship</i>	8
	<i>Inquiry Groups</i>	8
V	Coursework	9
	<i>Core Courses</i>	9
	<i>Grades & Academic Standing</i>	9
	<i>Incomplete Grades</i>	9
VI	Mid-Program Evaluation	11
VII	Doctoral Capstone	12
	<i>Research Assurances</i>	12
	<i>The Doctoral Capstone and Examination</i>	12
	<i>Procedures for the Oral Doctoral Capstone Examination</i>	14
	<i>Passage or Failure</i>	16

<i>Committee Preparation</i>	16
<i>Attendance at the Examination</i>	16
<i>Emergency Substitution Procedure</i>	16
<i>Location and Announcements of the Examination</i>	17
<i>The Dean’s Representative</i>	17
<i>Invalidation of the Examination</i>	17
<i>Remote Participation in a Capstone Defense</i>	17
<i>Exceptions</i>	18
<i>Submission and Publication of the Capstone</i>	18
VIII Support, Organizations, and Opportunities	19
<i>Student Organizations and Representatives</i>	19
<i>Research Labs, Centers, and Interest Groups</i>	19
<i>Writing and Publishing</i>	22
<i>Ombuds Office</i>	22
<i>Graduate Student Legal Aid Office</i>	23
<i>Accessibility and Disability Services (ADS)</i>	23
<i>Basic Needs Security & Resources</i>	23
<i>Embedded INFO Counselor</i>	23
IX Campus Safety Resources	24
Questions and Comments about the Handbook	26

I Introduction

This handbook serves the Doctor of Information Science in Information Science Leadership and Community Engagement (“Professional Doctorate”) students, faculty, and staff at the College of Information (INFO) at the University of Maryland, College Park. The handbook contains an overview of policies and procedures and specific suggestions to help guide students through each stage of the professional doctorate program. This handbook covers the most important and common issues that students encounter, but it is not meant to be exhaustive. For any issues not covered in the handbook, students should consult their program leadership, the Graduate Student Services Office, and/or university policies, as appropriate.

Land Acknowledgement

Every community owes its existence and strength to the generations before them, around the world, who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy into making the history that led to this moment.

Truth and acknowledgement are critical in building mutual respect and connections across all barriers of heritage and difference. So, we acknowledge the truth that is often buried: We are on the ancestral lands of the Piscataway People, who are the ancestral stewards of this sacred land. It is their historical responsibility to advocate for the four-legged, the winged, those that crawl, and those that swim. They remind us that clean air and pristine waterways are essential to all life.

This Land Acknowledgement is a vocal reminder for each of us as two-leggeds to ensure our physical environment is in better condition than what we inherited, for the health and prosperity of future generations. [Source: [UMD Office of Diversity & Inclusion](#)]

Relationship between the Handbook and the University’s Graduate Catalog

This Doctoral Program Handbook is an INFO-specific application of the policies established in the [University of Maryland Graduate Catalog](#). All regulations enforced by the Graduate School are updated in this handbook on an annual basis. However, in cases where there is a discrepancy between the handbook and the Graduate Catalog in the wording of a policy enforced by the Graduate School, the Graduate Catalog supersedes this handbook.

Process for Updating the Doctoral Program Handbook

Program handbooks are updated annually by the INFO Doctoral Program staff. Requests for changes to the handbook can be sent to the Doctoral Program Director at any time, but the handbook is only updated on an annual basis.

II Program and INFO College Overview

The **Info Leader Doctorate**—the **Doctor of Information Science in Information Science Leadership and Community Engagement (D.Inf.Sci.)**—is a practitioner-oriented doctoral program for professionals in information organizations such as libraries, archives, museums, colleges and universities, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Designed to prepare graduates for institution-level leadership, the program centers community engagement as a core leadership approach. Students complete their coursework online and as part-time students, allowing them ample time to gain the skills, experience, and confidence to lead responsive, impactful organizations—and apply what they learn immediately in their careers. In addition to coursework, students are required to participate in cross-cohort communities of practice called Inquiry Groups. Each inquiry group will meet monthly in an online, synchronous format, and will meet in person to attend at least one conferences per year. Graduates earn the distinction of Doctor, an achievement that provides rare and highly respected credentials within the U.S. LIS field.

The College of Information is at the center of groundbreaking research in the fast-moving Information field. With a multidisciplinary faculty studying such diverse topics as Information Policy, Public and School Libraries, Digital Curation, Human-Computer Interaction, Social Computing, Citizen Science, Information Technology Innovations, and Health Informatics, the INFO College cultivates doctoral students from a wide range of backgrounds. The INFO College's location near Washington, DC offers unparalleled opportunities for students to pursue research and employment opportunities.

Program of Study

Below is the course plan for a professional doctorate student completing the program. This program is meant to be delivered to students with no deviation. Students who are requesting any deviation in their course plan should work closely with their program directors and Graduate Student Services **prior** to registering for any course that is not part of the plan as listed below. It is the student's obligation to register for the appropriate course each semester and to track their own progress toward degree completion.

Fall Semester, Year 1:

INST820: Literacies for Leadership	3 credit hours
INST821: Practice-Based Research	3 credit hours
INST001: Inquiry Group	0 credits

Spring Semester, Year 1:

INST830: Information Ethics	3 credit hours
INST832: Information & Human Rights	3 credit hours
INST001: Inquiry Group	0 credits

Summer Semester, Year 1:

INST833: Diverse Populations, Inclusion, and Information	3 credit hours
INST831: Information Policy	3 credit hours
INST001: Inquiry Group	0 credits

(Additional course plan information continued on the next page)

<u>Fall Semester, Year 2:</u>		
INST825: The Public Intellectual		3 credit hours
INST822: Program Assessment & Evaluation		3 credit hours
INST001: Inquiry Group		0 credits
<u>Spring Semester, Year 2:</u>		
INST824: Leading an Inclusive Information Organization		3 credit hours
INST823: Participatory Design & Participatory Action Research		3 credit hours
INST001: Inquiry Group		0 credits
<u>Summer Semester, Year 2:</u>		
INST826: Access, Accessibility, and Equity		3 credit hours
INST838: Doctoral Capstone Preparation		3 credit hours
INST001: Inquiry Group		0 credits
<u>Fall Semester, Year 3:</u>		
INST829: Doctoral Capstone I		6 credit hours
INST001: Inquiry Group		0 credits
<u>Spring Semester, Year 3:</u>		
INST829: Doctoral Capstone II (the course number remains the same as Fall Semester, Year 3)		6 credit hours
INST001: Inquiry Group		0 credits

Part Time Status

This program is, fundamentally, a part-time program. Students pursuing this degree program as intended will enroll in 6 credits of coursework per semester (including a 0-credit Inquiry Group course), which is considered part-time status by the university's standards. If students elect to take additional courses **not** applicable to this degree (i.e. taking 9 credits in a semester) that would classify you as a full-time student, which has additional student fees.

