

Doctoral Program Policies

PhD Program

PhD Program Policies

The administration of the following policies and university-wide components will be maintained under the Vice Provost for Graduate Education as specified on the University PhD Policies & Requirements page of this *Bulletin*:

- Academic and Professional Integrity Policy for PhD Students
- Involuntary Leave of Absence
- Child Day Care Subsidy
- Interdisciplinary Courses
- Minimum Stipend Award
- New Child Leave

Residency Policy

The PhD program at Olin Business School is full-time and residential. We strive to create a collaborative and engaging academic community. All course work is taught in-person and on campus. During the academic year (fall and spring semesters), PhD students are expected to be physically present on campus and participate fully in activities. Students may travel or take personal time during their winter or summer breaks. Any absence from campus lasting longer than two weeks and occurring during the regular academic year must be first approved by the faculty coordinator in the area and then approved by the Director of Doctoral Programs. Requests should be submitted in advance and in writing to the program office.

Degree Requirements

To earn a PhD degree in Olin Business School, students must meet the following general requirements:

- 36 graduate credit units (This is the minimum threshold. Students in some areas, including Finance and Accounting, may need to exceed the minimum to ensure that all required courses have been taken. Students should consult with their faculty advisor for a complete list of required courses.)
- Completion of presentation skills seminar and additional communication course
- Completion of teaching requirements
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress
- Pass required milestones, including the area qualifying exam and second-year paper
- Thesis proposal and oral defense of the thesis proposal during the fourth year
- Dissertation and oral defense of the dissertation

The following rules apply:

- Students are expected to earn a “B” or higher in all 500-level PhD courses. Students who receive lower grades, including but not limited to falling below a 3.0 cumulative GPA will be reviewed by the Committee and may be placed on academic probation.
- Up to 12 units of credits earned in graduate work at a previously attended university may be transferred.
- Transfer of credit is considered only after two years of course work at Olin and requires approval of the area’s representative on the Doctoral Programs Advisory Committee. A syllabus and course work will be requested to review transfer potential.
- Students must complete all required core courses unless they receive written approval to waive such a course. A waiver does not reduce the number of credits that a student must complete to earn the doctoral degree. Waivers are intended to allow students to avoid redundant study of subjects already mastered and to advance in other subject areas.
- Full-time students register for 9 to 12 credit units per semester, completing the 36-credit requirement in their first two years of graduate study. Thereafter, students can maintain full-time student status by registering for continuing doctoral student status at the beginning of each semester until they have defended their dissertation and completed all other requirements for the doctoral degree.
- Students who fail to register for two consecutive semesters will be considered candidates for dismissal.
- Only graduate-level courses that a doctoral student takes for a grade are counted toward the student’s 36-credit program requirement. In addition, all courses must be approved in advance by the student’s advisor and the doctoral program as eligible to be counted toward the student’s degree. Audited courses and courses taken pass/fail (or credit/no credit) are not counted toward the doctoral degree and may not be eligible for tuition remission.

Students should consult their advisors regarding these options. Student academic performance is evaluated at the end of each semester and must be maintained at a level that is consistent with the standards established by Olin Business School.

PhD Advisor Policy

PhD students are required to be supervised by a principal faculty member throughout their enrollment. By default, the area coordinator serves in this capacity and supervises students during the first 2 years. In exceptional circumstances, second-year students may be supervised by an alternate faculty member in their academic area. Alternative arrangements must be reported to the program office. By the beginning of year three, students must report their principal faculty advisor to their area faculty coordinator and the doctoral programs office. At the end of each semester, the principal advisor will submit a written evaluation of progress to be included in each student’s academic record.

Faculty choose whether or not they will supervise or advise students. If a student cannot identify a faculty member from their academic area willing to supervise them by year two or serve as their advisor by year two, they are not considered to be making satisfactory academic progress.

Policy on Probation and Dismissal for Academic Reasons

This policy gives guidelines and procedures for probation and dismissal because of poor academic performance (Academic Dismissal) for students enrolled in the Olin PhD program. Academic Dismissal is distinct from withdrawal (initiated by the student), deactivation of a student's record by a failure to register, and dismissal or other sanctions associated with Academic and Professional Integrity Policy or the University Student Judicial Code.

Olin PhD students must also maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined below.

Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress may result in immediate dismissal or in academic probation for the ensuing year. Most financial awards, and all federally funded awards, are contingent on the student's maintaining satisfactory academic progress.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

The following are the minimum standards of satisfactory academic progress for PhD students:

- Students are expected to proceed at a pace appropriate to enable them to finish within the required time limit. By the end of the fourth year of full-time graduate study, students are expected to have completed all PhD requirements except the dissertation.
- Students are expected to maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. The Doctoral Programs Committee will review students who have a grade point average lower than 3.0 or receive three or more 'B-' grades. Students may be placed on academic probation or be dismissed based on the Committee's review.
- Only course work receiving a "B" or higher is counted toward the 36-credit requirement.
- During any semester, students may not carry more than 9 credit units for which a grade of "I" (incomplete), "X" (final examination missed), or "N" (not submitted yet) is recorded.
- Grades of "I" (incomplete) or "N" (not submitted) must be cleared within one-semester term from the end of the course. Registration may be restricted until grades are recorded for prior semesters.
- Faculty supervision is required in the PhD program. Starting in year two, students must have a faculty member in their area willing to supervise them. For second-year students, most often, this would be the area faculty coordinator. If a student cannot identify a faculty member in their academic area willing to supervise them in year two or to serve as their advisor by year three, they will not be considered to be making satisfactory academic progress.

- After 4 years of full-time graduate study, doctoral students who cannot identify three faculty members who are willing to serve on their Research Advisory Committee are not considered to be making satisfactory academic progress.

Satisfactory Academic Progress for Title IV Federal Financial Aid

The minimum GPA requirements needed to maintain eligibility for Satisfactory Academic Progress are dictated by your specific program of study. In each case, per the requirements of 34 C.F.R. 668.34(a) (4)(ii), the program requires a minimum of a C average to maintain eligibility for aid, but any specific program may have a higher minimum GPA for federal Satisfactory Academic Progress. Olin Business School requires a 3.0 minimum GPA.

Students in doctoral programs have **seven calendar years**, starting on the date of their first registration in a graduate degree program at Washington University, to complete the degree requirements. Extension of the period of doctoral study may be granted on an annual basis if circumstances warrant.

To request an extension, Olin PhD students must submit an application to the Doctoral Programs Office.

Guidelines for Academic Probation and Dismissal

Except for circumstances justifying immediate dismissal, a student cannot be dismissed on the basis of academic performance without the opportunity to return to good standing during an identified period of probation. The purpose of probation is to: (1) explicitly warn the student of their status; (2) provide the student with clear guidelines of the performance that will be necessary to return to good standing; and (3) provide the student with reasonable time to meet these expectations. To meet these objectives, probation normally should be designated for a minimum of three months. When the probation criteria involve course work, then the probation period would normally correspond to the semester duration. A student on probation must receive a detailed letter from the program office, stating the reasons for the probation and explicitly identifying the steps necessary for the student to return to good standing by the end of the probation period.

At the end of a first probation, the student may be: (1) returned to good standing; (2) placed on a second consecutive probation, which generally will be for a full semester; or (3) dismissed from the program. A second consecutive probation must be accompanied by a new letter identifying the steps required to return to good standing. While the purpose of the probationary period is to provide the student with time to improve, the decision of the program at the end of a probationary period could involve immediate notification of dismissal.

At the end of a second continuous probation, the student will be either returned to good standing or dismissed. A third probation will be allowed only if it is not continuous. A fourth probation will not be permitted. A student whose performance would result in a fourth probation will be dismissed immediately. A leave of absence cannot be used by a student to delay or nullify the consequences of a third consecutive or fourth probation.

Each area must have a standard procedure to manage decisions regarding placement on probation, removal from probation, recommendations for dismissal after a probationary period, and recommendations for immediate dismissal due to extreme underperformance. The procedure for managing such decisions must be applied to all students in the program and cannot be managed solely by an individual faculty member, including the student's research mentor, though the input provided by the research mentor may play a key role in the process.

Stipend support should continue during a probationary period unless the student is failing to meet basic expectations (i.e. If a program or school decides to suspend stipend support under these circumstances, the student must be given a minimum of two weeks' notice prior to withholding such support). If the student's performance improves and he/she begins meeting the basic expectations of the position, stipend support should resume at that time. During all probationary semesters, tuition remission will remain as offered at initial enrollment.

