

ACADEMIC STANDARDS, POLICIES, AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Responsibility for progress in a graduate degree program is shared by the student, faculty advisor, and the people administering the program. Students are responsible for compliance with the Graduate School's rules and procedures and all other graduate program requirements. Students can increase their chance for academic success by actively seeking the advice of their faculty mentors, graduate program directors, and Graduate School staff members.

Complete information on the special requirements for degrees is found in the publications of the individual programs. The general requirements common to all graduate programs are as follows.

Advisement

Program faculty coordinate academic advising for graduate students. Students are encouraged to seek the advice and counsel of graduate advisors and program directors in planning their curriculum. In addition, the Graduate School provides graduate assistants with a manual on policies and guidelines. Other policies related to student enrollment activities are in the University's Student Answer Book.

Minimum Grade Point Average

The Graduate School requires all graduate students to maintain a minimum, cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale during their studies to remain enrolled. The Graduate School reviews students' academic performances each semester. Failure to maintain the minimum GPA requirements may result in academic dismissal. No student may graduate with a cumulative grade point average of less than 3.00.

The Graduate School expects students to meet the highest standards of academic integrity—the success of the entire academic enterprise depends on their doing so. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, or abetting the academic dishonesty of another will result in sanction and may lead to academic dismissal.

Academic Performance and Progress in Master of Science Programs

The Graduate School has established standards and requirements with regard to minimum grade point average, continuous enrollment, time to degree, academic integrity and other elements of satisfactory academic progress and degree completion.

The elements are delineated in the "Policies" section of this Catalog under "Policy on Academic Performance and Progress in University of Maryland, Baltimore Master of Science Programs." All master's degree candidates are expected to review and comply with these standards and requirements.

Academic Performance and Satisfactory Progress in PhD Programs

The Graduate School has established standards and requirements with regard to minimum grade point average, continuous enrollment, time to degree, advancement to candidacy, academic integrity, and other elements of satisfactory academic progress and degree completion.

These elements are delineated in the "Policies" section of this Catalog under "Policy on Academic Performance and Progress in University of Maryland, Baltimore PhD Programs." All doctoral degree candidates are expected to review and comply with these standards and requirements.

Appeal of Academic Dismissal

The procedures for the resolution of controversy between the Graduate School and a student dismissed for poor academic performance are found in the "Appeal of Academic Dismissal" policy. Students dismissed for cheating or plagiarism may appeal under the guidelines provided by the "Student Academic Misconduct" policy. Both documents are on file with the office of the Dean of the Graduate School, and are printed in the "Policies" section of this Catalog.

Degree Requirements

Requirements for the Master of Science Degree

The entire course of study undertaken for the Master of Science degree must form a unified, coherent program approved by the student's advisor and the Graduate School. Students inadequately prepared for the required graduate courses may need to take additional courses to supplement their undergraduate work. These courses may not be considered as part of the graduate program.

Course Requirements

The minimum number of credits required by the university and the Graduate School for the master's degree is 30. Some programs or degree specializations require more credits. Students in a thesis option program must complete a minimum of 6 credits of master's thesis research.

No more than 6 credits of graduate course work taken as a non-degree student or at other regionally-accredited institutions before matriculation in the Graduate School may apply toward the master's degree. A request for transfer of credit should be completed shortly after matriculation. The student's advisor and graduate program director must approve the form and submit it to the Graduate School. Official transcripts of the courses for which credit is requested must accompany the Transfer Request form. The student is subject to final examination in all work offered for the degree.

The Graduate School does not allow transfer credit for any courses required for any other degree. The Graduate School does not grant credit for correspondence courses or for "credit by examination" courses taken at other universities. Note that the Graduate School only transfers credit, not grades, from other universities.

Time Required

All requirements for the master's degree must be completed within a five-year period. Courses completed more than five years before the expected date for receiving the master's degree will not count toward that degree.

Thesis Option

Students must complete a minimum of 30 credits, including 6 credits of master's thesis research (799), for the Master of Science degree. Of the remaining 24 credit hours required in graduate courses, no fewer than 12 must be selected from courses numbered 600 or above.