Time to Degree

The Graduate School requires that every professional doctorate student complete their pre-capstone coursework, including INST838, within five years. The ILD program aims to ensure that no student needs more than one year to complete the capstone, but once a student successfully completes INST838 and is enrolled in INST829, students have four years to complete the capstone requirement.

Grading Methods

When registering for INST001: Inquiry Group, students must always select the Satisfactory/Fail (S/F) grading method. INST838 and INST829 (the two capstone-related courses) must also have the Satisfactory/Fail grading method selected. All other courses must be added with the Regular Grading Method. Students may audit superfluous courses if they so choose, but audited courses are not allowed to be applied toward degree requirements.

Evaluation and Assessment

All students must undergo a mid-program evaluation, which must be completed within five years after admission to the doctoral program. This evaluation will take place during INST838: Doctoral Capstone Preparation in the Summer Semester, Year 2.

Residency

The University System of Maryland Board of Regents has developed policies and procedures that define a Maryland resident for tuition and charge-differential purposes. As part of the admissions process, the university determines whether the applicant is an in-state or out-of-state resident. If a student feels that their residency status has been mis-classified, they can submit a petition to the Office of the Registrar. This information and more can be found at [Residency Reclassification Services](#). Students in this program are not required to maintain residency in the state of Maryland or any nearby states, including the District of Columbia, given the online modality of this program.

Program Administration

The professional doctoral program is administered according to standards and regulations established by the Graduate School under the jurisdiction of the Graduate Council of the University of Maryland.

Within the college, the professional doctoral program is led by one Program Director or multiple Program Co-Directors. At the request of the INFO College leadership, the Dean may stand up a program committee at any time. Such a committee is comprised of faculty representatives, doctoral program directors, doctoral program coordinator, academic advisor (if applicable), and one student representative. Other members, such as the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and the Director of Graduate Operations, may be asked to serve on the committee as non-voting, ex-officio members. Committee meetings are open to anyone interested in participating. However, due to legal requirements related to privacy, meetings or portions of meetings where the Committee addresses issues pertaining to individual students or applicants to the college are not open to students.

The Doctoral Program Director leads the Doctoral Committee to perform tasks such as the following:

- Oversee administration of the program;
- Define, evaluate, and modify principles on which the program is based;
- Make admission and funding decisions about applicants to the program;
- Review and vote on doctoral student travel requests and other support when relevant; and
- Review and vote on committees for individual doctoral students.

III Academic Integrity

The university is an intellectual community. Its fundamental purpose is the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Like all other communities, the university can function properly only if its members adhere to clearly established goals and values. Essential to the fundamental purpose of the university is the commitment to the principles of truth and academic honesty. The [Code of Academic Integrity](#) is designed to ensure that the principle of academic honesty is upheld. While all members of the university community share this responsibility, the Code of Academic Integrity is designed so that special responsibility for upholding the principle of academic honesty lies with students. The Graduate School also provides a statement on academic integrity in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

The college takes issues of academic integrity extremely seriously and has a *zero tolerance* policy for academic dishonesty. As part of their preparation to be scholars and educators, doctoral students must be extremely conscious about adhering to principles of academic integrity, as they will need to follow these principles throughout their entire careers and model the principles to their own students and colleagues.

Code of Academic Integrity

The university's Code of Academic Integrity states that any of the following acts, when committed by a student, shall constitute academic dishonesty:

- CHEATING: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
- FABRICATION: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- FACILITATING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this Code.
- PLAGIARISM: intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.
- SELF-PLAGIARISM: the reuse of substantial identical or nearly identical portions of one's own work in multiple courses without prior permission from the current instructor or from each of the instructors if the work is being submitted for multiple courses in the same semester.

The college encourages faculty and students to explore useful strategies and resources about academic integrity. For example, some advice on how to avoid plagiarism is available from the [University Libraries](#).

On exams, no assistance is authorized unless given by or expressly allowed by the instructor.

Penalties for Violations of Academic Integrity

Engaging in any academic dishonesty will result in consequences in line with university policies. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, buying work, multiple submissions of the same paper, forging signatures, submitting fraudulent documents, and facilitating the academic dishonesty of others.

Students who are found to have falsified, fabricated, or plagiarized in any context, such as coursework, laboratory research, archival research, or thesis/dissertation writing, are referred to the [Office of Student Conduct](#). The Office of Student Conduct determines the penalties for violations of the

university's standards of academic integrity, but the normal sanction for a graduate student found responsible for a violation of academic integrity is dismissal (suspension or expulsion) from the university. The College pursues the maximum penalties applicable in cases where a doctoral student engages in academic dishonesty.

Students in Academic Difficulty

All graduate students in the College of Information must maintain a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA. Students whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0 will be placed on academic probation, and they must bring their GPA above a 3.0 by the end of the next term in which they are enrolled. If, after that subsequent term, the student still has not surpassed a 3.0 cumulative GPA, they will be referred to the College's Students in Academic Difficulty (SAD) committee for review and possible dismissal from the program.

INST820 and INST821 have been designated as core courses for this program. In accordance with INFO College Policy, students must earn a B or higher in all core courses to remain in good academic standing. If a student earns a B- or lower, they must enroll in (and pay for) the course again, in the first semester that it is offered, and earn a B or higher in the retake. If the student retakes the course and earns a B- or lower in the retake, they will be referred to the College's Students in Academic Difficulty (SAD) committee for review and possible dismissal from the program.

