

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Admission

There are three means of entry to PhD study:

- An applicant who holds a recognized master's degree obtained with high academic standing may be admitted to PhD studies as a regular or provisional student.
- An applicant who has achieved excellent standing at the honours baccalaureate level and who wishes to proceed to doctoral study may enrol, in the first instance, in a master's degree program. If the student achieves a superior academic record and shows a particular aptitude for research, the Board of Graduate Studies, on the recommendation of the department, may authorize transfer to the PhD program without requiring the student to complete the master's degree. The application for transfer must be made between the end of the second semester and the end of the fourth semester.
- At the applicant's request, some departments may choose to recommend to the Board of Graduate Studies direct admission to the PhD program after completion of an honours baccalaureate with high (first-class) standing and demonstration of research promise. Information on direct admission and procedures to be followed is available from the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Minimum Duration

At least five semesters of full-time study must be devoted to the doctoral program following completion of a recognized master's degree. At least seven semesters are required for those who are permitted to proceed from the honours baccalaureate without completing the master's degree. For a student registered part-time, the minimum duration period is ten part-time semesters for those with a recognized master's degree, and 14 part-time semesters for those who are permitted to proceed from the honours baccalaureate without completing the master's degree.

Completion

Normally, a thesis must be formally submitted (see Submission of Thesis (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/thesis/>)) or the program otherwise completed, within twelve semesters (see Program Duration (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/registration/>)). Candidates must understand, however, that announced departmental policy may require completion of the degree requirements within a briefer time period.

Advising

The Advisory Committee will consist of no fewer than three members of the graduate faculty in whose selection the graduate student normally participates. It is recommended that one of the committee members be from a department other than the one in which the student is registered. The committee chair is normally the Advisor of the student's research, and is nominated by the Department Chair. The Advisory Committee must be established and the Advisory Committee Appointment form submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies not later than the 20th class day of the second registered semester.

Courses

The PhD degree is primarily a research degree; for that reason course work commonly comprises a smaller proportion of the student's total program than is the case at the master's level.

Prescribed Courses: Some departments may designate that certain courses be taken as part of the student's background in their discipline. Other courses may be designated because of the close relationship to the research topic. It is such substantive courses that should comprise the prescribed courses in which the candidate must obtain an overall weighted average of at least 'B-' standing (see Establishment of Program (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/student-programs/>) and Prescribed Studies (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/academic-standings/>)). It is highly recommended that students admitted to a doctoral program directly from an honours baccalaureate complete at least 0.50 graduate level course credits.

Additional Courses: In addition to the prescribed courses, it is not unusual for the student to complete ancillary courses supportive of the discipline and special field. The language requirement of some departments may be most readily met by some students by completing one or more courses in the language concerned (see entry for Departments of French Studies and Languages). These courses would not be regarded as prescribed.

Research

In the total program of a doctoral student, it is expected that the major part of the student's time will be devoted to research for their thesis. Students should register for UNIV*7500 Research/Writing in each semester that they are working towards their doctoral thesis and/or are not taking any other courses for which an active section exists. The research proposal should be formulated as early as possible and presented to the Advisory Committee for approval. When it is necessary for the research, or some part of it, to be conducted off-campus, the arrangements are subject to the prior approval of the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies).

Qualifying Examination

As early as possible and in no case later than the final semester of the minimum duration requirement (the 5th semester for a full-time student), the student is required to pass an examination to assess their knowledge of the subject area and related fields. The examination ordinarily will be in several parts (written and/or oral) and should be completed within a two-week period if possible.

The Qualifying Examination is an examination by the academic unit in which the student is enrolled (as distinct from an examination by the Advisory Committee). Upon completing it satisfactorily, the student is deemed to have met the departmental standards and becomes a candidate for the PhD degree. The examining committee, appointed by the Chair or Director of the academic unit concerned, consists of five members:

- The Chair/Director of the academic unit (or designate) or the Chair of the Graduate Program Committee, who acts as Chair of the examination committee *except* when this person is also a member of the advisory committee. In that event, the Chair will designate another member of the regular graduate faculty of the unit to chair the examination;
- Two members, normally of the regular or associated graduate faculty who are not members of the Advisory Committee;

- Two members of the Advisory Committee;
- Normally, at least one of the Qualifying Examination committee members must be from outside the department/discipline in which the student is registered. That person may be a member of the Advisory Committee.

