

**PhD vs CLINICAL PRACTICE DOCTORATE  
UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE**

**Rubric for Identifying the Type of Doctoral Degree that is Issued/Designed by a Program.**

	PhD	Advanced Practice Clinical Doctorate	Graduate Entry Level Clinical Doctorate (e.g.: DPT)	Graduate Entry Level Professional Degrees (e.g. PA)	Classic Master Degrees
≥ 50% of overall credits are research related. <sup>1</sup>	★				
≤ 30% of overall credits are research related. <sup>1</sup>		★	★	★	★
Candidacy Exam	★				
Dissertation	★				
Teach and Apply Evidence Based Practice Principles	★	★	★	★	★
Applies Research <sup>3</sup>	★	★	★	★	★
Independent Research Product <sup>2</sup>	★	★			★
Clinical Expertise		★	★	★	
Related to licensure or 1 <sup>st</sup> credential to practice			★	★	

Rubric developed by the Rutgers, School of Health Related Professions (formerly the University of Medicine & Dentistry of NJ, School of Health Related Professions which merged with Rutgers in July 2013) Practice Doctorate Task Force. Task Force examined entry and advanced practice doctorate degrees components using several documents including the Council of

Graduate Schools document, the ASAHP Position Statement on Practice Doctorates and discipline specific (PT, Dietetics, Nursing) practice doctorate components.

Definitions.

1. Research related credits - include both coursework on research design and statistics, as well as dissertation credits, candidacy exam credits, and doctoral seminar credits.
2. Independent research product – The student is expected to create a question, review the literature, explain the methodology, collect data, interpret the data and produce a formal document that meets the programs expectations. This may include a dissertation, a manuscript, or a series of manuscripts based on the data. The type of research is inclusive of retrospective research, outcomes research, survey research, and/or prospective research.
3. Applies research – students learn the structure of research design, statistics and evidence based practice principles for the purpose of critically reading research literature and apply readings to clinical decision-making.

**The key distinction between the PhD and all of the practice doctorates are:**

- PhD curriculum emphasis (>50%) on research,
- PhD requirements include candidacy examination and dissertation product,
- **Advanced practice doctorates** are distinguished from the entry level practice doctorates by their inclusion of an independent research product,
- All practice doctorates include clinical expertise as a component which is not included in the research doctorate.