Students will be notified if they are being placed on academic probation and/or if they must retake a core/required course. If the student's case is taken to the Students in Academic Difficulty (SAD) committee, the student will have the option to submit a letter of explanation and an action plan, which will be reviewed by the committee as they decide on possible dismissal. Any decisions of dismissal by the College are final on the part of the College, but students will have the option to appeal the decision with the Graduate School. Instructions on how to appeal will be sent out with the official notification of dismissal from the Graduate School.

IV Academic Advising, Mentorship, and Inquiry Groups

Academic Advising

The office of Graduate Student Services has a dedicated academic advisor who will be your point of contact for all matters pertaining to registration, scheduling, petitions/forms required by the Graduate School, policy clarification, and any personal matters that have a direct or indirect impact on your program of study.

Mentorship

Each student is partnered with a full-time faculty mentor, as well as a dedicated advisor from the INFO advising office. In addition, students are partnered with professional mentors from INFO's extensive professional network who have expertise and experience relevant to the student's interests and goals.

Inquiry Groups

Students also participate in Inquiry Groups—cross-cohort communities of practice that connect small groups of students with shared institutional contexts. Guided by a full-time faculty mentor and enriched by the college's professional network, each group engages in a self-directed readings seminar to explore problems of practice, research questions, and relevant literature. Inquiry Groups meet monthly in a synchronous online format and extend learning beyond the virtual classroom by attending an annual conference together—at least three over the course of the program. Faculty mentors provide ongoing feedback, and as students reach the capstone stage, Inquiry Groups become a vital source of writing, research, and peer support.

V Coursework

The courses in the professional doctoral program are designed to introduce students to the research and scholarship in Information Studies and prepare students to become institution-level leaders in their field.

Students must complete the 48 credit hours of coursework as laid out in Section II of this handbook. The curriculum for this program is fixed, with no automatic elective space. Students may elect to take additional elective coursework at their choosing, but they will not count toward this degree without explicit written permission provided by the program leadership *prior* to registration.

Core Courses

Grades & Academic Standing

The grade of A+ or A is calculated at 4 quality points, A- at 3.7 quality points, B+ at 3.3 quality points, B at 3.0 quality points, B- at 2.7 quality points, C+ at 2.3 quality points, C at 2.0 quality points, and C- at 1.7 quality points. Students do not earn credit toward degree for courses in which they receive a grade of D or F. For graduate students, all courses taken that are numbered 400 and above (except 500-level courses, those numbered 799, 898, or 899, and those graded with an S) are used in the calculation of the grade point average.

In order to maintain good academic standing, every graduate student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 for all courses taken at the university. A student may repeat a course in an effort to earn a better grade. Whether higher or lower, the most recent grade is used in computing GPA. Grades for graduate students remain a part of the student's permanent record. Changes in previously recorded grades may be made if timely (within one semester) and if the original instructor certifies that an actual mistake was made in determining or recording the grade. The change must be approved by the Dean of the College of Information and the Dean of the Graduate School. Graduate credit transferred from another institution is not included in the calculation of GPA.

A graduate student's academic record (transcript) is intended to serve as a complete history of the student's academic progress at the University of Maryland. Under no circumstances will academic records be altered because of student dissatisfaction with a grade or other academic accomplishment.

Incomplete Grades

An incomplete grade is an unusual mark that an instructor may give to a student whose work in a course has been qualitatively satisfactory, but who is unable to complete some portion of the work required because of illness or other circumstance beyond the student's control. In awarding the mark of "I" for graduate courses other than 899, instructors must complete a [Graduate School Incomplete Contract](#). The contract specifies the work remaining to be completed. It must be signed by the instructor and the student and then maintained by the program offering the course. The student is responsible for providing a copy of the contract to the Director of Graduate Operations.

The mark of incomplete in 500-, 600-, 700-, and 800-level courses does not automatically roll-over to a letter grade. Students are expected to complete courses in which they have received an "I" by a date no more than twelve months from the beginning of the semester in which the course was taken. In other words, a student who has an Incomplete grade in a Fall course has through the following Fall semester to complete the work, though all efforts should be made to complete the work as quick as possible.

Students remain in good standing despite marks of incomplete if the courses are not required for their degrees. For courses required for graduation, students are considered to be making satisfactory progress only if they fulfill the conditions of any outstanding incomplete contracts in a timely manner.

VI Mid-Program Evaluation

Professional practice doctoral programs are typically defined by two major components: didactic coursework credits and professional practice credits. As defined in Graduate School policy, programs perform an evaluation of each student at a point that reflects the transition to the final practice and Doctoral Capstone components of the program, referred to as either the Post-Coursework or Mid-Program Evaluation. The IDL program will perform this Mid-Program Evaluation during INST838: Doctoral Capstone Preparation. Each student must successfully pass this evaluation to advance to the Capstone portion of the final academic year.

At the time of completion of the mid-program evaluation, students are expected to be in good academic standing. Failure to be in good academic standing may result in a mandated retaking of INST838: Doctoral Capstone Preparation.

A student must successfully complete a Mid-Program Evaluation for the doctorate within five years after admission to the doctoral program and at least six months before the date on which the degree will be conferred. Paperwork must be received by the Graduate School prior to the 25th of the month for the advancement to become effective the first day of the following month. Professional practice doctoral students who have successfully completed the Mid-Program Evaluation are then automatically registered for Doctoral Capstone credits (e.g., 829) within their program; students are continually registered for Doctoral Capstone credits until they graduate except in special circumstances.

More information about this policy can be found here:

<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/professional-practice-doctoral-degrees-policies/#text>

VII Doctoral Capstone

After successful completion of coursework and INST838: Doctoral Capstone Preparation, all students in good academic standing will advance to the Capstone portion of their degree requirements. Students will enroll in INST829: Doctoral Capstone for 6 credits in the Fall **and** Spring semesters of their third year. Completion of this milestone is critical to completion of the degree requirements, and failure to complete the capstone by the end of the second semester of INST829 will result in being forced to retake INST829 for an additional term. If, after a third term, the student has still not completed their capstone, their case will be reviewed by the INFO College's Students in Academic Difficulty committee for possible removal from the program.

Research Assurances

Where professional practice doctoral students engage in activities that require data collection or research activities involving human or animal subjects, please refer to the information below.