Note

The Chair serves to administer the examination according to the approved format of the program. The Chair does not serve as an additional examiner. In unforeseen circumstances where a committee member is unable to attend, the Chair will attempt to receive questions to ask on behalf of the absent member, to be answered by the student to the satisfaction of the examiners.

As a Qualifying Examination, consideration is to be given not only:

1. to the student's knowledge of the subject matter and ability to integrate the material derived from their studies, but also
2. to the student's ability and promise in research.

The Examination Committee, therefore, will receive from the Advisory Committee a written evaluation of the quality of the student's research performance to date and of the student's potential as a researcher. The Examination Committee will determine the relative importance to be given to these two major components of the Qualifying Examination.

The student is deemed to have passed the Qualifying Examination if not more than one of the examiners votes negatively. An abstention is regarded as a negative vote. The results of the Qualifying Examination will be reported to the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies) through the Chair of the academic unit. The report to the Assistant VP will record the decision as unsatisfactory or satisfactory. The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will register the student in UNIV*7000 Qualifying Examination and record the result of the report. If it is unsatisfactory, the student may be given a second attempt (UNIV*7010 Qualifying Examination (Second Attempt)) at the examination. A student who fails the Qualifying Examination and who is being given a second opportunity to pass the examination will be required to repeat it no later than six months after the failed attempt. Academic units may impose a shorter time limit. A second failure constitutes a recommendation to the Board of Graduate Studies that the student be required to withdraw (see Unsatisfactory Progress (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/unsatisfactory-progress/>) and Appeals of Decisions (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/appeals-decisions/>)).

Thesis

Each candidate shall submit a thesis, written by the candidate, on the research carried out by the candidate on an approved topic. The thesis is expected to be a significant contribution to knowledge in its field and the candidate must indicate in what ways it is a contribution. The thesis must demonstrate mature scholarship and critical judgement on the part of the candidate and it must indicate an ability to express oneself in a satisfactory literary style. Approval of the thesis is taken to imply that it is judged to be sufficiently meritorious to warrant publication in reputable scholarly media in the field.

External Examiner

For each doctoral thesis an External Examiner from outside the University is appointed on behalf of the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies) by the Graduate Program Coordinator, in consultation with

the Advisor, with the purpose of ensuring arm's length evaluation of the PhD. The External Examiner must not have served as Advisor to the student's Advisor or have been a trainee of the Advisor in the last six years, must not have directly collaborated in joint projects or co-authored publications with the Advisor or the student in the last six years, and must not have an existing plan to collaborate with the Advisor or the student. In addition, the External Examiner must not have been either a student or a member of the Regular Graduate Faculty at the University within the past five years. The nomination will be made when the candidate's Advisor declares that the thesis is about to be prepared, normally no later than the beginning of the student's last semester. The External Examiner will submit a written appraisal of the thesis (at least seven days prior to the examination) to the Chair of the Department who will then provide these comments to the candidate and the Advisory Committee. The External Examiner is expected to participate in the final oral examination and to assist in evaluating all aspects of the candidate's performance. An individual may not serve as an External Examiner more than once within the same academic year and may not examine students who share the same primary Advisor until three years have passed.

In specialized fields where there is insufficient disciplinary depth to meet the eligibility criteria without compromising examiner expertise, an exception to the above described time-based restrictions may be considered.

Procedures

The thesis may be submitted at any time of the year, but candidates are advised to allow ample time for revision and examination. A copy of the schedule of deadlines should be obtained from the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies by the candidate no later than the beginning of the semester in which the candidate intends to graduate.

