Academic Information

General Requirements
To earn a PhD at Washington University, a student must complete 72 semester hours, maintain satisfactory academic progress, pass certain examinations, fulfill residence and teaching requirements, write, defend, and submit a dissertation, and file an Intent to Graduate form on WebSTAC (https://acadinfo.wustl.edu).

Semester Hours
Programs vary greatly in distributing their students’ semester hours between those earned by taking courses and those earned by doing research, but the completed semester hours must total 72. Full-time students register for 9-12 hours per semester and thus finish this requirement in their first three to four years of graduate study. Thereafter, full-time student status can be maintained by registering for doctoral continuing student status. Part-time student status can be maintained by registering for nonresident student status.

Courses
To count toward the 72-hour requirement, courses must be offered at the graduate level, taken for a grade, and approved in advance by the student’s adviser and program as eligible to count toward the student's degree. Depending on the program, graduate-level work begins with courses numbered in the 400s or 500s. Audited courses and courses taken pass/fail cannot be counted toward the degree and may not be eligible for tuition remission. Students should consult their advisers regarding these options.

When certain conditions apply, graduate students may be permitted to register for Arts & Sciences courses numbered below 400, but they may not ordinarily be counted for credit toward a graduate degree, and they are not covered by tuition scholarships unless taken in addition to 9 hours at the graduate level or approved by the Dean of the Graduate School or his designee. University College offers undergraduate and graduate courses in the evenings during the academic year and both by day and at night during the summer. Full-time students in the Graduate School who wish to take graduate courses in University College or Summer School for credit toward their degree programs must obtain the approval both of their academic adviser and of the Dean of the Graduate School. Tuition remission may be available for such approved course work.

Registration
Students newly admitted to Graduate Arts & Sciences receive from the University Registrar information on creating a WUSTL Key that is used to register online via WebSTAC during open registration periods. All registrations require online approval by the student's faculty adviser and are monitored by the Graduate School.

Grades
Credit-conferring grades for graduate students in Arts & Sciences are these: A, outstanding; B, good; C, conditional (an A, B or C grade may be modified by a plus or minus); S, satisfactory; and U, unsatisfactory (used almost exclusively for semester hours earned by doing research). Other grades are F, failing; N, not submitted yet; X, final examination missed; and I, incomplete. The mark of I becomes a permanent part of the student's record after the lapse of one calendar year unless the program in which the mark was assigned requests an extension of time.

Arts & Sciences uses a 4-point scale for calculating grade point averages, with $A = 4$, $B = 3$, and $C = 2$. A plus adds .3 to the value of a grade, whereas a minus subtracts .3 from the value of a grade.

Retaking a Course
Graduate students may be allowed to retake a course with prior permission from their department or program. The department can refuse the student's request. If permission to retake a course is granted, both registrations will show on the transcript. The grade for the first enrollment will always be replaced by the symbol R, whether or not it is lower than or equal to the original grade. The grade for the second enrollment will be used to calculate the GPA. The grade for the first enrollment will not be replaced with an R until the second enrollment is completed and its grade has posted. A student who retakes a course without prior permission might not receive permission retroactively and might not receive credit for the second enrollment. No student may use the retake option to replace a grade received as a sanction for violation of the Academic Integrity Policy. The R option may be invoked only once per course, and the original grade option must be retained.

Transferred Credits
For PhD students, the maximum credit ordinarily transferable is one full year of study (24 semester hours). Applications to transfer credit are not ordinarily approved, however, until one full year has been completed at Washington University. Academic credits counted toward requirements for the bachelor's degree are ordinarily not transferable toward the doctoral degree. Likewise, academic credits counted toward requirements for any completed graduate degree are ordinarily not transferable toward a subsequent degree of equivalent or lower level.

Satisfactory Academic Progress
Satisfactory academic progress for students in PhD programs monitored by the Graduate School as well as the degree program. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress
Qualifying Examinations
Progress toward the PhD is contingent upon passing examinations variously called preliminary, qualifying, general, comprehensive, or major field exams. The qualifying process varies according to the program. In some programs, it consists of a series of incremental, sequential, and cumulative exams over a considerable time. In others, the exams are held in a relatively short period. Exams may be taken orally or in writing; they may be replaced by one or more papers. The program, which determines the form these required examinations take, is responsible for notifying the Graduate School of the student's successful completion of them.

Residence Requirements
The residence requirements for the PhD are:
1. that each student must earn at least 48 semester hours of the required 72 at Washington University and
2. that each student must spend at least one academic year registered for full-time credits (9-12 in the fall followed by 9-12 in the spring) at Washington University.

Any exceptions to these requirements must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. All PhD programs prefer that students remain full-time and in residence throughout their work toward the degree.

Teaching Requirement
Graduate students must meet department and Graduate School-wide teaching requirements. PhD students must demonstrate competency in teaching at the basic level and at the advanced level. For more information, students should consult their Director of Graduate Studies for discipline-specific guidelines on fulfilling the requirements.

