

DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for the Doctoral Degree Special Considerations for Doctoral Studies

In addition to the particular rules of the various graduate programs as stated in their sections of this catalog, the following general rules apply to all doctoral degree programs.

The award of a doctoral degree indicates that a student has attained mastery of a field and has demonstrated the capacity to perform independent scholarly research. Accordingly, no specific minimum number of credit hours has been established for doctoral degree programs. However, ordinarily the equivalent of three years of full-time graduate study is a minimum.

The doctoral degree is not awarded solely upon completion of a curriculum of courses, even though the student has done superior work in them; rather, it is awarded in recognition of creative scholarship as demonstrated by a substantial contribution in the candidate's chosen field. Only students who offer promise of meeting this high standard will be accepted by a graduate program to begin work toward this degree. Doctoral degree programs typically have more restrictive criteria for admission than those for admission to a master's degree program. The prospective student should consult in person with the graduate program in which he/she wishes to major.

Program of Study

Each applicant for the doctorate is expected to take such courses as may be required for both a strong foundation in the field and the development of a specialization. The student's program will consist of a major field and such minor fields as the major professor, the student, the program faculty, and department chair may agree upon. This program may be modified at any time upon the recommendation of the major professor and approval of the department chair and the dean of the unit.

All courses offered by the University, at any level and in any school, shall be accessible to the doctoral student, subject to approval by the instructors.

Residency for Doctoral Students

To ensure that doctoral students have the opportunity to participate fully in the intellectual life and research atmosphere of the University, at least two years of study must be spent at the University of Louisville and at least one must be spent in full-time residency (except as indicated below). The two-year requirement allows students to build mentoring relationships with faculty members and accrue classroom and research experience over time, while the full-time residency requirement is designed to provide students with at least one year of immersive, intensive study.

According to the Council of Graduate Schools, residency advantages students in the following ways: "... fluency in the language and vocabulary of the [field of] specialization is enhanced by frequent and close association with other students in the same field; competence in the field is enhanced by close familiarity with the university's libraries; valuable experience is gained by attending and participating in both formal and informal seminars, colloquia, discussions led by specialists visiting from other campuses, laboratories, or governmental research

groups; and thesis or dissertation research is facilitated by frequent consultation with the advisor."

Full-time residency requires that a student be registered for a minimum of 18 credit hours within a twelve-month period. Registration for candidacy cannot be used to meet this requirement.

Alternative Residency Track

All doctoral students must meet the two-year enrollment requirement. Students enrolled in part-time doctoral work may substitute four terms of continuous enrollment (summer terms can be used to meet this requirement) for the full-time residency requirement.

Programs that allow part-time and/or off-site participation must provide a rationale to the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs, indicating how they ensure that such students have access to an intensive and immersive educational experience. The rationale must be approved by the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs and be on file in the Graduate School.

Foreign Language Requirement

Foreign language proficiency is no longer a general requirement for graduate degrees. However, certain graduate programs may have established such requirements, which will be specified in their sections of this catalog.

Qualifying Examination and Candidacy

The applicant for a Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Education degree must pass a qualifying examination, oral or written, or both. Its purpose is to verify that the student has sufficient understanding of and competence in his/her field to become a candidate for the degree. This examination may be referred to by some programs as the preliminary, comprehensive, or candidacy examination. To be eligible for this examination, the student must have satisfactorily completed the major portion of the prescribed course work and must have met the foreign language requirement of the program, if applicable. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the program's policy on the consequences in the case of failure of all or part of the examination. A student who fails the examination may not be allowed to retake it more than once.

A doctoral degree student must have been admitted to candidacy not later than the end of the ninth month prior to the awarding of the degree, that is:

- August graduation: November 30 of preceding year
- December graduation: March 31 of same year
- May graduation: August 31 of preceding year

Although the prescribed course work may have been completed, the candidate must maintain an active registration status until the degree is awarded (see the catalog section on General Academics Policies and Requirements (<https://catalog.louisville.edu/graduate/general-policies-procedures-requirements/>)).

Time Limitation

The candidate must complete all other requirements for the doctoral degree within four calendar years after passing the qualifying examination. In exceptional cases, the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs is empowered to grant limited extensions of this four-year period.

Dissertation

A dissertation is required of all candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Education. It is to be a scholarly achievement in research, and should demonstrate a thorough understanding of research techniques in the field of inquiry and the ability to conduct independent research.

The dissertation shall be read by a reading committee, chaired by the major professor, and appointed by the unit dean upon the recommendation of the chair of the major department. This committee shall consist of not fewer than four members, and must include one representative from outside the program. All members must be qualified to serve on the committee as specified by their Unit's Guidelines for Graduate Faculty. The dissertation must be approved by the committee and the chair of the major professor's department.

