

DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS (page 27 of Graduate Bulletin)

A master's degree is not a prerequisite for the doctorate; however, the first year of study after the baccalaureate will be substantially the same for both the master's and doctoral student. Some programs admit students to doctoral programs directly after the bachelor's degree; others require a master's degree. No specific number or sequence of courses constitutes a doctoral program or assures attainment of the degree. A formal degree program consists of a combination of courses, seminars and individual study and research that meet the minimum requirements of the Graduate School and those of the committee for each individual student.

Admission

Usually, a student is not officially considered as a doctoral student until completion of a master's program or its equivalent and approval for further study. Departments offering doctoral degree programs review each candidate carefully before recommending admission. A minimum grade-point average of 3.00 is required for graduation of a candidate for all doctoral degrees.

Residency Requirements

A doctoral student may meet the degree requirements of the Graduate School and department by full-time study or a combination of full- and part-time study.

The minimum residency requirement for a doctoral candidate in all programs is at least two consecutive semesters of full-time study and involvement in departmental activities. Full-time study is defined as 9-15 semester credits, except for graduate teaching and research assistants for whom full-time study is specified by the assistantship agreements. The summer sessions may count as one semester, provided that the candidate is enrolled for a minimum total of six semester credit hours per combined summer terms. Programs vary in their requirements beyond the minimum, e.g., credits or courses to be completed, proper time to fulfill the residency requirement, and acceptability of part-time employment.

Before a doctoral student begins residency, the student's adviser and the student shall prepare a statement indicating the manner in which the residency requirement will be met. Any special conditions must be detailed

and will require the approval of the student's committee, the department faculty members approved to direct doctoral dissertations, the collegiate dean, and the dean of the Graduate School.

Continuous Enrollment Requirement

The Graduate School requires that a doctoral student register for a minimum of one graduate credit as approved by his or her adviser during each fall and spring semester. Individual departments may exceed this minimum requirement. A doctoral student should consult with his or her academic department.

Time Limit

All doctoral requirements must be completed within ten years of starting coursework at The University of Akron or elsewhere. This refers to graduate work after receipt of a master's degree or the completion of 30 semester credits. Extension of up to one year may be granted in unusual circumstances by Graduate School upon written request by the student and recommendation by the adviser, department head, and college dean.

Credits

A doctorate is conferred in recognition of high attainment and productive scholarship in some special field of learning as evidenced by the satisfactory completion of a prescribed program of study and research; and the successful passing of examinations covering the special field of study and the general field of which this subject is a part. Consequently, the emphasis is on mastery of the subject rather than a set number of credits. Doctoral programs generally encompass the equivalent of at least three years of full-time study at the graduate level. A minimum of 50 percent of the total credits above the baccalaureate required in each student's doctoral program must be completed at the University. A maximum of six workshop credits may be applied to a doctoral degree. Such credits must be relevant to the degree program, recommended by the student's advisor and approved by the dean of the Graduate School.

No graduate credit may be received for courses taken by examination or for 400- numbered courses previously taken at the 400-number course level as an undergraduate without advance approval from the dean of the Graduate School. "Repeat for change of grade" is not available at the graduate level.

Transfer Credits

Up to one-half of the total credits above the baccalaureate required in a doctoral program may be transferred from an accredited college or university, including The University of Akron. Departments and colleges may set more restrictive limits. All transfer credit must be at the "A" or "B" level (4.00 to 3.00) in graduate courses. The credits must be relevant to the student's academic program as determined by the student's academic department and fall within the ten-year limit. A University of Akron must receive prior approval from his or her academic department for transfer courses taken elsewhere.

Individual course transfer of credit must fall within the ten-year time limit to complete degree requirements. A block transfer of credit may be requested if a student holds a prior graduate degree from an accredited college or university, including The University of Akron. No more than 30 semester credits may be transferred from a single master's degree. A block transfer of credit does not apply toward the student's ten-year time limit to complete the degree.

A student seeking to transfer credit must have full admission and be in good standing at The University of Akron. Transfer credit shall not be recorded until a student has completed 12 semester credits at The University of Akron with a grade-point average of 3.00 or better. Transfer credits from other institutions shall not be computed as part of a student's University of Akron grade point average.

No more than six workshop credits may be applied to a doctoral degree program.

Language Requirements

There is no University-wide foreign language requirement for the doctoral degree. The student is required to demonstrate one of the following skills depending upon the particular program.

- Plan A: Reading knowledge, with the aid of a dictionary, of two approved foreign languages. At the discretion of the major department an average of "B" in the second year of college-level courses in a language will be accepted as evidence of proficiency in reading knowledge for that language. English may be considered as one of the approved foreign languages for a student

whose first language is not English; and demonstrated competence in research technique (e.g., statistics and/or computers) may be substituted for one of the two foreign languages. Under the last option, each department should define competence and publicize.

- Plan B: Comprehensive knowledge of one approved foreign language, including reading without the aid of a dictionary and such additional requirements as the department may impose.
- Plan C: In certain doctoral programs the demonstration of competence in appropriate research skills may serve as a substitute for the foreign language requirements.
- Plan D: In certain doctoral programs there is no foreign language requirement.

Optional Department Requirements

Each department may determine requirements for a doctoral student with regard to entrance examinations, qualifying examinations, preliminary or comprehensive examinations and course sequences.

Dissertation and Oral Defense

The ability to do independent research and demonstrate competence in scholarly exposition must be demonstrated by the preparation of a dissertation on some topic related to the major subject. It should represent a significant contribution to knowledge, be presented in a scholarly manner, reveal the candidate's ability to do independent research and indicate experience in research techniques.

A doctoral dissertation committee supervises and approves the dissertation and administers an oral examination upon the dissertation and related areas of study. This examination is open to the graduate faculty. The dissertation and oral examination must be approved by the committee before the dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School.

A final online submission of the dissertation is due in the Graduate School at least three weeks prior to commencement. This copy must be signed by the adviser, faculty reader, department head, and college dean prior to submission to the Graduate School. A manual titled Guidelines for Preparing

a Thesis or Dissertation is available online and all copies of the dissertation must conform to these instructions

Graduation

To be cleared for graduation, a candidate must have completed coursework with a minimum cumulative graduate grade-point average of at least 3.00; submitted an approved dissertation and passed an oral examination; submitted an online application for graduation with the University Registrar; paid all applicable fees; and met any other applicable department and University requirements.