

DOCTORAL DEGREE

Students who aim to receive a doctoral degree must demonstrate that they are proficient in some broad subject of learning and that they can critically evaluate work in this field. Furthermore, they must have shown the ability to work independently in their chosen field and must have made an original contribution of significance to the advancement of knowledge. The technical requirements stated below are minimum requirements for all candidates for the degree; additional conditions set by the departments or schools will be found in the announcements. Any department may make additional regulations consistent with these general rules.

Minimum Requirements

The minimum number of credit hours required for a PhD degree is thirty (30) credits of coursework, all of which must be at the graduate level (5000 and above) and thirty (30) dissertation credits. Selected programs might have obtained permission for an exception from this rule from the Graduate Council. Graduate level coursework taken for a Master's degree may be applied toward a doctoral degree with Program approval.

All courses that count towards the minimum requirements for a doctoral degree must be at the graduate level; and must be graded on the A-F system (not pass/fail) and offered within a Degree Program at the 5000 level or above. With the approval of the Program Director, students enrolled in Graduate Programs at CU Denver|Anschutz can undertake graduate-level courses at other campuses within the University of Colorado system.

The minimum enrollment requirement at CU Denver|Anschutz for doctoral students is six (6) semesters of full-time scholarly work beyond the attainment of a bachelor's degree.

PhD students must register for a minimum of 5 hours (and a maximum of 10 hours) of dissertation credit in each fall and spring semester following successful completion of the comprehensive examination.

Once a student has completed 30 dissertation credits, they need to enroll for only one credit in each fall and spring semester until a successful defense of their dissertation. If defending in the summer semester, they must also register for one dissertation credit.

A grade of "In Progress" (*IP*) will be assigned to all dissertation credits earned until the final approved dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School office. The dissertation advisor determines the final dissertation grade, and then submits "Change of Record" requests to the Graduate School to change all *IP* grades to this final grade.

Registration Requirements

A student (who is not on a leave of absence) and fails to register continuously in a given academic year (fall and spring semesters) for dissertation credit hours after passing the comprehensive examination may, at the discretion of the program director, be required to retake and pass the examination in order to regain status as a student in "good standing."

Students who are unable to register for the minimum dissertation credits because of extenuating personal circumstances should apply for a Leave of Absence.

Leave of Absence

Students who need to leave a CU Denver|Anschutz Graduate Program for a period of time should determine, in consultation with their Program Director, whether a petition for a Leave of Absence is required for up to one (1) year. An approved Leave of Absence pauses the student's academic record and automatically extends the time limit for completing a degree by the equivalent amount of time that the student spends on leave. Requests for leaves of absence that exceed one (1) year may be approved on a case-by-case basis with provided justification. Students who are absent for longer than one (1) year will be considered to have withdrawn from the Program and will be required to reapply for admission and be considered with all other applicants.

Examinations

Each doctoral program will require at least comprehensive and final examinations. Notice of all examinations must be filed with the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to administration.

Preliminary Examination

Each Program is responsible for ensuring that students are qualified for doctoral studies by passing a comprehensive examination or a combined preliminary and comprehensive examination. If a program evaluates students' preparedness with a separate preliminary examination, it must be administered equitably to all students, with the limited exception of programs that require a student to have a master's degree before entering doctoral training; a master's degree may exempt the student from the preliminary examination but cannot exempt the student from the comprehensive examination.

Comprehensive Examination

After completing or registering for all program-required, non-dissertation coursework, and concurrent with applying for admission to candidacy, doctoral students must take a comprehensive examination in their respective discipline. This examination will test a student's mastery of a broad field of knowledge, not merely the formal coursework that has been completed.

The examination committee shall consist of a minimum of three (3) graduate faculty members. A majority of the committee members, including the Chair, must be members of the degree-granting Program. The student's dissertation advisor, if already identified, may not chair the comprehensive examination committee. The student's comprehensive exam committee and the examination schedule must be approved by the Program Director before being submitted to the Graduate School on the Exam Request Form. The Graduate School must receive the Exam Request Form by published deadlines. Individual graduate programs may have additional requirements for registering/scheduling the exam.

At the Program's discretion, the oral portion of the comprehensive examination may be open to all members of the Program, after which the student shall meet with the examination committee in a closed session. This examination must be completed no later than the end of the third (3rd) year for full-time students, unless indicated otherwise in program-specific guidelines and communicated to the Graduate School.

All members of the committee must be present for the examination, either in person or by interactive video. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Graduate School. The primary faculty advisor's participation is determined by the program, if that person is not already part of the committee. In the event of an emergency that prevents one (1) faculty committee member from attending the exam, the exam may

proceed with the faculty members who are able to attend. The student must schedule a separate meeting with the absent faculty member at an alternate time. The examination form must be signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School. If the original Chair must be absent, a replacement must be designated by the program. A majority of the examination committee must vote for one of the following outcomes: a) Pass; b) Conditional Pass; or c) Fail. All members of the committee must sign the exam report form to document their individual vote and the form, with original signatures, must be returned to the Graduate School in hard copy or high quality scan.

