

Academic Information

General Requirements

To earn a PhD at Washington University, a student must complete all courses required by their department; maintain satisfactory academic progress; pass certain examinations; fulfill residence and mentored experience requirements; write, defend, and submit a dissertation; and file an Intent to Graduate form on WebSTAC (<https://acadinfo.wustl.edu>).

Enrollment and Registration

Students newly admitted to the Graduate School receive information on creating a WUSTL Key from the university registrar. The WUSTL Key is used to register for courses 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.

Regular Enrollment

Students admitted to a PhD program in the Graduate School must maintain full-time continuous enrollment throughout the approved length of their programs. Most of our PhD programs will be completed within five or six years. During those years, students will be considered full-time if they have one of the following statuses:

- They are registered for 9 or more course units; **or**
- They are registered in a zero-unit course (LGS 9000 Full-time Graduate Research/Study or LGS 9001 Full-time Graduate Study in Absentia) that indicates the student's full-time engagement in research or academic writing.

Registration in LGS 9000 is based on a recommendation from the student's adviser stating the student is making satisfactory progress toward the degree.

During a student's period of regular registration, they may have a need or opportunity to study away from Washington University. Recommendations from departments for students' registration in absentia will be considered by the Graduate School on a case-by-case basis. If approved by the Graduate School, the student will be registered for LGS 9001 Full-time Graduate Study in Absentia. Students may be allowed to register for LGS 9001 for up to four consecutive or nonconsecutive fall/spring semesters. Semesters in which a student is registered in absentia are counted as part of the student's program length.

PhD students in Arts & Sciences who are fully funded, registered full-time within their program length, and making satisfactory academic progress will receive tuition remission and the 90% health insurance, dental insurance and wellness fee subsidies. Tuition each semester will be calculated based on the number of registered course units.

Enrollment Extension

Students may be permitted to register for one additional year beyond their program length. When recommended by their department and approved by the Graduate School, these students will be registered in a zero-unit course (LGS 9002 Full-time Graduate Study Extension) that confers full-time enrollment status. Students registered for LGS 9002 may or may not receive stipend support, but they are eligible to receive other benefits available to full-time PhD students in the Graduate School, including health insurance and wellness fee subsidies.

Students may be registered for LGS 9002 for a maximum of two semesters. There will be no exceptions to this limit. Students who do not complete their programs within this time limit must either withdraw from the program or be designated as Degree Candidacy Extended.

Degree Candidacy Extended

Upon the recommendation of their departments and the approval of the Graduate School, students who do not complete their PhD degrees within their program length and potential one-year enrollment extension may remain doctoral candidates for up to five years. Departmental recommendations and Graduate School approval are required for each year of extended degree candidacy. Extended degree candidates are not registered for any courses, have no enrollment status, and receive none of the benefits available to registered Washington University students, including student loan deferment.

Part-Time Students

PhD candidates are not admitted as part-time students. Part-time status will be calculated strictly on the basis of registration in fewer than 9 course units without LGS 9000 registration and will be permitted only in extraordinary circumstances.

Courses and Tuition Remission

The Graduate School will approve tuition remission for up to 72 course units. The 72-unit calculation includes courses transferred from other graduate programs.

Students pursuing a certificate or an unrelated master's degree in addition to their PhD must consult the departments and advisers about credit sharing between the programs. Tuition remission for units in excess of 72 will not be provided by the Graduate School.

To be eligible for tuition remission, courses must be offered at the graduate level, taken for a grade, and approved in advance by the student's adviser and program as necessary for the student's degree. Depending on the program, graduate-level courses begin with courses numbered in the 400s or 500s. Audited courses and courses taken pass/fail are not eligible for tuition remission. Students should consult their advisers regarding course selection.

When certain conditions apply, graduate students may be permitted to register for Arts & Sciences courses numbered below 400, but they may not ordinarily be covered by tuition remission unless approved by the dean of the Graduate School or their designee. Full-time students in the Graduate School who wish to take graduate courses in University College or Summer School must obtain the approval of both their academic adviser and the dean of the Graduate School. Tuition remission may be available for such approved courses.