Human Subject Research

Everyone at the University of Maryland who is conducting research that involves human subjects must obtain approval in advance from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is charged with approving the initiation of research involving human subjects and conducts periodic reviews of that research to ensure that all projects comply with Federal regulations. These regulations are strict, and the Graduate School urges all graduate students to consult with the IRB before beginning any research involving living subjects. For application forms and guidelines on such issues as research involving minors or prisoners, surveys, and the use of audio taping, videotaping, digital recordings, and photographs, please see the [Institutional Review Board's website](#).

Other Research

If the doctoral capstone involves the use of vertebrate animals, animal use protocols must be approved in advance by the Animal Care and Use Committee. If the activity involves hazardous materials, either biological or chemical, or recombinant RNA/DNA, the research must be approved by the appropriate University committee. These assurances must be approved prior to the initiation of any capstone-related research, and the approvals must be provided to the Graduate School at the time the student submits the Nomination of Examining Committee form.

The Doctoral Capstone and Examination

A Doctoral Capstone is required of all students for a professional practice doctoral degree, with the specific requirements and outcomes determined by the INFO college. The Graduate School has established the following procedures for the conduct of the doctoral capstone examination.

- **The Doctoral Capstone and Capstone Outcomes.** The completion of a doctoral capstone is required of all professional practice doctoral students, allowing demonstration of excellence in professional practice in the field as determined by the graduate program in which the student is earning the degree. The topic, activities, and outcomes related to the doctoral capstone are approved by the doctoral advisor and doctoral capstone committee, with the Doctoral Capstone outcomes presented and defended by the student.
- **Eligibility.** A student is eligible to defend a doctoral capstone if the student (a) has successfully completed the Mid-Program Evaluation, (b) has met all program requirements for a doctoral capstone examination, (c) is in good standing as a graduate student at the University, (d) is

registered for at least one credit, (e) has a valid Graduate School-approved Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee, and (f) if this is the second examination, the examination has been approved by the Graduate School.

- **Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee Membership.** The Committee must include a minimum of five members of the Graduate Faculty, at least three of whom must be Full Members or Associate Members whose primary academic affiliation is with the University. The Chair of the Committee normally will be the student's advisor, who will be a Full or Associate Member of the Graduate Faculty, or who has been granted an exception to the policy by the Dean of the Graduate School. Each Committee will have appointed to it a representative of the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean's Representative may be one of the five voting members. Alternatively, the Dean's Representative may not be a voting member of the Committee. Whether the Dean's Representative votes or not is a decision made by the student, primary advisor and the Dean's Representative before the Dean's Representative is nominated for approval by the Dean of The Graduate School. In addition, the Dean will ensure that there are five voting members on the Committee. Therefore, Committees that have a non-voting Dean's Representative must have at least six members (five voting members and the non-voting Dean's Representative.)
- **Nomination of the Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee.** Membership on a Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee requires nomination by the student's advisor and the Graduate Director of the student's professional practice doctoral program, and approval by the Dean of the Graduate School. The nomination of a Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee should be provided to the Graduate School at least six weeks before the date of the expected capstone presentation and defense. The capstone examination cannot be held until the Graduate School approves the composition of the Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee. Furthermore, if the Graduate Faculty status of any member of an approved Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee changes, the approval of the Committee may be void, and a new Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee nomination form may be required to be approved by the Graduate School.
- **Chair.** Each Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee will have a chair, who must be a Full Member of the Graduate Faculty, an Associate Member who has been approved by faculty, or, by special permission, has been otherwise appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. Doctoral Capstone Examining Committees may be co-chaired; at least one of the co-chairs must be a Full or Associate Member of the University of Maryland Graduate Faculty or an individual so appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- **Representative of the Dean of the Graduate School.** Each Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee will have appointed to it a representative of the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean's Representative should have some background or interest related to the student's activities, and may be a voting or non-voting member of the committee. The Dean's Representative must be a tenured member of the Graduate Faculty at the University of Maryland, College Park. The Dean's Representative must be from a tenure home different than that of the student's program, the primary advisor or co-advisors, and the dissertation examining committee chair or co-chairs (if the chairs or co-chairs are not the primary advisor or co-advisors). In the case of multi-disciplinary programs, the Dean's Representative can be a member of the program, as long as they have a different tenure home from that of the primary advisor or co-advisors and the dissertation examining committee chair or co-chairs.

The person nominated to become the Dean's Representative may serve as a regular member of the student's Doctoral Graduate Committee from the time it is first convened. Alternatively, the person nominated to be the Dean's representative may be added to the Doctoral Graduate Committee at a later date and either take part in some Committee meetings including the Mid-Program Evaluation, or only join as a Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee member for the final capstone defense. In all cases, the Dean's Representative must be present for the full capstone presentation and defense and serve to adjudicate the defense.

- **Special Members.** Individuals from outside the University of Maryland who have been approved for Special Membership in the Graduate Faculty may serve on Doctoral Capstone Examining Committees. To participate on capstone committees, professional mentors will likely need to be appointed as special members by the College. Any Special Members seeking appointment must be processed by the time the student completes INST838. These Special Members must be **in addition to** the required three Full or Associate Members of the University of Maryland Graduate Faculty. Special Members may also co-direct Doctoral Capstone Examining Committees with a Full or Associate Member.
- **Service of former University of Maryland faculty members.** Graduate Faculty who terminate employment at University of Maryland (and who do not have emeritus status) retain their status as members of the Graduate Faculty for a twelve-month period following their termination. Thus, they may serve as members and chairs (but not as Dean's Representatives) of Doctoral Capstone Examining Committees during this twelve-month period if they are otherwise eligible. After that time, they may no longer serve as chairs of Doctoral Capstone Examining Committees, although, if granted the status of Special Members of the Graduate Faculty, they may serve as co-chairs.
- Professors Emeriti and Associate Professors Emeriti may serve on Doctoral Capstone Examining Committees provided they are members of the Graduate Faculty.

Procedures for the Oral Doctoral Capstone Examination

All students are required to defend orally their doctoral capstone as a requirement in partial fulfillment of the degree. The oral examination consists of two parts.