It is understood that, as the thesis is being written, the candidate will be in regular communication with the Advisory Committee. When a draft is completed that the Advisory Committee recommends for examination, the candidate, with the endorsement of the Department Chair, formally requests an examination. A copy of the final draft is then sent to the External Examiner as fair copy of the thesis. Arrangements for the final oral examinations are made. It is understood that as a result of the final oral examination corrections may be necessary to produce a revised final draft of the thesis.

Final Oral Examination

The final oral examination is devoted chiefly, but not necessarily entirely, to the defence of the doctoral thesis. It is a faculty (as distinct from a departmental) examination, for which the arrangements are made by the department on behalf of the faculty in consultation with the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

The examination is conducted by a committee consisting of five members:

- A member of the regular graduate faculty who is not a member of the Advisory Committee appointed to act as Chair by the Department Chair on behalf of the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies);
- The External Examiner;
- A member of the regular graduate faculty, who is not a member of the Advisory Committee, selected by the departmental Graduate Program Committee;
- Two members of the student's Advisory Committee, selected by the Advisory Committee.

Note:

- The Chair serves to administer and ensure the proper conduct of the examination. The Chair is expected to exercise full control over the proceedings and does not participate directly in questioning the candidate during the examination. In unforeseen circumstances where an examiner is unable to attend due to sudden illness, accident, etc., the Chair will attempt to receive questions to ask on behalf of the absent member, to be answered by the student to the satisfaction of the examiners.

The Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies), or a designate, may attend a part or all of the examination. The examination is open to the public but members of the audience may question the candidate only upon invitation of the Chair of the Examination Committee.

The members of the Examination Committee, including the External Examiner, report individually on the final examination and the thesis. The candidate is deemed to have passed if no more than one of the four examiners votes negatively. An abstention is regarded as a negative vote. Concurrently, the members sign the Certificate of Approval, which is submitted with the approved thesis in its final form to the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies) via the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (see Submission of Thesis (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/thesis/>)) where the decision of satisfactory or unsatisfactory will be recorded. If unsatisfactory, the candidate may be given a second attempt. A second unsatisfactory result constitutes a recommendation to the Board of Graduate Studies that the student be required to withdraw (see Unsatisfactory Progress (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/unsatisfactory-progress/>) and Appeals of Decisions (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/appeals-decisions/>)).

Copies of Thesis

One electronic (.pdf) copy of the certified thesis must be submitted to the Atrium (<https://atrium.lib.uoguelph.ca/>) by the thesis submission deadline date shown in the Schedule of Dates in the calendar. Also included in the electronic submission must be a copy of an abstract consisting of no more than 350 words. The Certificate of Approval signed by the External Examiner and the members of the Examination Committee, a copy of the circulation waiver and the copying license must also be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Departments may have a requirement to submit a bound copy of the thesis.

Publication

The Certificate of Approval indicates that the thesis is suitable for publication. The university requires publication of the thesis in the following manner:

One electronic copy of the thesis is uploaded by the National Library of Canada, and the agreement form signed by the candidate authorizing the National Library to publish the thesis and to make copies available for sale on request. The National Library will upload the thesis exactly as it is and will list the thesis in Theses Canada (<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/thesescanada/index-e.html>) as a publication of the National Library.

An abstract of not more than 350 words, prepared by the author and approved by the Advisor and submitted as part of the electronic thesis submission, is also uploaded by the National Library.

The National Library's Theses Non-Exclusive License (<https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/frm-nl59-2-e.pdf>) will be sent to the candidate prior to the final oral examination, to be signed and submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies immediately after the successful completion of the examination.

The candidate, in consultation with the Advisor and the Department Chair, shall have the right to request that circulation and/or copying of the thesis in any form be withheld for up to one year.

Publication in the above manner does not preclude publication of all or part of the thesis in journals or in book form.

Program Regulations

Individual programs may have specified regulations in addition to those described in this calendar. The student is responsible for consulting the program concerning any such regulations. University regulations, as specified herein, take precedence and may not be overruled by any program regulations.