The Dissertation
Each candidate, as evidence of mastery of a specific field of knowledge and capacity for original, scholarly work, must complete a dissertation. The subject must be approved by a Research Advisory Committee consisting of at least three tenured or tenure-track faculty members. This committee is ordinarily led by the student's major adviser and must be approved by the Graduate School.

A Title, Scope, and Procedure Form for the dissertation must be signed by the committee members and by the program Chair. It must be submitted to the Graduate School at least six months before the degree is expected to be conferred or before beginning the fifth year of full-time enrollment, whichever is earlier.

A Doctoral Dissertation Guide, which gives instructions regarding the format of the dissertation, is available on the Graduate School's Policies and Guides page (http://graduateschool.wustl.edu/policies-and-guides); it should be read carefully at every stage of a student's dissertation preparation. The Graduate School requires each student to make the full text of the dissertation available to the committee members for their review at least one week before the defense. Most degree programs require two or more weeks for the review period; students should check with their faculty.

Dissertation Defense
Approval of the dissertation by the Research Advisory Committee is necessary to bring it to the defense. The
committee before which the student is examined consists of at least five members, who normally meet two independent criteria:

1. Four of the five must be tenured or tenure-track Washington University faculty; one of these four may be a member of the emeritus faculty. The fifth member must have a doctoral degree and an active research program, whether at Washington University, at another university, in government, or in industry.

2. Three of the five normally come from the student’s degree program; at least one of the five must not.

All committees must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences or by his or her designee, regardless of whether they meet the normal criteria.

The committee is appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School upon the request of the degree program. The student is responsible for making the full text of the dissertation accessible to his or her committee members for their review in advance of the defense. Faculty and graduate students who are interested in the subject of the dissertation are normally welcome to attend all or part of the defense but may ask questions only at the discretion of the committee members. Though there is some variation among degree programs, the defense ordinarily focuses on the dissertation itself and its relation to the student’s field of expertise.

Dissertation Submission

After the defense, the student must submit an electronic copy of the dissertation online to the Graduate School. The submission website requires students to choose among publishing and copyrighting services offered by ProQuest UMI, but the university permits students to make whichever choices they prefer. Students are asked to submit the Survey of Earned Doctorates separately. The degree program is responsible for delivering the final approval form, signed by the committee members at the defense and then by the program chair or director, to the Graduate School. Students who defend their dissertations successfully have not completed their PhD requirements; they finish earning the degree only when their dissertation submission has been accepted by the Graduate School.

Graduation Information

Students are responsible for filing an Intent to Graduate form in order to have each earned degree conferred. The Intent to Graduate is available online through WebSTAC. Deadlines for filing an Intent to Graduate are listed on the Graduate School’s website. No degree will be awarded if this form has not been filed. Students who do not complete their degree requirements by their intended graduation date must re-file for the next graduation date.

Specific Circumstances

Changes in Program of Study

Students are usually admitted to the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences to study toward specific degrees. Therefore, a change in the degree objective (e.g., from AM to PhD) is subject to the approval of the student's program and of the Graduate School. A request for a change in the subject of study (e.g., from economics to history) requires the approval of both programs concerned as well as that of the Graduate School. Students may be required to fill out a new application for admission before making such changes, but they will not be charged a second application fee.

Student Grievance Procedures

From time to time, students may feel that they have legitimate complaints regarding academic matters or an interaction with a faculty member. It is important that students and faculty have a common understanding of how such complaints may be expressed and resolved. Students with complaints regarding academic matters should initially seek resolution from their faculty adviser, then from their Director of Graduate Studies, and finally the chair of their degree program. Complaints which remain unresolved may be addressed to any of the deans in their School. The final court of appeal for all graduate students in Arts & Sciences is the Dean of the Graduate School.

All complaints regarding academic and professional integrity should be addressed to an Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences.

Washington University policies state that members of the university community can expect to be free from discrimination and harassment. Students, faculty, staff, and outside organizations working on campus are required to abide by specific policies prohibiting harassment.

An allegation of sexual discrimination may be appealed to the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, who will determine whether to convene the Title IX Grievance Committee to hear the case. Visit http://hr.wustl.edu/policies/Pages/SexualHarassment.aspx for more information.

Leaves of Absence

Students who wish to suspend their graduate study should apply for a leave of absence. A student’s application for a leave of absence must be endorsed by the degree program and then approved by the Graduate School.

Such a leave may be personal or medical. In the case of a medical leave the student must present authorization from Student Health Services at the beginning and again at the end of the leave. At the end of any leave of absence, a student is reinstated into the Graduate School under the conditions prevailing at the time the leave was granted. Being on leave suspends student status and financial support from the
are generally not subject to reduction as they represent agreed-upon financial aid; however, a student whose absences interfere with academic responsibilities may have his or her assistantship or stipend reduced or eliminated.) Decisions regarding the grant of time off will not be based upon the existence of or source(s) of funding. The Program Director or Department Chair should address disagreements between supervisors and students over absences. If the Director cannot resolve the dispute, the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, or his/her designee, will serve as the final arbiter.