The final manuscript is submitted electronically to the Graduate School through ThinkIR (<https://ir.library.louisville.edu/>), directions on submission will be provided upon review of the dissertation by the Graduate School. The final copy is submitted as a PDF. Along with the PDF the student is required to submit a digital/electronic (<http://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/>) copy of the signature page or hard copy of the signature page, which should be on white paper with original signatures. The digital/electronic or the original signature page must be submitted to the Graduate School.

Some programs may require students to submit a copy of the dissertation or signature page to the department; please check with your program director.

Standards for the Preparation of Thesis and Dissertations (<http://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/thesis-dissertation-guidelines-1/>) are available on the website of the Graduate School. Alternate standards must be approved by the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs if in conflict with this standard.

Each student who is required to submit a dissertation to fulfill degree requirements must follow the guidelines for the Preparation of Thesis and Dissertations (<http://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/thesis-dissertation-guidelines-1/>). Prior to submission of the final copy of a dissertation, students must contact the Graduate School to schedule a review of the document.

Final Oral Examination

The final oral examination is to be a defense of the dissertation and a demonstration of the candidate's mastery of his/her field. The examination will be given by a committee of Graduate Faculty members appointed by the unit dean upon recommendation of the chair of the major department. The committee will be composed of a minimum of four qualified graduate faculty members, one of whom must come from outside the student's program. The major professor and the remaining Committee members must be qualified to serve as specified by the unit's guidelines for graduate faculty. The examination committee for doctoral students in Interdisciplinary Studies will be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School upon recommendation of the major professor.

The Dean of the Graduate School shall notify all members of the Graduate Faculty at least one week in advance that they are invited to participate in the examination, but only members of the committee may vote. At the discretion of the major department, a portion of the examination may be written.

The examination must be taken at least fourteen days before the end of the semester in which the degree is to be granted. To be passed in this examination, the student may not receive more than one abstention or dissenting vote.

Requirements for the Master's Degree

The departmental announcements in this catalog should be consulted in all instances; however, the following rules apply to all master's degree programs.

Course Credit

A minimum total of 30 credit hours of graduate credit is required for the master's degree. At least 15 credit hours must be in courses of the major subject area, and the remaining hours in the program distributed as recommended and approved by the major department. At least one-half of the credits counted toward the degree (exclusive of thesis, practicum and internships) must be in courses open to graduate students only (600 level or above). A grade average of 3.0 or better must be maintained.

Residency for Master's Students

Master's students must take at least 24 credit hours of coursework at the University of Louisville to satisfy the residency requirement for the master's degree.

Time Limitation

There is a time limit imposed, stipulating that credit earned more than six years prior to the completion of the degree may not be counted toward meeting its requirements. This time period may be extended upon recommendation of the student's department chair, unit dean and the approval of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs.

Maintaining Candidacy

Refer to previous section entitled, General Academic Policies and Requirements (<https://catalog.louisville.edu/graduate/general-policies-procedures-requirements/>), see subsection entitled Maintaining Candidacy.

Thesis

Students completing degree programs that include a thesis must submit the thesis to their major professor at least thirty days in advance of graduation (guidelines may be found on the Graduate School website (<http://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/>)).

Acceptance of the thesis shall be at the discretion of a special reading committee composed of the major professor and two other committee members. One member shall be from outside the program, and all three members must be qualified to serve on those capacities as specified by their unit's guidelines for Graduate Faculty. The committee shall be approved by the unit dean upon recommendation of the chair of the major department. The committee shall complete its review of the thesis at least one week prior to the final oral examination.

The final manuscript is submitted electronically to the Graduate School through ThinkIR (<https://ir.library.louisville.edu/>), directions on submission will be provided upon review of the thesis by the Graduate School. The final copy is submitted as a PDF. Along with the PDF the student is required to submit a digital/electronic (<http://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/>) or hard

copy of the signature page, which should be on white paper with original signatures. The digital/electronic or original signature page must be submitted to the Graduate School.

Standards for the Preparation of Thesis and Dissertations (<http://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/thesis-dissertation-guidelines-1/>) are available on the website of the Graduate School. Alternate standards must be approved by the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs if in conflict with these standards.

The thesis normally carries three-six (3-6) credit hours of graduate credit, which is in addition to the 15 credit hour minimum taken within the major department. In certain departments, a professional paper or portfolio may be required in lieu of a thesis. For procedures in these instances, consult the Director of Graduate Studies or the chair of the department.