Examination of the master's thesis is conducted by the candidate's master's examination committee. This committee comprises a minimum of three and a maximum of five voting members, all of whom must hold the doctoral degree or the highest degree for the discipline. The committee must include the candidate's master's thesis advisor. One or two members may be from programs separate from the candidate's. At least three of the committee members must be Graduate Faculty members. The Graduate School dean selects one committee member as the Graduate School representative. The Graduate School representative, who must be a member of the Graduate Faculty and not the committee chair, is responsible for ensuring that the examination is conducted according to established procedures.

The committee chair must be a member of the Graduate Faculty and is normally the candidate's advisor. The chair is responsible for nominating the committee members to the Graduate School dean. In the event that a candidate's advisor is not a member of the Graduate Faculty, the candidate's program director is responsible for appointing a Graduate Faculty member from within the program to

serve as chair. Nomination of committee members must be made by the chair at least two months before the date of the final master's examination. After receiving the completed nomination form, the dean of the Graduate School appoints the committee and designates the Graduate School representative.

The chair must sign the "Certification of Completion of Master's Thesis" form and return it to the Graduate School at least two weeks (a minimum of 10 working days) before the proposed examination date. The signature of the chair certifies that the master's thesis is ready to be defended. Any minor or typographical corrections or amendments resulting from the master's examination must be incorporated in the master's thesis by the student before the student turns in a final, unbound copy of the master's thesis to the Graduate School. The signature of the student's advisor on the approval sheet to be bound with the master's thesis certifies that the student has made all required corrections. Beyond the oral master's examination, the program committee may require a comprehensive written examination.

Complete final examination policies and procedures, including a description of the conduct and outcomes of the examination, are in "Procedures for Examination of the Master's Thesis." This document is available from the Graduate School and online.

Nonthesis Option

The requirements for Master of Science degree without thesis vary among programs in which this option is available. Standards for admission are, however, identical with those for admission to any master's program. The quality of the work expected of the student is also identical to that expected in the thesis programs. The general requirements for students choosing the nonthesis option are: an overall average grade of B in all course work taken; of the total credits required by a program, a total of 18 numbered 600 or above; submission of one or more scholarly papers; and a passing grade on a written comprehensive examination. The program must certify, on the form provided for that purpose, that the student has completed all requirements for the degree.

Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree

The Doctor of Philosophy degree (PhD) is the highest degree awarded by the university. The degree is granted to those candidates who demonstrate both a high level of scholarship and the ability to conduct independent research. It is not awarded for the completion of course and seminar requirements alone. Beyond the following requirements, the department or program may have special requirements. Consult the program descriptions in this catalog and the program director for more information.

Course Requirements

There is no Graduate School requirement on the number of courses students must take in either the major or minor fields. The Graduate School policy encourages the development of individualized programs for students who seek the doctoral degree. The academic departments and interdisciplinary programs have been directed to decide major and minor requirements, levels or sequences of required courses, and similar requirements for submission to the Graduate Council for approval.

Courses taken at other institutions approved by the graduate program for partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree at UMB are listed on the Graduate Record Form at the time of admission to candidacy.

Time Required

The Graduate School requires a minimum of three years or its equivalent of full-time graduate study and research. Of the three years, at least one year or its equivalent must be spent at the University of Maryland, Baltimore. Students must submit all work at other institutions in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctoral degree to the Graduate School with the program recommendation for approval at the time of admission to candidacy. Official transcripts of this work must be on file in the Graduate School.

Students must be admitted to candidacy within five years of admission to the doctoral program and at least two full sequential semesters or sessions (spring, summer, or fall) before graduating. All degree requirements, including the doctoral dissertation and final doctoral examination, must be completed within four years of admission to candidacy and no more than nine years after admission into the doctoral program. Failure to complete all requirements within the time allotted requires another application for admission to the Graduate School with the usual requisites as decided by the program committee. The Graduate School grants extensions of time only under the most unusual circumstances.

Registration Requirements

Doctoral students may not enroll for 899 research credits until reaching candidacy; prior to candidacy, they must enroll in 898 Pre-candidacy Research (1 to 8 variable credits) in preparation for candidacy and to ensure full-time enrollment at that stage in their studies. Pre-candidacy Research 898 is offered for variable registration of 1 to 8 credits per semester. Students should enroll in the appropriate number of credits to reflect their work toward the dissertation before reaching candidacy. 898 credits are not counted as part of the 899 credits required for graduation, and are only offered as a Pass/Fail grading option.

