

DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

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.

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.

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 prescribed program of study and research; the preparation of a dissertation based on independent 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 fifty per cent of the total credits above the baccalaureate required in each student's doctoral program must be completed at The University of Akron. 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 adviser and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

No graduate credit may be received for courses taken by examination or for 500-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.

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 chair, and college dean prior to submission to the Dean of 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

Students must file an online application for graduation with the Office of the University Registrar after completion of one-half of the credits required for their degree program or by the following dates:

- April 1 for Spring Commencement
- July 1 for Summer Commencement
- November 1 for Fall Commencement

Students wanting to attend the commencement ceremony must visit the Office of the University Registrar website to respond to the ceremony.

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.

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 a college-level course 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 a research technique (e.g., statistics and/or computers) may be substituted for one of the two foreign languages.

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.

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. For doctoral students who are in their final semester of study and have completed all degree requirements except the dissertation, and for

international students participating in curricular practical training (CPT) and/or academic training (AT) opportunities of 30 or more hours per week with approval from the International Center one or more graduate hours constitute full-time enrollment. 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.

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 the Dean of the Graduate School upon written request by the student and recommendation by the adviser, department chair, and college dean.

Transfer Credits

Up to fifty per cent of the total graduate credits above the baccalaureate required in a doctoral program may be transferred from an accredited college or university, including The University of Akron. All transfer credit must be at the "A" or "B" level in graduate courses. The courses must be relevant to the student's program as determined by the student's academic department and fall within the ten-year limit if beyond the master's level. A student already admitted to The University of Akron must receive prior approval from his or her academic department for transfer courses taken elsewhere.

A student admitted with a master's degree or equivalent will have work evaluated in relation to the student's program to determine transfer credit. Thirty semester credits are transferable from a master's degree. A block transfer of credit does not apply toward the student's ten-year time limit for degree completion.

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.