Notification Procedures for Academic Probation

1. The explanation of academic performance issues leading to probation should be specific (low GPA, failed exam, etc.) and contain a clear statement of what must be done within a specified period of time in order for the student to return to good standing. This includes probation associated with faculty judgments of research potential, timely progress toward the degree, teaching performance or professional responsibilities. The expectations will be consistent with those held for all students in the program. They must be communicated in writing, accompanied by the opportunity to meet with the designated departmental faculty representatives for a clarifying discussion.
2. If the student does satisfactorily meet the requirements of the probation, a written notice of reinstatement, including the date that the student has returned to good standing, will be provided to the student. Students may be reinstated before the end of the probation period if they have met the requirements for reinstatement.
3. Copies of any letter or e-mail to the student, or summary notes of discussions with the student regarding the student's placement on probation should be placed in the student's file, which the student has the right to review.

Notification Procedures for Academic Dismissal

1. Students who do not meet the requirements of the probation by the specified time and the program recommends dismissal, the faculty coordinator of the student's program will send a request for dismissal and a draft of the dismissal letter to the Director of Doctoral Programs, along with copies of all previous communications and/or warnings. The draft dismissal letter will include the grounds for dismissal, the effective date of dismissal and advice to the student that voluntary withdrawal from the program is an option.
2. If the student is an international student on a visa, the Doctoral programs office will consult with the Office of International Students and Scholars prior to finalizing the dismissal letter. It is often advisable for an international student to withdraw ahead of a dismissal to avoid an adverse impact on future entry to the United States.

Appeal Procedures

In cases of probation or dismissal, a student may appeal within 14 calendar days to the department chair or another designated faculty representative, consistent with Department or Program procedures.

Probation

Appeals of probation end with the Chair of the department or program. In cases where there is a perceived conflict of interest with the Chair, another member of the department can be designated to address the appeal process for probation or dismissal.

Dismissal

For academic dismissal decisions, an Olin PhD student may submit a final appeal of his/her dismissal to the Director of Doctoral Programs. Appeal requests must be initiated at the appropriate level within 14 calendar days of formal notification of probation or dismissal. Responses to appeals generally occur within the next 14 calendar days after the appeal is requested.

Stipend support is discontinued at the time the student is notified of dismissal. The student is not eligible to receive stipend support during an appeal of dismissal; however, if the appeal is upheld, the student is eligible for stipend support covering the period of the dismissal appeal process. Students who have chosen to withdraw from their program or department (as opposed to taking an authorized leave) cannot appeal or seek reconsideration of this decision.

Graduate Student Code of Professional Conduct

Olin PhD students are expected to behave in accordance with the school's code of conduct for all of its graduate programs, which is described below.

Overview

The Code of Professional Conduct (“the Code”) is meant to encourage and clarify appropriate classroom, interpersonal, and extra-curricular etiquette that is expected of each individual by their peers, the faculty, and the institution. It is also intended to help describe the overall environment of excellence and professionalism that all members of the Olin community seek to establish and to continually enhance. It is the responsibility of each member of the Olin community to uphold the spirit, as well as the principles of the Code of Professional Conduct.

Expectations: Professional Standards of Conduct

In keeping with these shared expectations, Olin graduate students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a professional manner. Professional behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following items:

In the Classroom

- **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend each class session. Students who must miss a session for any reason should make every effort to notify the instructor prior to the class meeting. Informing faculty or seeking ex post permission after missing a class or portion of a class is unacceptable behavior and is subject to academic sanctions. Students should never register for courses scheduled in conflict with one another.
- **Punctuality:** Students are expected to arrive and be seated prior to the start of each class session.
- **Behavior:** Classroom interaction will be conducted in a spirited manner, but always while displaying professional courtesy and personal respect.
- **Preparation:** Students are expected to complete the readings and other assignments prior to each class session and be prepared to actively participate in class discussion.
- **Distractions:**
 1. *Exiting and Entering:* Students are expected to remain in the classroom for the duration of the class session unless an urgent need arises or prior arrangements have been made with the professor
 2. *Laptop, Tablet, and Other Electronic Device Usage:* Students are expected to use laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices only with the instructor’s consent and for activities directly related to the class session. Accessing e-mail or the internet during class is not permitted, as this can be distracting for peers and faculty.
 3. *Smart/Mobile Phone Usage:* Students are expected to keep their mobile phones turned off or have them set on silent/vibrate during class. Answering phones while class is in session is not permitted.
 4. Other distractions will be specifically identified by individual instructors, such as eating in the classroom.