Once admitted to candidacy, doctoral students must successfully complete a minimum of 12 credit hours of doctoral dissertation research (899) as noted below.

Admission to Candidacy

Doctoral students must complete an application for admission to candidacy, in duplicate, when they fulfill all requirements for candidacy. They must submit both copies to the major advisor and program director for signature, and subsequently forward them to the Graduate School for final review. A graduate record form delineating all course work taken by the student in fulfillment of degree requirements must accompany each copy of the application for admission to candidacy.

Preliminary examinations or other substantial tests as the departments may elect are frequently prerequisites for admission to candidacy.

Doctoral Dissertation

Students must prove the ability to do independent research by an original dissertation on a topic approved by the department or program graduate committee. During the preparation of the dissertation, all candidates for the doctoral degree must complete a minimum of 12 credit hours of doctoral dissertation research (899) at the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

A PhD student must establish and maintain a professional relationship with a member of the Graduate Faculty with the appropriate knowledge and expertise to serve as his or her research advisor. If no appropriate Graduate Faculty member is available or no appropriate Graduate Faculty member agrees to be the student's research advisor, the student cannot continue in the PhD program.

In most PhD programs, students must also have a doctoral examination committee appointed by the graduate program. The doctoral examination committee comprises of a minimum of five scholars: the advisor, who is a regular member of the Graduate Faculty, at least two additional regular members of the Graduate Faculty, and at least one individual from outside the program, department, or discipline. Two committee members are designated as readers. When the dissertation is completed to the satisfaction of this committee and at least 10 days before the defense, the advisor and both readers sign the form saying that the dissertation is ready for defense.

Often, students will submit the results of their dissertation research for publication. Students should obtain authorization from research advisors for publication of all or part of the dissertation before its defense. A manual to help students in the preparation of their doctoral dissertations, "Instructions for Preparing Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertations," is available online and from the Graduate School.

Procedures for Examination of the Candidate's Doctoral Dissertation

The dissertation defense is an essential step in fulfilling the requirements of the PhD. The purpose of the defense is to allow the candidate to demonstrate that he, or s/he:

- (1) Has mastered a field of knowledge.
- (2) Has successfully completed a program of research in his or her chosen field.
- (3) Is able to discuss and defend a research question and the results of the research project with colleagues and the general public.

The examination of the doctoral dissertation is conducted by the doctoral examination committee. Described below are the:

- Composition of the Doctoral Examination Committee
- Documentation and Actions Required Prior to the Doctoral Examination
- Conduct of the Doctoral Examination

I. Composition of the Doctoral Examination Committee

The committee must have a minimum of five and a maximum of seven voting members, all of whom must hold a doctoral degree or the terminal degree in his/her discipline. The committee must include the candidate's dissertation advisor, two readers, and one member who is external to the candidate's program, department or discipline. One of the committee members (other than the Chair) is appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School as graduate school representative, and serves as the Dean's surrogate. At least three of the members of the committee must be regular members of the graduate faculty http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/graduate_people/list_grad_faculty.html

- **Committee Chair:** The committee chair must be a regular member of the graduate faculty (link) and is normally the candidate's advisor. At least six months prior to the proposed defense date, the committee Chair will prepare and send a list of potential committee members to the Dean of the Graduate School http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/graduate_people/graduating.html for approval. If changes need to be made in committee composition, the committee Chair must request approval from the Dean of the Graduate School. In the event that a candidate's advisor is not a member of the graduate faculty, the candidate's program director is responsible for appointing a regular graduate faculty member from within the program to serve as the Chair. In this case, it is expected that the dissertation advisor would serve on the committee as one of the other members.