Students wishing to withdraw from their program must give notice in writing by filling out the Graduate School's Withdrawal form. This form must include the date when the withdrawal should be considered effective. Without such information, there may be serious financial repercussions for the student and/or the university.

**Dismissals**

A program may wish to dismiss a student for a number of reasons: willful misrepresentation to gain admission to graduate study, breaches of academic integrity, academic failure, or behavior destructive of the welfare of the academic community. Dismissals are recommended by the degree program and are not final until approved by the Graduate School. Any student who believes his or her dismissal was undeserved may appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School, who may accept or decline the program’s recommendation to dismiss the student.

**Time Off for Graduate Students Who Are Engaged in Research**

The Graduate Council approved the following policy in 2002: Students working toward Arts & Sciences graduate degrees are entitled to all official university holidays. (To the extent that responsibilities essential to the maintenance of research, such as replenishing liquid nitrogen stocks or feeding laboratory animals, must be done on university holidays, graduate students may be required to share in this responsibility.) Supervisors should approve other planned absences, and unplanned absences should be reported to them. "Supervisors" in the graduate years are Program Directors, and Research Rotation or Dissertation Advisors, as appropriate. The total amount of excused absence should be consistent with that of academic employees in the same area. (Assistantship or stipend payments are generally not subject to reduction as they represent agreed-upon financial aid; however, a student whose absences interfere with academic responsibilities may have his or her assistantship or stipend reduced or eliminated.) Decisions regarding the granting of time off will not be based upon the existence of or source(s) of funding. The Program Director or Department Chair should address disagreements between supervisors and students over absences. If the Director cannot resolve the dispute, the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, or his/her designee, will serve as the final arbiter.

**Interdisciplinarity**

**Interdisciplinary Course Work**

PhD students can discuss with their advisers individual courses available outside their school that may advance their research or professional goals. A university tuition agreement signed by all the deans of the university’s graduate and professional schools fosters interdisciplinary study across the schools and allows enrollment in classes outside the student’s home school. Many courses, undergraduate as well as graduate, are available for graduate student enrollment subject to eligibility guidelines:

- Students must be registered full time in graduate degree programs and have the approval of their faculty adviser or administrative officer to take a course outside their home school.
- Courses will be open to students outside the discipline only if the students have met the required prerequisites, have the approval from their department, and the course instructor agrees to admit such students.
- Finally, courses in the evening divisions, including University College and its Summer School, are not part of this agreement, and courses requiring individualized instruction and/or additional fees (such as independent studies or individual music lessons) are also excluded.

**Joint and Dual Degree Programs**

The university has set up numerous programs permitting students to earn two graduate and/or professional degrees at the same time. One of these programs includes a PhD degree from Arts & Sciences:

*Medical Scientist Training Program (MD/PhD in various disciplines)*

The Graduate School uses the term "joint degree" to refer to programs in which one or more semester hours are counted toward both degrees. The Graduate School uses the term "dual degree" to refer to programs in which no semester hours are counted toward both degrees. Interested students must apply to and be admitted by each degree program separately, but ideally all applications should be made before beginning graduate or professional study. Joint and dual degrees are ordinarily conferred simultaneously, after all the requirements for both degrees have been met.

Students wishing to pursue joint or dual degrees other than these may be permitted to do so, but such requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Admission to an individualized joint degree program between two Arts & Sciences disciplines on the Danforth Campus must be recommended by the Directors of Graduate Studies for both disciplines and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Admission to an individualized joint degree program involving another school of the university must be recommended by the
Directors of Graduate Studies for both disciplines and approved by the deans of both schools. Recommendations should address a variety of academic and administrative concerns, including the timeline for completion of both degrees and responsibility for funding the student and remitting the tuition. Students should not undertake study toward an individualized joint degree program until it has been fully approved.

**Graduate Certificates**

The certificates offered to full-time students in the Graduate School are all interdisciplinary in nature:

- American Culture Studies
- Film and Media Studies
- Language Instruction
- Latin American Studies
- Translation Studies
- Urban Studies
- Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Graduate certificates are open to students in PhD programs at Washington University. They require 15 semester hours, 6 of which should also be counted toward the requirement of 72 semester hours for the PhD. Interested students must fill out an application for admission to a certificate program and receive the approval of their degree program's chair, the certificate program's director, and the dean of the Graduate School. The application form is posted on the Graduate School's website (http://graduateschool.wustl.edu/prospective_students/application-instructions). Tuition remission is usually available for the additional semester hours required to complete a certificate program; however, earning a certificate does not increase a student's expected time to degree or amount of stipend support. No student will be admitted to, given tuition remission for, or awarded more than one graduate certificate.