Outside the Classroom

- Students are expected to conduct themselves responsibly and professionally when dealing with all members of the Olin and Washington University communities as well as in the career search process, at club activities, networking events, job interviews, and other functions where they are representing the Olin community.
- **Facilities:** Students are expected to help maintain the appearance and the functionality of the building, classrooms, and other facilities.
- Students are expected to abide by the University Student Conduct Code of Washington University in St. Louis.

Grading

- **A: Outstanding.** The quality of work is distinctly superior.
- **B: Good.** Performance is satisfactory and represents the academic attainment in the course expected of promising candidates for a graduate degree. Course work receiving a grade of “B-” or below is not counted toward the degree.
- **C: Conditional/unsatisfactory.** Poor quality of performance that falls short of that regarded as entirely satisfactory at the graduate level. Units of credit with a grade of “C” must be matched by an equivalent number of credits with a grade of “A.” Course work receiving a grade of “C” is not counted toward the degree.
- **F: Fail.** The student will be placed on academic probation. Course work receiving a grade of “F” is not counted toward the degree.
- **N/I: Incomplete.** A grade of “N” is recorded when otherwise satisfactory work in a course or seminar is not completed. After twelve months, an unchanged “N” becomes a permanent part of the student’s transcript and may not be changed to another grade. Students with more than nine units of “N” or no grades reported are not permitted to register for courses.

All areas require passing grades for course work.

Mentored Teaching/Research Experience

Graduate students participating in mentored teaching experiences are highly valued members of the Washington University instructional team. The mentored teaching experience varies widely across disciplines. They may include assisting faculty in the preparation, instruction, and grading of an undergraduate course; tutorial responsibilities; monitoring the laboratory segment of an undergraduate course; and, in some instances, full course responsibility. **For all mentored teaching experience, excluding full course responsibility, students register for the Mentored Teaching/Research Assistance course (MGT 6000 Mentored Teaching/Research Experience). It is required that students in years two through five participate in either a mentored teaching or mentored research experience each semester. Students on the academic job market in their fifth year may request a one-semester exemption subject to area approval. A written request must be submitted to the program office by April 30 of the fourth year.**

In order to focus on course work and acclimate to the program, first-year students do not participate in mentored teaching experiences and are prohibited from accepting any other teaching or research assignments, including voluntary or paid positions.

Overview

Olin Business School requires PhD students to complete the following communication and pedagogical training:

Students must attend TA orientation held by the Center for Teaching and Learning prior to the beginning of the second year of the doctoral program. Orientation is typically held once a year in August.

1. **Formal Instructional/Teaching Experience:** Participate in a teaching preparation seminar, instructional workshop, internship, or course that addresses course design and classroom facilitation.
2. **Formal Communication Experience:** Participate in at least one communication seminar, instructional workshop, or course that addresses communication and presentation skills and includes classroom instruction to an undergraduate or master's level audience.
3. **Deliver Annual Presentation:** Prepare and deliver annual presentations to the doctoral program faculty in the student's chosen field of study (e.g., accounting, business economics, finance, marketing, organizational behavior, operations, and manufacturing management, or strategy) beginning in the second year of the doctoral program.
4. **Present Working Paper:** Present a working paper at a conference, job-market seminar, or consortium prior to graduation.

Once the teaching requirement has been fulfilled, the student must file a Teaching Requirement Form with the department doctoral programs office. Please contact the Doctoral Programs Office for the form.

Assignment to Faculty for Mentored Teaching/Research Experience

Prior to the fall semester, students years 2-5 will be asked to submit their top three choices for assignment to faculty for mentored teaching/research experience. This information will be collected by the Doctoral Programs Office and sent to the area faculty coordinator who will make assignments. The rules for making the allocations are as follows: (1) Each student receives his/her top choice of faculty, unless two or more students bid for the same faculty, in which case the faculty member gets to choose; (2) no faculty member is assigned more than one student until every faculty member has one student; (3) if a student cannot be assigned his/her first choice (because more than one student bid for that faculty), then they should be given their second choice and so on. Assignments will last for the entirety of the academic year. Assignment can be either teaching or research at the discretion of the faculty, taking into account the needs of the student. Each academic area should determine the guidelines for mentored teaching and research assistance work. A description of the mentored experience should be provided by the faculty to the student and the program office prior to the start of the semester.