- **Readers:** In addition to the Chair, two members of the committee must be identified as readers. The Chair and readers serve to certify that the dissertation is ready to be defended and do so by signing the Certification of Completion of Doctoral Dissertation form http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/graduate_people/graduating.html. This form must be returned to the Graduate School at least two weeks before the proposed examination date (see Documentation Required Prior to the Doctoral Examination http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/graduate_people/graduating.html). The candidate will provide the chair and the readers a copy of the dissertation at least two weeks prior to the deadline for submitting the Certification of Completion of Doctoral Dissertation http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/graduate_people/graduating.html form. By signing the Certification, the readers and the Chair are indicating that the dissertation is a presentable, interpretable, and complete document. The three signatures attest that the dissertation conforms to these criteria; however, they do not indicate a determination of the ultimate acceptability or approval of the dissertation which can only occur at the conclusion of the final examination session. The candidate's program director must also sign the Certificate of Completion form. By signing, the program director indicates that all other university and program criteria pertaining to completion of the PhD are satisfied and that the exam may go forward.

- **External Member of the Examination Committee:** One of the members of the committee must be an external member. This individual must be from a separate program, department, or discipline from that of the candidate. The role of the external member is to provide a broader perspective within the examination process. The external member must hold a doctoral degree or a terminal degree in his or her field. The individual may be from within the university or may be a scholar from another institution. If the external member is a member of the graduate faculty, the individual may also serve as the Graduate School representative or as a Reader. If the external member is not a member of the graduate faculty, a curriculum vitae must accompany the nomination.

- **Graduate School Representative:** One member of the committee, designated by the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School serves as the Dean's surrogate. The representative must be a regular member of the graduate faculty and cannot be the committee Chair. In addition to the normal responsibilities as a member of the committee, the representative has the responsibility of ensuring that the examination is conducted according to established procedures. Any questions or disagreement over the examination procedure are referred to the Graduate School representative for a decision. Upon designation, the Graduate School representative will receive from the Graduate School a copy of the Procedures for Examination of the Doctoral Dissertation.

- **Other Committee Members:** There may be up to seven members of the committee. Beyond the five required members described above, up to two additional individuals may be appointed to the committee. These members may be individuals within or outside the candidate's program and may include scholars from other institutions or other components of the University of Maryland Graduate School, Baltimore. All such members must hold a doctoral degree or a terminal degree in their field. A *curriculum vitae* must accompany the nomination form submitted by the committee Chair to the Dean of the Graduate School for any committee nominees who are not members of the graduate faculty.

2. Documentation and Actions Required Prior to the Doctoral Examination

Prior to the doctoral examination, the following actions need to be completed:

- (1) Nomination of the Doctoral Examination Committee form http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/graduate_people/graduating.html must be submitted to the Dean's office.
- (2) Certification of Completion of the Doctoral Dissertation http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/graduate_people/graduating.html must be submitted to the Dean's office.
- (3) Submission of the Doctoral Dissertation: All members of the committee must receive a final version of the dissertation, as described above, two weeks (i.e. a minimum of 10 working days) prior to the proposed examination date. This version of the dissertation should be substantially the same as that which was certified by the chair and the two readers as ready to be defended.
- (4) Announcement of the Doctoral Examination: The Dean of the Graduate School has the responsibility for disseminating information to all members of the graduate faculty about the candidate's doctoral examination at least two weeks before the examination date. Graduate Programs are responsible for notifying their students and graduate faculty about the examination. The time and place of the examination will be established by the Chair.

3. Conduct of the Doctoral Examination

The doctoral examination normally comprises two components: an open presentation by the doctoral candidate and a formal examination by members of the committee.

- **Open Presentation by the Doctoral Candidate:** Each candidate is expected to give a presentation of his or her dissertation in a forum open to the general public and moderated by the committee Chair. The open presentation should take place as close as possible to the time scheduled for the doctoral examination. In many cases the open presentation will immediately precede the formal doctoral examination; however, the exact timing and notice of the presentation will be in keeping with the usual policy of the candidate's program. All members of the committee must be present (see below for definition of 'present') at the open presentation. Those attending the open presentation may ask questions of the candidate within a reasonable time interval set by the candidate's committee.