- **Part 1: Student Presentation.** The student presents a summary of the capstone, emphasizing the key activities, important outcomes, and relevance to the practice field of the discipline, with the details of these presentations determined by the program. During Part 1, questions from the public audience to the student will be permitted. For questions from persons who are not members of the Examining Committee, the Chair of the Committee will have discretion to decide whether such questions are germane to the topic of the capstone and how much time will be allotted for them and the answers.
- **Part 2: Formal Examination of the Student by Members of the Examining Committee.** This part will be open only to the Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee, other members of the Graduate Faculty, and graduate students from the student's graduate program. During Part 2, only members of the Examining Committee will be permitted to ask questions. The chair of the Examining Committee invites questions in turn from each member of the Examining Committee.

The questioning may continue as long as the Examining Committee feels that it is necessary and reasonable for the proper examination of the student.

- **Conclusion of the Examination.** After questioning has been completed, the student and any others who are not members of the Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee are asked to leave the room while the Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee discusses whether or not the capstone and its defense are satisfactory. The Committee has the following options:
 1. To accept the capstone and the oral defense without any recommended changes and sign the Report of the Examining Committee.
 2. To accept the oral defense, but recommend substantive revisions to the capstone and, except for the chair, sign the Report of the Examining Committee. The chair will provide the committee and student with a list of the required revisions. The chair will check that the changes to the capstone have been made, and, upon their approval, sign the Report of the Examining Committee.
 3. To accept the oral defense, but recommend substantive revisions to the capstone and not sign the Report of the Examining Committee until the student has made the changes and submitted the revised capstone for the Examining Committee's approval. The chair will provide the committee and student with a list of the required revisions. The Examining Committee members sign the Report of the Examining Committee if they approve the revised capstone.
 4. To recommend major revisions to the capstone and/or to deem the oral defense deficient. In this case, the committee would reconvene a closed meeting of only the Examining Committee and the student to complete the student's examination. The chair will provide the committee and student with a list of the required significant revisions to the capstone and/or deficiencies in the oral defense. The chair also will inform the program's Director of Graduate Studies and the Dean of the Graduate School of the required revisions/deficiencies and the timeline for reconvening the Examining Committee. During the reconvened meeting, committee members' questions will focus on the revisions to the capstone and/or the deficiencies in the prior oral defense. Ordinarily, the reconvened meeting of the Examining Committee will occur within two months after the initial meeting oral defense.
 5. To rule the capstone (including its examination and oral defense) unsatisfactory. In that circumstance, the student fails. Following the examination, the chair, in the presence of the Dean's Representative, must inform the student of the outcome of the examination. The committee chair and the Dean's Representative both sign the Report of the Examining Committee, including a statement explaining why the capstone was deemed unsatisfactory. A copy of this statement must be included in the student's file at the graduate program office, and a copy is given to the student. This statement must be submitted to the program's Graduate Director, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the student.
 - A second examination may be permitted if the student will be in good standing at the time of the proposed second examination. A second examination requires the approval of the program's Graduate Director and the Dean of the Graduate School.
 - If the student fails this second examination, or if a second examination is not permitted, the student's admission to the graduate program is terminated unless the student desires to and is eligible to change their degree objective (e.g., to a master's degree in

the same program). For more information on changing a degree objective, consult the Policy on [Change of Status or Program](#).

Passage or Failure

The student passes if one member refuses to sign the Report of the Examining Committee, but the other committee members agree to sign, before or after the approval of recommended changes. Two or more negative votes constitute a failure of the student to meet the capstone requirement.

Committee Preparation

The members of the Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee must receive any written components and related artifacts of the capstone at least ten working days before the scheduled examination. Should the Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee deem it reasonable and appropriate, it may require submission of the capstone materials more than ten working days in advance of the examination.

Attendance at the Examination

Oral examinations must be attended by all members of the student's officially established Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee as approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. All examinations must be open to all members of the University of Maryland Graduate Faculty. Programs may wish routinely to open capstone examinations to a broader audience. In such cases, program policies must be established, recorded, and made available to all doctoral students.

Emergency Substitution Procedure

Last-minute emergencies can prevent a committee member from attending a scheduled capstone examination. The Graduate School will work with the chair of the examining committee and/or the Director of Graduate Studies to make last-minute substitutions in committee membership to allow the examination to take place as scheduled.

- The request must be sent in writing via email to the Dean of the Graduate School. A telephone call to the Graduate School explaining that an emergency request is coming will facilitate the process.
- The proposed substitute must be a member of the Graduate Faculty consistent with the rules for committee membership. Thus, if the Dean's Representative (who must be a tenured faculty member) could not attend, the substitution of an untenured member of the Graduate Faculty would not be acceptable.
- Once the written request has been received, the substitution will be made, usually within the hour, provided that the revised committee meets the requirements for committee membership.
- When the substitution has been made, a written confirmation via email will be sent, along with a telephone confirmation. The substitution is not official, however, until the written confirmation has been received in the graduate program. A copy of the written request and the written confirmation must be placed in the student's file for future reference.
- An examination that is held with one or more substitute members on the committee, but without prior written confirmation from the Graduate School that the substitution(s) have been approved, will be voided and the examination will have to be repeated.

Location and Announcements of the Examination

Oral examinations must be held in University facilities that are readily accessible to all members of the Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee and others attending the examination. The chair of the examining committee selects the time and place for the examination.

Announcements of the date, time, and location of the examination, as well as the student's name and the capstone title, will be disseminated five working days in advance to all members of the Graduate Faculty and graduate students within the graduate program in which the student's degree is to be awarded. Mass distribution methods, such as e-mail, a faculty/student newsletter, or individual announcements are acceptable. Merely posting a paper notice on a corridor bulletin board will not constitute a sufficient announcement.

The Dean's Representative

The Dean's Representative must be identified at the beginning of the examination. The responsibilities of the Dean's Representative include the following: ensuring that the procedures of the oral examination comply with those of the Graduate School (as described herein) and reporting to the Dean of the Graduate School any unusual problems experienced in the conduct of the examination.

Invalidation of the Examination

The Dean of the Graduate School may void any examination not carried out in accordance with the procedures and policies of the Graduate School as pertaining to Professional Practice Doctoral degrees. In addition, upon recommendation of the Dean's Representative, the Dean may rule an oral examination to be null and void.