Curriculum: Typical Chronology of the PhD Program*

Year One

- Core foundation course work
- Microeconomics comprehensive preliminary exam, if required
- by the department (offered in June)
- Seminars/workshops in the field of study
- Summer paper, if required by the department

Year Two

- Courses and individual study in major field (as recommended by the advisor)
- Completion of two semesters of Mentored Teaching/Research Assistance
- Seminars/workshops in major field
- Presentation of one research paper
- Completion of the Qualifying Field Exam requirement

Year Three

- Completion of two semesters of Mentored Teaching/Research Assistance
- Completion of remaining field requirement
- Presentation of one research paper
- Seminar in presentation skills (B53-660)
- Additional communication course
- Begin preparation of dissertation proposal (spring semester)

Note: Field requirements are expected to be completed within the first 36 months of the program.

Year Four

- Completion of two semesters of Mentored Teaching/Research Assistance
- Oral defense of dissertation proposal
- Submission of dissertation title, scope, and procedures
- Begin plans for job search

Year Five

- Completion of two semesters of Mentored Teaching/Research Assistance
- Oral defense of dissertation
- Enter job market

* Each area has specific requirements that can be found online.

Preliminary Exam in Microeconomic Theory

Some areas require that students take the preliminary exam in economics at the end of the first year. Each area that requires the exam sets the definition of a passing grade.

Olin PhD students are required to take a five-hour microeconomics theory examination concentrating on applications of the theory, offered in late June after the first year of the program. Students are expected to stay in residence after the end of spring-semester classes to study for this exam.

The grading scale for the microeconomics exam is as follows: PhD pass, borderline pass, MA pass, and fail. The exams are graded anonymously by a committee consisting of the first-year instructors, which issues one grade for each student exam. In the event that it cannot make a positive decision based solely on a student's performance on the examination, the Committee will also consider the student's first-year course grades. The Committee usually meets to evaluate student performance on the exams by mid-July.

The area faculty, in consultation with the PhD Programs Office, determines whether the student will be allowed to continue in the program. The normal expectation of areas that require the economics prelim exam is that a "PhD Pass" grade is required for a student to maintain good student status. Students who fail the prelims are placed on academic probation and re-evaluated based on their summer paper submission and academic performance in the first year.

First-Year Paper

Some areas require a first-year or "summer" paper to expose the student to the full range of activities required to successfully conduct independent research. This paper is evaluated by area committee representatives during the first two semesters of the second year, and the evaluation is provided to the student.

Second-Year Paper

Students must produce a satisfactory research paper before taking the major qualifying exam and are expected to begin the paper no later than one year after entering the PhD program.

The second-year paper is presented to area faculty for its evaluation, usually during a faculty brown-bag or departmental seminar. The student, in consultation with their PhD advisor, selects a paper review committee consisting of two full-time faculty members. Presentation deadlines vary by area.

Although the research paper is expected to have all of the elements of a publishable paper, the overall quality need not be at a level sufficient to merit publication. For example, the typical empirical paper should have all of the elements of a typical empirical article appearing in leading journals in the student's area. Similarly, a theoretical paper should have a sufficiently broad range of development to warrant comparison with similar work published in the area.

Failure to produce a satisfactory paper, as determined by the review committee, will constitute unsatisfactory performance and will result in a review of the student's academic performance by the Doctoral Program Committee.

Qualifying Field Examination (Comprehensive Exam)

Doctoral students must take a written qualifying examination to demonstrate their comprehensive knowledge in their major field within three years of their entry into the program. The examination may be taken before the student has completed all course work; however, students typically take this examination immediately after completing foundation course work.

Students make arrangements for taking this examination with their PhD advisor. Students who fail the examination may arrange to retake it. Only in unusual cases, and on written petition to the Olin Doctoral Programs Committee, can a student take the examination more than twice. If such approval is not granted, a student who has twice failed the examination will be terminated from the program.

These examinations are under departmental control. The responsible department provides notification of the test result to both the Doctoral Programs Office and the student.

Annual Progress Report

In order to prepare an annual assessment of student progress, the doctoral program requires that students submit the following, to both their area advisor and the program office: a current CV, a grade summary, and all research projects conducted during the year. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in academic probation or suspension from the program.

Registration Information Drop/Add and Withdrawal

Students may drop or add a course to their registration during specified periods at the beginning of each term. The signature of a faculty member is not necessary to add or drop a class.