Grades

Credit-conferring grades for students in the Graduate School are as follows: 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 credit units 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.

The Graduate School uses a 4-point scale for calculating grade point averages, with A = 4, B = 3, and C = 2. A plus adds 0.3 to the value of a grade, whereas a minus subtracts 0.3 from the value of the grade.

Zero-unit LGS 9000-level courses will have only the satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade option.

Retaking a Course

Graduate students may be allowed to retake a course once 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 grade-point average. 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. 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 Credit

Credit for previous courses will be transferred to a student's Washington University record only to fulfill departmental course/credit requirements. Departments may request transfer credit from official transcripts after a student's admission to a PhD program.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory academic progress for students in PhD programs is monitored by the Graduate School as well as by the degree program. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress may result in a student's immediate dismissal or in their placement on academic probation for the ensuing year. Most financial awards — and all federally funded awards — are contingent on the maintenance of satisfactory academic progress. Moreover, satisfactory academic progress is a prerequisite for service on any committee authorized by the Graduate School. The following are minimal standards of satisfactory academic progress for PhD students; degree programs may set stricter standards but must not relax these.

1. Students are expected to proceed at a pace appropriate to enable them to finish within the time limits discussed below. Students are expected to have completed all PhD requirements except for the dissertation by no later than the end of the fourth year of full-time graduate study.
2. Students are expected to maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Note that plus and minus marks alter the numerical value of a letter grade.
3. Students are expected not to carry at one time any more than 9 credit units for which the grades of I (incomplete), X (final examination missed), or N (not yet submitted) are recorded. The Graduate School may deny a student with more than 9 unfinished credits permission to register.
4. After four 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. The Title, Scope and Procedure form (https://graduateschool.wustl.edu/sites/graduateschool.wustl.edu/files/Title%20Scope%20Procedure%20PhD_0.pdf) must be filed before the fifth year in order to identify the membership of the student's Research Advisory Committee.
5. Students may take five or six years to complete the PhD, depending on the program. A one-year extension is available if circumstances warrant. Extensions are obtained by application by the student to the degree program, endorsement by the degree program to the Graduate School, and approval by the Graduate School.

Qualifying Examinations

Progress toward the PhD is contingent upon the student passing examinations that are 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 during a relatively short period of time. Exams may be replaced by one or more papers. The program, which determines the structure and schedule of the required examinations, is responsible for notifying the Graduate School of the student's outcome, whether successful or unsuccessful.

Residence Requirement

Each student must spend at least one academic year enrolled full-time at Washington University. Any exceptions must be approved by the dean of the Graduate School.

Mentored Experience Requirement

Doctoral students at Washington University must complete a department-defined Mentored Experience. The Mentored Experience Requirement is a doctoral degree milestone that is notated on the student's transcript when complete. Each department has an established Mentored Experience Implementation Plan in which the number of semesters that a student must engage in a Mentored Teaching Experience or a Mentored Professional Experience is defined. The Mentored Experience Implementation Plans outline how doctoral students within the discipline will be mentored to achieve competencies in teaching at basic and advanced levels. Some departments may elect to include the Mentored Professional Experiences as an avenue for completing one or more semesters of the Mentored Experience Requirement. Doctoral students will enroll in LGS 600 Mentored Teaching Experience or LGS 603 Mentored Professional Experience to signify their progression toward completing the overall Mentored Experience Requirement for the degree.

The Dissertation

As evidence of the mastery of a specific field of knowledge and of the capacity for original scholarly work, each candidate must complete a dissertation. The subject must be approved by a Research Advisory Committee that consists 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 and a template (<http://graduateschool.wustl.edu/guides-0/>) that give instructions regarding the format of the dissertation are available on the Graduate School's website; both should be read carefully at every stage of thesis 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 written dissertation by the Research Advisory Committee is necessary before the student can orally defend the dissertation. The committee that examines the student 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 or by their 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 their 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. Although 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's 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 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 (<https://acadinfo.wustl.edu/>). 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 refile for the next graduation date.

