

# Graduate School Academic Regulations

[General](#)[Minors](#)[Master's](#)[Specialist's](#)[Doctoral](#)[Calendar](#)[Conduct](#)[Grade Appeal](#)[Services](#)

## Doctoral Degree

Degrees higher than the baccalaureate are granted at the University of Mississippi because of special attainments achieved by degree candidates. Prospective students should understand clearly that a graduate degree is not awarded upon the basis of a collection of course credits, or the passing of certain prescribed examinations, or the submission of a thesis or dissertation. In other words, the student cannot expect to receive a higher degree because of successfully completing the individual parts of the degree program. Course schedules, examinations, and other requirements explained in this catalog are to be regarded as minimal; and any student may be required to satisfy whatever additional requirements academic advisers deem appropriate.

To receive a higher degree from the University of Mississippi, the student must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the graduate faculty of the department, school, or college of the student and to the faculty of the university that the student has attained through intelligence, scholarship, industry, and personal qualities the high level of professional and academic competence that the faculty of each department expects of a person holding the degree being sought. The determination of fitness to qualify for the degree rests solely upon the estimate that the faculty makes of the student's right to the degree. (See also "Operational Procedures" section and see the School of Law and School of Pharmacy sections for information about the J.D. and Pharm.D. degrees.)

### Requirements for All Doctoral Programs

In addition to the above "General Requirements for All Advanced Degrees" and those requirements listed below, additional program requirements may be found in the description of individual graduate degree programs in the Academic Structure.

### Course and Degree Credit Requirements

The aim of the doctoral program is to afford instruction and guidance leading to the mastery of a major field. Specific course requirements as deemed necessary are stipulated by the student's advisory committee. In certain instances, a student may be required to take courses in a minor field. For students required to take a minor, a specific program will be formulated. To fulfill the degree credit requirement, the student must (a) have completed three years (54 hours) of study beyond the bachelor's degree; (b) have completed a minimum of two years (36 hours) of graduate study at the University of Mississippi; and (c) have completed a minimum of one year (18 hours) of graduate work in continuous residence.

Where course work (excluding dissertation hours) is required for the degree, at least one-half, up to 30 hours, must be completed at the University of Mississippi.

Certain nontraditional graduate programs have been approved for delivery at off-campus sites, including centers at Tupelo and Jackson. Course work taken at these sites can fulfill the above requirements.

### Preliminary Examination

At or near the beginning of the student's work beyond the master's degree, the department or school may require a preliminary examination to determine the student's qualifications to undertake a program leading to the doctorate and to assist the student's adviser in planning the student's program.

### Time Limit

All required formal course work and the comprehensive exam should be completed within four calendar years of initial enrollment into degree seeking (conditional or full-standing) status, whether a student begins the doctoral program following completion of a bachelor's or a master's degree. After passing the comprehensive exam, a student becomes a candidate for the doctoral degree and must complete all remaining requirements, including the written dissertation and its defense, within five calendar years. If a candidate does not complete all requirements within this time, then the Graduate School will change the student's status to nondegree seeking.

The Graduate School may grant a one-year extension to this time limit for serious, nonacademic hardships (e.g., military duty, pregnancy, illness, or problems within the student's immediate family).

Additionally, a student may petition his or her academic program for a limited extension for a reason unrelated to personal hardship. If an academic program grants an extension, it may also impose additional requirements, which may include passing another comprehensive examination, more course work, and/or other appropriate remedies. Any extension plan accepted by the candidate and the academic program must be approved by the Graduate School.

### Comprehensive Examinations and Admission to Candidacy

All doctoral students must successfully complete a comprehensive examination. Upon completion of this examination, the student is admitted to candidacy.

The purpose of this examination is to establish that the student has satisfactorily mastered the body of academic material appropriate to the degree. Though academic programs have broad latitude in the design of comprehensive examinations, the following guidelines should be followed. The examination may be either a single test or a set of tests. The examination must be written; however, departments may require that part of the examination be oral. The examination may be constructed and evaluated by the student's dissertation advisory committee or by a separate committee. To sit for the examination, a student must be in full-standing status, must have satisfied any foreign language requirement, must have a graduate grade-point average of 3.0 or above, and must not have an outstanding I grade. If a graduate program has an extra departmental concentration area of more than 12 hours, a component of the comprehensive examination must include testing over this concentration area, and this testing must be done by faculty in the second department. Upon



completion of all components of a comprehensive examination and notification to the Graduate School, the student is considered to be a candidate for the degree. In general, this status signifies that the individual has completed all or nearly all of the program course work and has entered the formal dissertation (or doctoral essay) stage of the program. Ordinarily, the comprehensive examination should be completed before the dissertation prospectus is defended. In any situation in which a student wishes to appeal the results of his or her comprehensive examination, he or she may appeal, following procedures in the Graduate Student Appeal Process.

**Continuous Enrollment**

Upon admission to candidacy, a doctoral student is expected to maintain continuous enrollment. Minimum enrollment to fulfill this requirement is 3 hours of graduate-level course work for fall, spring, or summer terms, with enrollment for at least two of these three periods being required for any 12-month period. (Note that the minimum enrollment during the summer would be 1 hour if the enrollment is not to satisfy the continuous enrollment policy.)

**Penalty Clause**

The penalty for failure to maintain continuous enrollment, following admission to candidacy, is a fee equal to the tuition charge that would be necessary to have maintained continuous enrollment for the most recent 12-month period.

**Binding and Digital Archiving**

A fee of \$88 for binding and digital storage of doctoral dissertations must be paid at the Office of the Bursar and the receipt presented to the Graduate School office. This fee covers the cost of publishing and digital archiving of the dissertation by UMI Dissertation Publishing, inclusion of the abstract in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, and transportation charges. It is recommended, but not required, that the candidate copyright the dissertation; copyright fee is \$65.