The following is the policy for dropping or withdrawing from a course once it has started:

- Within the first two weeks of a "mini" semester course or the first four weeks of a semester-long course, a student can drop the course by completing the online Drop/Add procedure. Courses dropped during these time periods will not appear on the student's transcript.
- In the third or fourth week of a "mini" semester course or the fifth week through the eighth week of a semester-long course, a student can withdraw from the course by completing the online Withdraw procedure. However, such a course remains on the student's transcript with the code "W."
- If a student encounters extenuating health or other circumstances that necessitate withdrawal from a course beyond the fourth week of a "mini" course or beyond the eighth week of a semester-long course, the student may file a petition detailing the particular

circumstances with the university's Academic Review Committee. If the student's petition to withdraw is approved by the Academic Review Committee, the course (or courses) will remain on the student's transcript with the code "W."

Auditing a Course

Students who wish to audit a course should talk with the professor of the course to determine the specific requirements for a successful/unsuccessful audit before choosing this option (grade option "A" when registering for the course). The requirements vary by course and by professor. Audited courses are not considered in calculating the 36 credit units required for program completion.

Course Waivers

Olin PhD students may obtain a waiver for any required course. Waivers are intended to allow students to avoid redundant study of subjects already mastered and advance. In order to receive a waiver, the student must submit a petition to his PhD advisor of the required course and obtain the advisor's signature, denoting approval. Students then must submit the signed waiver form to the Doctoral Programs Office within the first two weeks of the class.

Please note that a waiver does not reduce the student's required credit units to earn the doctoral degree. Moreover, it should generally be presumed that approval will be granted only where the student has previously completed substantially equivalent course work during their prior education and/or demonstrated competency via work experience.

The PhD advisor may require the student to enroll in a specific substitution course. If no specific substitution course is required, the student may choose to substitute other PhD course work for which the stated prerequisites are met. The coordinator of doctoral programs is available to assist students in finding appropriate substitute courses and to answer questions about the waiver and substitution procedures.

Course Work in Other Divisions

Twenty-four of the 36 credits required for the degree must be taken within Olin Business School. The other 12 credits may consist of either (a) approved transfer credits from an AACSB-accredited program (12-credit maximum) or (b) credits earned in approved graduate-level courses offered in other divisions of Washington University. For approval to be granted for course work in other Washington University divisions, the course must appear on the list of approved courses available in the Doctoral Programs Office or must be reviewed for inclusion on that list.

Students are advised to consult with the Doctoral Programs Office before registering if they have any concerns about whether credits earned in a course will be applied toward the 36-credit requirement.

Independent Study and Research Internship Credits

Students desiring more in-depth exposure to an area of interest under the supervision and direction of a faculty member may seek a faculty sponsor. Typically, a student will discuss with a particular faculty member the possibility of receiving supervision for directed research or an independent study research project.

Because faculty members have a variety of commitments, a student should have an independent study project fairly well thought out prior to seeking a faculty sponsor. Projects may receive from 1.5 to 6 academic credits, but normally no more than 3 credits may be granted in any one semester.

Once a project is agreed upon between student and professor, the student must submit a petition to the Doctoral Programs Office and ask the faculty member to confirm their approval to the office. The petition should outline the topics to be covered, texts or other research material, methodology, and deliverables. Students must be in good academic standing to receive approval for independent study.

Master of Science in Business Administration

Students who seek a master of science in business administration (MSBA) degree as a terminal degree are not admitted to the doctoral program. However, as progress is made toward the PhD, a student who has met the requirements set out below may be awarded an MSBA in one of the areas offered for the PhD degree: accounting, business economics, finance, marketing, organizational behavior, operations, supply chain and technology, and strategy and entrepreneurship.

The requirements are as follows:

- Two years of full-time participation in the program
- Completion of the following:
 - 36 credit units of graduate-level course work with a grade-point average of 3.00 or higher, including completion of the core sequence (approximately 18 credit units) (**Note:** Transfer credits are not applicable.)
 - A grade of Master's Pass or higher on the preliminary economics core exam (if applicable).
 - Presentation of a research paper to area faculty.

In any semester in which a student has fulfilled all of the above requirements, the student may file to receive the MSBA degree with the Doctoral Programs Office.

Dissertation

A dissertation is the product of extensive research and presents an original contribution to knowledge in a given field. It documents the doctoral candidate's ability to make substantive contributions to answering a major intellectual question and to communicate research results with professional competence.

General Requirements

The dissertation must constitute an integrated, coherent work, whose parts are logically connected. It must have a written introductory chapter that sets forth the general theme and core questions of the dissertation research, and that explains the relationship among the constituent chapters or parts. The introduction will typically include, as is appropriate to the discipline, a review of the literature relevant to the dissertation, an explanation of the theories, methods, and procedures utilized by the author; and a summary discussion of the contribution of the dissertation project to knowledge in the field. In its final deposited form, the dissertation must constitute an archivable product that meets the standards prescribed by the university.