If a student receives a Conditional Pass, the examining committee must clearly define the requirements for the student to receive an unconditional passing grade, and these requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the examination committee within four (4) months. The committee Chair is responsible for monitoring the conditions and reporting their outcome to the Graduate School. Failure to satisfy these conditions will result in failure of the examination.

A student who fails the examination is subject to immediate dismissal from the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the program and concurrence of the Dean. At the program's discretion, a student who fails the examination may retake it once. The re-examination will be in the form designated by the committee and must be completed within twelve (12) months. The original examination form noting the failure should be signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School. The student will be required to meet registration requirements and be registered during the term in which the exam is repeated.

Final/Dissertation Examination

After the dissertation has been completed, a final examination on the dissertation and related topics is conducted in two (2) parts: an oral presentation of the dissertation research that is open to the public and a closed examination conducted by the examining committee.

The final examination/defense committee is usually, but not necessarily, the same as the student's Dissertation Advisory Committee. The dissertation defense committee shall consist of a minimum of four (4) Graduate Faculty members, except for professional doctorate programs, which require a minimum of three (3) Graduate Faculty members. A majority of the committee members, including the Chair, must be graduate faculty members of the degree-granting program. With program approval, *the doctoral student's dissertation advisor may chair the examination committee.*

The student's final examination/defense committee and the examination schedule must be approved by the Program Director before being submitted to the Graduate School on the Exam Request Form. The Graduate School must receive the Exam Request form by published deadlines. Graduate Programs may have additional requirements for registering/scheduling the exam. The Graduate School will send announcements of the examination to appropriate faculty members, and the Exam Report/signature form will be sent to the committee chair and other Program staff for completion at the examination.

The student must submit finalized draft copies of the dissertation to the defense committee at least two (2) weeks before the examination date. Programs/committees may require an earlier deadline. All members of the committee must be present for the examination, either in person or by interactive video. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Graduate School. The primary faculty advisor's participation is determined by the Program, if that person is not already part of the committee. In the event of an emergency that prevents one (1) faculty

committee member from attending the exam, the exam can proceed with the faculty members who can attend, and the student will schedule a separate meeting with the absent faculty member and the exam committee chair at an alternate time. If the original committee Chair must be absent, a replacement must be designated by the Program. A majority of the examination committee must vote for one of the following outcomes: a) Pass; b) Conditional Pass; or c) Fail. All members of the committee must sign the exam report form to document their individual vote and the form, with original signatures, must be returned to the Graduate School in hard copy or high quality scan.

If a student receives a Conditional Pass, the examining committee must clearly define the requirements for the student to receive an unconditional passing grade, and these requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the examination committee within sixty (60) days of the defense. Under extenuating circumstances, the graduate Program Directors may petition the Graduate School for additional time. If a student fails the examination, they may not continue in the program unless a time extension is s

Dissertation Requirements

A dissertation is based upon original research and is expected to demonstrate mature scholarship and critical judgment, as well as familiarity with the tools and methods of research. The work must be conducted and presented on a subject approved by the student's dissertation advisor and the Dissertation Advisory Committee. The research must meet any regulatory standards specified by federal, state, and local agencies regarding ethical research, animal use, human subjects, HIPAA and environmental safety.

The dissertation is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree and must meet the formatting criteria outlined in the Formatting Guide for Theses and Dissertations available on the Graduate School website. Substantive contributions to research and writing by other persons should be explicitly acknowledged, either in an Acknowledgements section or in the appropriate chapters. The Graduate School or the Graduate Program conducts the final review of dissertations for proper formatting. The final, formally approved dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School, with the completed Thesis Approval Form, within sixty (60) days of the thesis defense unless an extension is approved by the Graduate School. The thesis must be approved by a majority of the defense committee members, plus the student's advisor, if that person is not part of the defense committee.

Time Limit

Doctoral students, whether enrolled full time or part time, must complete all degree requirements within eight (8) years of matriculation. Students who fail to complete the degree in this eight-year period are subject to termination from the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the program director and concurrence of the Graduate School Dean. For a student to continue beyond the time limit, the Program Director must petition the Dean for an extension and include:

1. Reasons why the program faculty believes the student should be allowed to continue in the program and,
2. An anticipated timeline for completion of the degree. Extensions for time to degree are normally issued for one year or less, but under rare circumstances, a second extension may be granted. The "Extension of Time Limit" form is posted on the Graduate School website. Approved "Leaves of Absence" automatically extend the time limit for

earning a degree by the equivalent amount of time that the student is on leave.