Each student who is required to submit a thesis to fulfill degree requirements must follow the guidelines for the Preparation of Thesis and Dissertations (<http://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/thesis-dissertation-guidelines-1/>). Prior to submission of the final copy of a thesis, students must contact the Graduate School to schedule a review of the document.

Final Oral Examination

The final oral examination shall be conducted by a committee of Graduate Faculty members recommended by the chair of the major department and appointed by the unit dean.

The examination must cover the materials presented in the thesis and may include the content of courses taken or other matters pertinent to the candidate's admissibility to the master's degree. At the discretion of the graduate program, a portion of this examination may be written. The recommendation for the degree shall be determined by a simple majority of the committee members. The examination must be taken at least fourteen days before the end of the semester in which the degree is to be granted.

In the event of an unfavorable vote, the committee may refuse the candidate's admissibility to the master's degree, or it may recommend another examination with or without additional work.

Dual Degree Programs

A dual degree program is a formalized path of study that allows a student to pursue two different degrees at the same time, either at the same institution or at different institutions, and possibly complete them in less time than it would take to earn them separately. The two degrees may be in the same subject or in two different subjects; they may be at the same level (e.g., master's-master's) or at two different levels (e.g., doctoral-master's). Students must meet the admission requirements for both degree programs. Other limitations or requirements may apply, depending on the program.

Dual degree programs allow students to earn two master's degrees in cases where there is synergy between the two programs. Course work which is common to both degree programs, or courses which provide similar learning outcomes, may be proposed to count for both degrees with justification of the overlap in learning outcomes of the courses. A dual-degree program that pairs two 30-hour programs may apply nine (9) credit hours of overlapping course work toward each degree, for a total of 51 combined credit hours. A variance may be requested to apply

additional coursework for dual-degree programs with higher total credit hours.

Requirements for Graduate Certificate Programs

The following rules apply to all graduate certificate programs.

Graduate certificates are coherent, distinct courses of study at the postbaccalaureate level or higher leading to mastery in a more narrowly defined set of program-learning outcomes than those obtained in a graduate degree program. Graduate certificates are official credentials issued by the UofL Board of Trustees in accordance with the UofL Redbook, and they include postbaccalaureate certificates, post-master's certificates, and post-professional certificates as defined by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE).

Course Credit

Graduate certificate programs must require at least nine (9) credit hours of graduate coursework at the 500 level or above with at least three (3) credit hours being core requirements of the graduate certificate. Additionally, all graduate certificates must require a culminating experience (e.g., exit exam, thesis, capstone project, capstone course, etc.). Students must achieve a 3.0 or better cumulative grade point average and be in satisfactory standing to be awarded a certificate. Students may apply course credit earned from one or more graduate certificate programs towards a graduate degree, but they must submit an application to the degree program prior to beginning a second certificate that will count toward the degree. Use of credit from certificates is subject to admission to the degree-granting program and must be consistent with both curricular and residency requirements of the degree program. No more than 30% of credits may be shared between certificate programs. This requirement is rounded to the next highest whole credit hour. Consequently, most graduate certificate programs that require nine (9) credit hours may only share three (3) credit hours with another certificate program. Finally, the student must complete the culminating experience and at least 50% of the total credit hours required for the certificate program in residence at the University of Louisville.

Requirements for Accelerated Bachelor's-Master's Programs

Undergraduate students will follow the departmental process to apply for admission to the accelerated program before beginning their final 30 credits of **the bachelor's program**. Only exceptional students who meet all admissions requirements will be eligible for admission to accelerated programs; those who are admitted will be allowed to enroll in graduate coursework in their final 30 hours of the undergraduate program. Students who meet the program guidelines for successful completion of the graduate coursework as an undergraduate may then apply for admission to the master's program.

Students applying for admission to a 30 credit hour to 35 credit hour master's program may take a maximum of nine (9) credit hours as an undergraduate which will count toward both the bachelor's and the master's degree; those applying to a 36 credit hour or more master's program may take a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours that will count toward both the bachelor's and the master's degrees (the guiding

principle is that no more than one-third of a student's coursework may be double-counted for two different degrees at different levels).

Graduate credits taken while in a bachelor's program must be transferred to the student's graduate record after the student has completed one semester as a graduate student.

See specific programs for further requirements for applying to an accelerated program.

Application for Degree

Degrees are awarded in August, December, and May. Candidates who expect to receive degrees on a particular award date must complete the application for degree on ULink (<http://ulink.louisville.edu/>) before the deadline specified on the Office of the Registrar website (<https://louisville.edu/registrar/commencement-information.html>).

The University holds two commencement ceremonies each year. For specific information regarding the ceremonies, apparel, dates, etc. please visit the Commencement website (<http://www.louisville.edu/commencement/>).