The dissertation may consist (in whole or in part) of coauthored chapters and articles, but the candidate must be a major contributor to the research and writing of any such papers and must describe her or his ideas, individual efforts, and contributions to the larger work. In order to be in compliance with the university's policy on plagiarism and academic integrity, a dissertation that incorporates co-authored work must also include in its introduction an explanation of the role of the candidate in the research and in the writing of any co-authored work.

If a dissertation includes previously published materials (authored or co-authored), the candidate must provide a full referencing of when and where individual papers have been published. Because prior publication and multiple authorship have implications with respect to copyright, PhD candidates should discuss copyright with their advisors and obtain copyright clearances from any coauthors well in advance of defending the dissertation. Written permission must be obtained in order to include articles copyrighted by others in the dissertation.

It is the responsibility of the student and the student's dissertation committee to ensure that the dissertation meets all requirements regarding authorship, academic integrity, and copyright, as outlined here.

Proposal Defense

The purpose of the dissertation proposal is to provide evidence that the proposed dissertation will demonstrate the student's mastery of a specialized field of knowledge and capacity for original scholarly work.

At the dissertation proposal defense — which is open to all members of the regular faculty and all doctoral students — the student presents the research that has already been completed and an outline of the research that remains to be done. The student must make copies of the proposal available to the research advisory committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date. The faculty and doctoral students are informed of the date and location of the dissertation proposal defense a minimum of two weeks in advance.

The format of the proposal defense may vary among disciplines, but its general purpose is to provide the student the opportunity to present a detailed account of completed research, indicate a road map for what remains to be done, and receive the thesis committee's feedback on the research as well as approval that the proposal will lead to an acceptable dissertation if the student completes the research as described by the thesis committee.

There is no hard-and-fast rule regarding how much of the thesis must be completed before a proposal defense is scheduled. Some disciplines require that the thesis be more fully developed at the proposal defense than do other disciplines. A rough rule of thumb is to schedule a proposal defense before 50% of the research on the dissertation has been completed. This presumes that the student has been receiving guidance on the direction and scope of the research from the thesis committee.

Deadlines

Students are required to propose no later than the initial deadline of June 30 in their fourth year (i.e., the end of their fourth academic year in the program). Failure to propose by this deadline may result in academic probation and, if so, a letter to that effect will be sent to the student. If a signed Title, Scope and Procedure form, which signals a successful proposal defense, is not submitted to the Doctoral programs office by the second deadline of September 30th of the Fall semester of the 5th year, the student will be mandatorily placed on probation, and there may be additional consequences such as dismissal from the program.

Research Advisory Committee

The Research Advisory Committee consists of three tenured or tenure-track Washington University faculty members from the student's area. The committee members sign the Notice of Title, Scope, and Procedure of Dissertation before the student begins the dissertation and serves as the first three readers for the dissertation and as members of the student's Dissertation Examination Committee.

The faculty members attending the proposal defense confer with the prospective Research Advisory Committee, which recommends to the committee chair what the student must do to produce a completed dissertation. The chair collects the committee's recommendations, ensuring that all committee members agree on the direction and approach, and submits a written document to the Doctoral Programs Office and the student within two weeks of the proposal defense.

Title, Scope, and Procedure of Dissertation Form

If the recommendation is positive, the Research Advisory Committee formally approves the proposal by signing the Notice of Title, Scope, and Procedure of Dissertation form. The form can be obtained from the Doctoral Programs Office.

The project's "scope," as the student has described on the form, defines its limits — what the student intends to cover and what will not be covered. The "procedure" describes the manner in which the student intends to conduct the research. By defining the scope and procedure of the dissertation, the student provides an initial outline or model for use in researching the topic.

The form also serves as a contract between the student and the student's Research Advisory Committee. It is understood that the scope, procedure, and even the title of the dissertation may change during the course of the research. Major changes to the committee (e.g., a new thesis advisor from outside the committee) or a significant change of topic may require a new Title, Scope, and Procedure form.

Oral Dissertation Defense

The dissertation must be approved by the Research Advisory Committee before the defense can be formally scheduled and announced. Approval ensures that the dissertation is developed adequately and ready to be brought to defense.