Remote Participation in a Capstone Defense

Under normal circumstances, a majority of members of a Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee must be physically present in the examination room during the entire capstone presentation and defense and during the committee's private deliberations following the examination, with all other committee members present remotely for the entire duration by video teleconferencing. Participation by telephone is not permitted under any circumstances. Remote participation by video teleconferencing is permitted under the following circumstances:

- Permission to conduct a remote-participation defense must be obtained by the capstone chair from the Graduate School in advance. In making this request, the chair must indicate in writing that they have read the rules for a remote defense listed below.
- The student, the committee chair (or at least one of the co-chairs), and the Dean's Representative must all be present in the examination room. None of them may be at the remote site.
- Video conferencing software must be used that allows all participants to see and hear each other during the entire defense.
- The remote participants must connect to the defense in a manner that will ensure that all participants are visible and audible and that the connection is stable and available throughout the scheduled time of the defense.
- No more than two remote sites may be used during the capstone defense.

- Units can opt to offer online synchronous viewing options even when all committee members are in-person, with the defending student's consent.

Exceptions

Departments and graduate programs may petition the Dean of the Graduate School for exceptions to these procedures.

Submission and Publication of the Capstone

Capstones often have written or other components relevant for submission to the Graduate School in electronic format after final approval by the Doctoral Capstone Examining Committee, as evidence of successful completion of the Doctoral Capstone. See the [University of Maryland Electronic Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\) website](#) or the University of Maryland [Thesis and Dissertation Style Guide](#) for the details of this submission process. General guidelines appropriate to all culminating written projects at the university are included here. Not all capstones will have artifacts relevant to these procedures.

VIII Support, Organizations, and Opportunities

As part of the overall academic and professional development of doctoral students, there are other research support and community involvement opportunities available at the College.

Student Organizations and Representatives

The Doctoral Program Committee meets monthly during the academic year and consists of the Doctoral Program staff, the Director of Graduate Operations, the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, at least three additional College of Information faculty members, and one student representative. The role of the student representative for the Doctoral Program Committee is to serve as the elected representative of the INFO doctoral student community. They represent and support the interests of the students in the College, collaborate with the Graduate Student Services Office, and assist in shaping school and program policy, mediation activity, and faculty relations. By supporting scholarly activities and personal growth, this position aims to promote social, educational, and professional development. The student representative has voting rights; however, due to legal requirements related to privacy, meetings or portions of meetings where the Doctoral Committee addresses issues pertaining to individual students or applicants to the College are not open to students. The student representative is elected each year at the beginning of the semester.

The INFO College Assembly is the deliberative body that governs the curriculum, programs, and activities of the College. INFO Assembly meetings take place on the first Friday of the month in September, December, February, March, April, and May. Members of INFO Assembly include all INFO faculty and staff, plus one student representative from each INFO degree program. The role of the student representative is to attend all Assembly meetings and to report any relevant proceedings back to their program colleagues. Student representatives may also request items be added to the Assembly agenda on behalf of the INFO doctoral student community. The student representative for INFO Assembly has voting rights. The student representative is elected each year at the beginning of the semester.

The College has a few other student organizations in which doctoral students can become involved. The College has student chapters of the American Library Association (ALA), the Society of American Archivists (SAA), the Special Library Association (SLA), and the Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T), among others. Along with these chapters of national organizations, the College also has a School Library Media Specialist Student Association.

Research Labs, Centers, and Interest Groups

The College features an interdisciplinary, collaborative, and active research culture. Students wishing to become involved in research activities should speak to faculty members and other students with similar interests to find out about opportunities for involvement in ongoing projects or to discuss new project ideas of their own.

Several different research facilities and interest groups are closely affiliated with the College and its faculty. These facilities indicate areas of particular research strength at the College and offer significant opportunities for students to become involved in research projects, meet well-known researchers, hear academic talks, and work with other students who share their interests.

The [Advanced Information Collaboratory \(AIC\)](#) is an international research network that brings together

over 70 students, researchers, and partners from around the globe to explore the opportunities and challenges of “disruptive technologies” for archives and records management (digital curation, machine learning, AI, etc.); leverage the latest technologies to unlock the hidden information in massive stores of records; pursue multidisciplinary collaborations to share relevant knowledge across domains; train current and future generations of information professionals to think computationally and rapidly adapt new technologies to meet their increasingly large and complex workloads; and promote ethical information access and use.

The [Artificial Intelligence Interdisciplinary Institute at Maryland \(AIM\)](#) is a collaborative hub for AI, supporting faculty research, offering innovative and experiential learning opportunities, and focusing on responsible and ethical AI technology to advance the public good across industry, government and society. AIM brings together researchers from across disciplines and University of Maryland (UMD) units to conduct research that responsibly advances AI technology.

The [Center for Archival Futures \(CAFe\)](#) seeks to develop and disseminate human-centered approaches to creating the systems, processes, and institutions which enable the use of and care for digital objects and data over time. We take a holistic view of digital curation as a research area, education domain, and growing profession that transcends disciplines and organizational contexts. To accomplish the mission of developing and disseminating human-centered approaches to understanding the use of and care for digital objects and data over time the Center for Archival Futures conducts research, education, and partnership building in the following areas: data in communities, digital lifecycles, and data in knowledge ecosystems. We advance knowledge and practice by serving as an active hub, bringing together researchers, professionals, and students to facilitate collaborative research projects, experiential learning, demonstration projects, and other activities that promote the development of nuanced, actionable understandings of human-centered approaches to the use of and care for digital objects and data over time.

The [Computational Linguistics and Information Processing \(CLIP\)](#) Lab works on several areas of broad scale multilingual processing, such as machine translation, summarization, scalable translingual document detection, and cross-language information retrieval, and on architectures for wide area computation with heterogeneous information servers, such as those for scientific discovery from biomolecular data sources.

The [Global Elections and Information Security \(GEIS\) Interest Group](#) includes members from the University of Maryland, American University, George Washington University and Georgetown University. GEIS members study the dynamics and systems that contribute to unsafe, polarized, and vulnerable information environments in the US and abroad. We aim to construct new technologies, spaces, and policies that support higher-quality, more informative, and more civil information spaces.