- **Formal Doctoral Examination Procedures:** The formal doctoral examination is open only to members of the candidate's committee and other members of the graduate faculty who wish to be present and is conducted under the direction of the examination committee's Chair. All members of the committee must be present for the examination. In some cases committee members may participate by video conference or by telephone, if necessary. In such cases, arrangements for the member not physically present should be made such that his or her participation can be interactive and that he or she has access to all audio and visual materials used by the candidate or committee members during the formal doctoral examination, can ask questions and hear the candidate's answers, and can fully participate in the committee's discussions. This may require that the member not physically present participate by a video connection, or have access to the presentation slides (sent in advance to the member), or that other appropriate arrangements are made to allow the member to be an active member of the committee's deliberations. The Dean of the Graduate School must be notified of an absence and the accommodations made. The formal examination is moderated by the committee Chair, and only committee members may ask questions of the candidate. Other members of the graduate faculty who attend the examination do so only as observers. They are not permitted to participate orally or otherwise in the proceedings.

- **The formal doctoral examination has the following components:**

- (i) An initial private discussion occurs among the members of the committee only (the candidate and other graduate faculty members are not present during the discussion). This discussion should determine whether the written document is presentable as a dissertation and, hence, defensible. If a majority of the committee agrees that the dissertation is not defensible, the examination is canceled. Otherwise, the examination proceeds. The committee then determines procedures for the examination, including the order and manner of questioning.
- (ii) A presentation of the dissertation by the candidate (if required by the committee) is followed by questions from the committee members. At the discretion of the candidate's program and the doctoral examination committee, the open

presentation may serve as the doctoral examination presentation. In this case, no further formal presentation by the candidate will be required and committee members may immediately begin questioning the candidate. No time limit is set for this period, but it would be considered unusual if the entire period exceeded three hours.

4. Outcome of the Examination

At the end of the examination, the candidate and any others in attendance who are not part of the committee withdraw, and the committee deliberates in private on the acceptability of the written dissertation and the oral performance of the candidate. The Chair asks each member for an opinion and, following these deliberations, the members vote on whether the candidate has passed or failed. There are two levels of pass: 1) the dissertation is accepted with very minor changes, if any; or 2) the dissertation requires significant, non-trivial revisions. In the latter case the committee sets a time-line for completion of revisions and names the committee members who will certify satisfactory completion of the revisions. The members sign the report of the committee and register their votes. The affirmative votes of a majority plus one of the committee members constitute a successful defense of the dissertation; this means that the required number of affirmative votes is either four from a five-member committee or five from a six- or seven-member committee.

The candidate may be failed if the committee finds that either the quality of the written dissertation or the candidate's presentation is wanting. The committee may find that, in spite of a decision that the dissertation document was defensible, it has defects that prevent it from being accepted. If these defects are minor in nature, the committee may vote to accept the dissertation pending remedial modifications. If the defects are more serious, the committee may decide to fail the candidate and require a new examination. Alternatively, the dissertation document may be determined to be sound but the candidate's defense inadequate. In this case the committee must decide on a date for a new examination.

The Report of the Examination Committee http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/graduate_people/graduating.html form signed by the committee must be returned by the Graduate School representative to the Graduate School no later than two working days following the examination. The candidate's program director must also be provided with a copy of the report.

The candidate should be informed of the decision as soon as possible. In the event that the candidate fails the examination, the Graduate School representative will submit a letter within two working days to the dean of the Graduate School stating that the candidate has failed, the reasons for the failure, the decisions concerning necessary remedial action and approximately when a new examination is to be held. The Graduate School representative must return the letter with the signed Report of the Examination Committee http://www.graduate.umaryland.edu/graduate_people/graduating.html. Copies of the letter must be provided to the candidate, the Chair, and the graduate program Director. The new examination must be conducted within one year of the date of the defense of the first examination. The Chair must notify the Graduate School of the date of the second examination so that the necessary paperwork may be sent to the Graduate School representative. The candidate may present himself or herself for the doctoral examination at most twice. (Revised May 2009.)

Degree Certification and Diploma

The Graduate School issues a calendar each year showing dates by which students that are in the last semester of their programs must submit forms and meet requirements for graduation. Graduate students are responsible for meeting these deadlines. Students must file their applications for diplomas with the Office of Graduate Admissions and Enrollment Affairs by the published diploma application deadline date.

The university issues diplomas at the end of each semester or session. Students who have applied for a diploma but are not able to complete degree requirements as planned must inform the Graduate School as soon as possible. These students must then reapply in the semester or session in which they expect to graduate. Students do not need to pay another diploma fee, but they must register for at least one credit per semester or session until graduation and pay a renewal fee.