Preliminary Paperwork

There are four forms that the student must file well before the completion of the dissertation and the scheduling of the dissertation examination:

1. **Title, Scope, and Procedure form** — The Title, Scope, and Procedure form (titled "Notice of Title, Scope, and Procedure of Dissertation") is to be filed with the Program Office as soon as it is signed off by the faculty.
2. **Intent to Graduate** — Candidates for a degree must file their "Intent to Graduate" for the semester in which they intend to graduate. You may complete this after logging onto WebSTAC and clicking on "Intent to Graduate" from the menu. If you are unable to access this, contact the Office of Student Records. Please note that, if you do not finish by the time you had originally stated in your first Intent to Graduate form, you must file a subsequent intent for the semester when you now intend to complete your work.
3. **Dissertation Examination Committee approval** — Prior to scheduling the dissertation defense, the candidate must submit a "Dissertation Defense Committee" form for approval by the Director of Doctoral Programs.
4. **Satisfaction of Teaching Requirements** — Olin PhD students must meet department teaching requirements, including demonstrating competency in teaching at both a basic and advanced level and submit documentation.

Dissertation Examination Committee

The Dissertation Examination Committee is composed of the student's Research Advisory Committee and at least two additional faculty members. Of the five faculty members, four must be tenured or tenure-track (three of the five must come from the student's degree program; at least one of the five must not).

In most cases, the chair of the student's Research Advisory Committee serves as the chair of the student's Dissertation Examination Committee. Approval of the dissertation by the Research Advisory Committee is necessary to bring it to the defense.

Dissertation Defense

The defense is open to faculty and doctoral students, who may attend as observers rather than participants. Typically, the Dissertation Examination Committee solicits evaluations from the faculty attending the defense before making a decision as to the student's success in defending the dissertation. However, only the Dissertation Examination Committee is permitted to vote.

At least two weeks prior to the defense, the regular faculty is informed of the date and location of the defense and the composition of the Dissertation Examination Committee. **Students are required to submit their written thesis to their committee members at least 30 days before the scheduled date of the defense.** The committee will respond at least 2 weeks before the defense with substantial requested changes. These changes will be expected to be complete and resubmitted to the committee before the defense.

A typical defense follows these procedures:

- Presentation by the candidate lasting about one hour. Candidates are not expected to repeat the detail presented in the workshop.
- Committee chair asks for questions from non-committee faculty who are present.
- Chair asks for questions from the Dissertation Examination Committee.
- Chair asks for questions from the Research Advisory Committee.
- Chair excuses all attendees except the Dissertation Examination Committee, which deliberates and makes a determination on the success of the defense.
- Upon approval of the defense, all members of this committee, as well as the chair of the department or program, sign the **Examination Approval Form.**

Doctoral Dissertation Submission

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

Transfer Credit

As many as 12 units of transfer credit may be accepted toward the Olin PhD degree requirements provided that:

- The credits are for graduate-level courses that the student took while a doctoral student at a business school program accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and are relevant to the Olin PhD degree.

- The relevant area faculty, in consultation with the Olin Doctoral Programs Office, has determined (using course syllabi and other information) that the course work taken in the other business school program is comparable in content (for required courses) to required courses offered in the Olin doctoral program or acceptable in quality (for elective courses).
- A grade of “B” or higher was achieved in the course work for which transfer credit is requested.

In addition, credits petitioned for transfer must not have been used to satisfy the requirements of another degree. Credits for courses in which the student received no letter grade or credits earned through either correspondence courses or courses or experiences offered under the auspices of proprietary schools, business or industrial training programs, or schools conducted by federal agencies such as the Department of Defense, are not considered for transfer.

Students seeking acceptance of transfer credit must complete and submit a Transfer Credit Evaluation Form along with a copy of the official transcript from the institution where the credits were earned, a description of and syllabus for each course for which transfer credits are being requested, and course equivalency information.

Approved transfer credits are included on the student’s official transcript as credits accepted in transfer. Letter grades from transfer credits are not reflected on the transcript, nor are they considered in the determination of grade-point average.

Human Subject Research

Students who plan to conduct research involving human subjects must understand and follow university protocols and guidelines set by the Human Research Protection Office.

Placement

Students begin to seek employment during the recruiting season after the dissertation proposal has been accepted and should discuss their job search plans with their advisor. Although job search strategies will vary by discipline, it is never too early for the student to begin developing a network of individuals with the student’s discipline who have similar research interests.

A limited amount of funding is available from the Doctoral Programs Office to support students’ job search activities. Interested students should contact the Doctoral Programs Office for information on how to apply for this funding.