The [Human-Computer Interaction Lab \(HCIL\)](#) has a long, rich history of transforming the experience people have with new technologies. From understanding user needs, to developing and evaluating those technologies, the lab’s faculty, staff, and students have been leading the way in HCI research and teaching. HCIL develops advanced user interfaces and design methodology. The lab’s primary activities include collaborative research, a weekly speaker series, workshops, and symposia.

The [Immigration and International Information Research Alliance \(i3r@UMD\)](#) is a group of UMD College of Information faculty researchers, graduate students, and staff who investigate and advance immigrants’ information access. Their goal is to produce evidence-based tools to strengthen immigrants’

trust in information; offer research support through various gatherings; and promote information professionals' awareness of community members' lived experiences.

The [Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities \(MITH\)](#) is collaboration among the University of Maryland's College of Arts and Humanities, Libraries, and Office of Information Technology. MITH is the university's primary intellectual hub for scholars and practitioners of digital humanities, electronic literature, and cyberculture, with research clustering around digital tools, text mining and visualization, and the creation and preservation of electronic literature, digital games, and virtual worlds.

The [Maryland Initiative for Digital Accessibility \(MIDA\)](#) combines the expertise and passion of researchers, designers, developers and educators from multiple disciplines at the University of Maryland with a united goal of making digital technologies accessible for all. MIDA aims to involve the disability community, private and public partners, and anyone interested in accessibility issues, in technology development projects, public outreach programs and advocacy. We will collaborate with others to proactively build in accessibility when developing new technologies – known as the “born accessible” approach.

The [Organizational Teams and Technology Research Society \(OTTRS\) Interest Group](#) aims to advance research and collaboration on the study of teams as relevant to technology and information. Topics include, but are not limited to, teams and artificial intelligence, technology to support different types of teams, collaborative learning, ethics in teams and technology, leveraging technology to improve the study of teams, and more. There is a human focus, but OTTRS is inspired by computational potential and technological advances, and explicitly welcomes multiple and interdisciplinary approaches.

The [Social Data Science Center \(SoDA\)](#), established by the College of Information and the Joint Program in Survey Methodology (JPSM) within the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, is an interdisciplinary academic and research center. We strive to become a leader in research and education involving new forms of social and behavioral data. SoDa sponsors seminars, workshops and focused conferences designed to bring attention to the rapidly expanding universe of digitized data and new forms of behavioral data, as well as developments in data science that can benefit investigators in the social sciences.

The [Sociotechnical Cybersecurity \(STC\) Interest Group](#) examines and evolves current ideas around sociotechnical cybersecurity, including organizational, economic, social, legal, educational, psychological, and other human aspects of cybersecurity. Sociotechnical aspects of cybersecurity considers the human element. STC includes organizational, economic, social, legal, educational, psychological, political, policy, cultural, system, and other approaches engaging the human and technology interactions needed to secure the space, infrastructure, people and systems within the cyber environment. The STC interest group combines this effort in the College's academics, research, and events.

The [Tech Policy Research & Education Hub](#) studies tech policy from a socio-technical perspective, building the bridge between computer science & public policy to understand how policy is designed and implemented for, by, and with tech. The hub spans across the forefront of tech policy issues, including cybersecurity, consumer privacy, misinformation, and trustworthy machine learning (ML). We bring together issue networks of practitioners, academics, industry leaders, and civil activists to inform, impact, and shape the future of technology in society, applying a mix of comparative, qualitative, and computational research methods to advance our understanding and craft future paths for tech policy

development.

The [Trace Research & Development Center](#) uses an interdisciplinary approach to increase accessibility and usability of technology for people of all ages and ability levels. The Trace Center has been a leader in research and development in the field of technology and disability since 1971. The current focus of their work is everyday information and communication technologies. Their purpose is to prevent barriers and capitalize on opportunities presented by standard and emerging technology, in order to create a world that is as accessible and usable as possible, for as many people as possible.

The [University of Maryland Institute for Advanced Computer Studies \(UMIACS\)](#) fosters and enhances interdisciplinary research and education in computing across the College Park campus through research programs, cutting-edge computing infrastructure, and long-term partnerships with national and international research centers. The Institute's programs are led by distinguished researchers, many of whom hold joint appointments in strong academic units such as Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Linguistics, Geography, Philosophy, Business, Education, and the College of Information.

Many of these are sponsored or co-sponsored by the College. In addition, there are many other research facilities on campus that might relate to students' academic interests. A comprehensive list can be found on the [Centers and Institutes section of the University of Maryland's website](#).

Writing and Publishing

To help graduate students improve the quality of their writing, the [Graduate School Writing Center](#) maintains a website for Writing Resources. Students should become actively involved in publication activities beginning in their first year in the program. Publishing in refereed journals and refereed conferences is an essential part of not only an academic career, but the educational process of a doctoral program. Opportunities for publications can derive from coursework and independent research. Many people gain their first publishing experience by taking part in ongoing research projects as a member of a study team. Opportunities for involvement in projects may be available through centers and labs, as well as through individual faculty members.

Faculty and students are encouraged to co-author publications together. Co-authorship is valuable for a student's professional development and advancement, and it can also advance a faculty member's career. However, it is critical that authorship decisions, particularly those related to faculty-student interactions or collaborations, be handled in an appropriate and respectful manner that protects the interests of both students and faculty, demonstrates the value of authorship credit, and ensures the integrity of the university's approach to publication. More information, including general guidelines, common issues in faculty-student collaborations, and addressing authorship disputes and inappropriate authorship practices, can be found in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

Ombuds Office

The [Graduate School's Ombuds Office](#) assists graduate students with concerns related to their graduate experience. The Ombudsperson is an impartial, independent, and confidential resource for graduate students at the university who helps to surface and resolve school issues. The Ombudsperson can also help to affect positive change by providing upward feedback on patterns of problems and complaints to appropriate senior officers.