Specific Circumstances

Changes in Program of Study

Students are usually admitted to the Graduate School to study toward specific degrees. Therefore, a change in the degree objective (e.g., from AM to PhD) is subject to the approval of both the student's program and 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 from the chair of their degree program. Complaints that remain unresolved may be addressed to any of the deans in a student's school. The final court of appeal for all students in the Graduate School 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.

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 discrimination or harassment 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 the Discrimination and Harassment page (<http://hr.wustl.edu/policies/pages/sexualharassment.aspx>) for more information.

Leaves of Absence

A student may request and be approved for a leave of absence during their regular registration period if they are not registered in absentia. Leaves of absence must be endorsed by the degree program and approved by the Graduate School for up to one year. Extensions must be reapproved.

Approved leaves of absence are not counted as part of a student's program length and will not be approved for semesters beyond the program length, including enrollment extension. While on a leave of absence, the student is not registered and has no student status at Washington University. Students who begin a leave during any semester will be dropped from all course registration for that semester and will receive no course credit for work completed during that semester prior to the leave.

Leaves of absence may be personal or medical. In the case of a medical leave, the student must present authorization from Habif Health and Wellness Center 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 university. Taking a leave may therefore adversely affect loan deferment, visa status, the right to rent university-owned housing, and so on. Most visa types would prevent international students from remaining in the United States while taking a leave of absence; such students should consult the Office for International Students and Scholars (<http://oiss.wustl.edu>) as well as their faculty adviser, their program's director of graduate studies, and perhaps a dean.

Prior to taking a leave of absence, students should consider their need for health insurance coverage. The continuation of student health insurance and access to the Habif Health and Wellness Center depends on such factors as the kind of leave (medical or personal), the length of time the student has already been covered during the current insurance year, and the student's location during the leave. Students should consult the Habif Health and Wellness Center website (<http://shs.wustl.edu/Pages/default.aspx>) for current policies related to leaves of absence; these policies may change annually if insurance carriers change.

Withdrawals

Students wishing to withdraw from their programs must give notice in writing by filling out the Graduate School's Withdrawal form (<https://graduateschool.wustl.edu/sites/graduateschool.wustl.edu/files/Withdrawal.pdf>). 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, including 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 their 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.

Interdisciplinarity

Interdisciplinary Courses

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

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

Joint and Dual Degree Programs

The university has set up numerous programs that permit students to earn two graduate and/or professional degrees at the same time. One of these programs includes a PhD:

- 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 credit units are counted toward both degrees. The Graduate School uses the term *dual degree* to refer to programs in which no credit units 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 of 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 Graduate School 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 the completion of both degrees and the 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 (<http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/acs/>)
- Data Science in the Humanities (<http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/data-science-humanities/>)
- Early Modern Studies (<http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/complit/>)
- Film and Media Studies (<http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/film/>)
- Higher Education (<http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/ed/>)
- Language Instruction (<http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/romance/>)
- Latin American Studies (<http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/latam/>)
- Quantitative Data Analysis (<http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/psych/>)
- Translation Studies (<http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/complit/>)
- Urban Studies (<http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/urban/>)
- Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (<http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/women/>)

Graduate certificates are open to students in PhD programs at Washington University, and they require the completion of 15 to 18 credit units. Interested students must fill out an application for admission to a certificate program (https://graduateschool.wustl.edu/sites/graduateschool.wustl.edu/files/Application%20Certificate%20Program_2016.pdf) 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. Tuition remission may be available for the credit units required to complete a certificate program if the student's total units do not exceed 72. Earning a certificate does not increase a student's expected time to degree or amount of Graduate School support. No student will be admitted to, given tuition remission for, or awarded more than one graduate certificate.