Graduate Student Legal Aid Office

The [Graduate Student Legal Aid Office](#) is a part-time program of the Graduate Student Government and operates under the auspices of the Office of Student Affairs. It is funded solely by graduate student fees and has been in operation since 1987. The Graduate Student Legal Aid Office provides free legal information and related assistance to individual graduate students on a wide range of both off-campus and university matters. It also maintains active educational and outreach programs for the graduate student community, and is available to provide speakers for student events and other campus activities. The office is staffed by an experienced attorney and paralegal. While it is a small, two-person office funded on a part-time basis, it strives to be as accessible as possible to the graduate student community. The attorney cannot represent students in court.

Accessibility and Disability Services (ADS)

The University of Maryland is committed to creating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive educational, working, and living environment for people of all abilities. The University of Maryland is also committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the University, or be subjected to discrimination. The [Accessibility & Disability Service \(ADS\)](#) office provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals to provide equal access to services, programs and activities. ADS cannot assist retroactively, so it is generally best to request accommodations several weeks before the semester begins or as soon as a disability becomes known. Any student who needs accommodations should contact ADS as soon as possible so that they have sufficient time to make arrangements.

For assistance in obtaining an accommodation, contact Accessibility and Disability Service at 301-314-7682. Information about sharing your accommodations with instructors and more is available from the [Counseling Center](#).

Basic Needs Security & Resources

If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing enough food to eat every day, or lack a safe and stable place to live, please visit [UMD's Division of Student Affairs](#) website for information about resources the campus offers and contact the [Graduate Student Services Office](#) if you need additional support.

Embedded INFO Counselor

The Counseling Center has collaborated with INFO College to provide a counselor right in the College of Information. The INFO Embedded Counselor provides the following services:

- Mental health appointments for INFO students
- Consultation with INFO faculty and staff who are concerned about a student's mental health
- Outreach programming tailored to the needs of the College of Information

More information, including how to schedule an appointment, can be found on the [INFO College](#) website.

IX Campus Safety Resources

Our collective safety is a shared responsibility. As members of our campus community, faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to contact officials when safety concerns arise. Suspicious behavior should not be ignored. Early intervention in such cases is vital, and trained colleagues are prepared to assist.

Here are some warning signs of concern:

- Possession of a weapon
- Violence – striking, pushing, or assaulting another person
- Threat of violence or physical harm – in person, over the telephone, or electronically
- Stalking – pursuing another person
- Destructive behavior – damaging property
- Verbal aggression – expressions of uncontrollable anger, hostility, or frustration
- Disorderly or substantially disruptive behavior
- Unusual, bizarre, or disturbing behavior

Share your concerns with and report suspicious behavior to an appropriate resource listed below.

The university has a full suite of resources available to the entire campus community. The resources include:

1. Weapons, Violence, Substantial Disruption, Threats – [The Department of Public Safety](#) will respond to any act or threat of violence. To contact them, call 301.405.3333 or 911. Additionally, the Office of Student Conduct is authorized to impose an immediate suspension from classes (pending a hearing) if a student engages in threatening or disruptive behavior. Procedures may be initiated by the Vice President for Student Affairs or the Director of Student Conduct.
2. Behavioral Health or Psychiatric Concern – If you or someone you know needs immediate behavioral health/psychiatric attention or hospitalization may be necessary, contact [Behavioral Health Services](#) at 301.314.8106. The Department of Public Safety (301.405.3333 or 911) should be contacted if medical transportation is required.
3. Emotional or Psychological Distress – For anyone displaying emotional or psychological distress, comprehensive evaluation and treatment are provided by the [Counseling Center](#). You may contact the Counseling Center at 301.314.7651 for a consultation.
4. Disorderly or Disruptive Behavior – Report student behavior that is disorderly, disruptive, or poses a concern for violence to the [Office of Student Conduct](#) at 301.314.8204 or studentconduct@umd.edu. Disruptive or disorderly students may be charged under the [University's Code of Student Conduct](#) and/or be referred for specific counseling or other mental health interventions, if appropriate.
5. Behavior Evaluation and Threat Assessment, or Consultation – The [BETA Team](#) provides student behavior-related evaluation, assessment, and consultation to the campus. The team is comprised of representatives from the departments of Public Safety, Behavioral Health, Counseling, and Student Conduct. If you would like to discuss a specific student behavioral

concern, please contact the BETA Team at beta@umd.edu or 301.314.8204. You may also submit a report on the BETA Team's website.

6. Office of Civil Rights & Sexual Misconduct – The [Office of Civil Rights & Sexual Misconduct \(OCRSM\)](#) supports the University's commitment to a working and learning environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, stalking, etc.: All UMD faculty, staff in supervisory roles, teaching assistants, and academic advisors are designated as "Responsible University Employees" and are required by law to report all disclosures of sexual misconduct to OCRSM.

To speak with someone confidentially, students can contact one of UMD's confidential resources, such as [CARE to Stop Violence](#) at 301.741.3442 or the [Counseling Center](#) at 301.314.7651.

Students can also contact the Title IX Coordinator for assistance or supportive measures at 301.405.1142 or titleixcoordinator@umd.edu.

You may wish to print or save the following list of potential issues, resources and contact information:

WEAPONS, VIOLENCE, SUBSTANTIAL DISRUPTION, THREATS
Department of Public Safety (www.umdps.umd.edu) - 301.405.3333 or 911

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OR PSYCHIATRIC CONCERNS
Behavioral Health Service (<https://health.umd.edu/behavioral-health>) - 301.314.8106

EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCERNS
Counseling Center (www.counseling.umd.edu) - 301.314.7651

DISORDERLY OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR
Office of Student Conduct (www.studentconduct.umd.edu) - 301.314.8204

BEHAVIOR EVALUATION, THREAT ASSESSMENT, OR CONSULTATION
BETA Team (beta@umd.edu) - 301.314.BETA (301.314.2382)

CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT
Office of Civil Rights & Sexual Misconduct (ocrsm.umd.edu) – 301.405.1142

CONFIDENTIAL VIOLENCE ADOVCACY, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH
CARE to Stop Violence (health.umd.edu/CARE) – 301.741.3442

Everyone can help by taking advantage of the services outlined above and by looking out for one another. Together, we can ensure a safe environment for all.

Questions and Comments about the Handbook

Any questions and comments about the handbook, including requests for clarification, should be directed to the Doctoral Program staff at infoleaderdoc@umd.edu.

College of Information

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