

Doctor of Philosophy Degree Requirements

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is conferred on candidates who have demonstrated general proficiency and high attainment in a special field of knowledge and capacity to carry on independent investigation in that field as evidenced by the presentation of an acceptable dissertation embodying the result of original research.

Time and Registration Requirements: A candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree is ordinarily expected to devote 3 or more academic years to graduate work. The degree is not awarded for less than 2 full academic years of graduate work.

Graduate work done in residence at other institutions will be accepted in partial fulfillment of the time requirements, provided such work is approved by the Standing of Graduate Students and by the departments concerned.

Work of a fragmentary nature scattered over a long period of time, or work completed many years before the student becomes a candidate for the degree, is subject to special review by the Standing of Graduate Students. The extent to which such work may be credited towards fulfillment of the time requirements will be decided by the committee.

All post-baccalaureate work toward the doctorate must be completed within 10 years. A student beginning doctoral course work after an elapsed period of at least 1 semester after the Master's degree has been confirmed is granted 7 years in which to complete the doctoral program.

Doctoral students whose graduate study is carried out entirely at Lehigh University must register for a minimum of 72 credits beyond the Bachelor's degree. Students who have earned a Master's degree at another institution must register for a minimum of 48 credits. However, resident students who during their entire doctoral program, including the semester of graduation, have paid full tuition continuously (normally a minimum of 9 credit hours per academic semester) will have satisfied the tuition requirements for the doctoral degree upon completion of all other requirements. These requirements include registration for research or dissertation credits.

Full-time students working toward the doctorate normally register for a minimum of 9 credit hours per semester. If the minimum degree registration requirement is attained before formal admission to candidacy, continued registration of at least 3 credits per semester is necessary. Full-time student status must be certified on the *Graduate Registration Form* by the Research and Graduate Programs Office.

After admission to doctoral candidacy, a student must maintain candidacy by registering in both the fall and spring semesters. After completion of the minimum registration requirement, plus any additional requirements of the student's department or program, registration is

permitted for “Maintenance of Candidacy.” The tuition charge is for 1 credit hour. Full-time status again must be certified on the *Graduate Registration Form*.

Concentrated Learning Requirement: To fulfill the concentrated learning requirement for the doctoral degree, a candidate must complete two semesters as a full-time graduate student or at least 18 credit hours of Lehigh graduate study within a fifteen-month period either on or off campus. The concentrated learning requirement is intended to ensure that doctoral students spend a period of concentrated study and intellectual association with other scholars.

Individual departments may impose additional stipulations. Candidates should check with their advisors to be certain that they have satisfied their concentrated learning requirements.

Language Requirements: Language requirements for the Ph.D. are the option of and in the jurisdiction of the candidate’s department. Since the proficiency in a language is not a university requirement, each department decides which languages, if any, constitute part of the doctoral program.

Qualifying Examinations: Many departments require students who wish to enroll in doctoral programs to pass qualifying examinations. Since these examinations vary among departments, students should ask their advisers or department chairpersons for more detailed information. If a qualifying examination is not used, students should find out how and when eligibility to pursue doctoral studies is determined.

Doctoral Committee: With the help of an academic adviser, the student names the faculty members of the doctoral committee, a special committee formed to guide the student through the doctoral program. The committee is responsible for assisting the student in formulating a course of study, satisfying specific departmental requirements, submitting a suitable dissertation proposal, overseeing progress in research, and evaluating the completed dissertation.

The minimum number of committee members is four. Of these, three, including the committee chair, are to be voting Lehigh faculty members. With the written approval of the dean of the college, one of the three aforementioned faculty members, each of whom must have a doctoral degree, may be drawn from categories that include departmentally approved adjunct, professors of practice, university lecturers, and courtesy faculty appointees. This latter member may not serve as the committee chair. The fourth required member must be from outside the student’s department. Committees may include additional members who possess the requisite expertise and experience. Committee membership must be approved by the University’s Graduate and Research Committee; such approval may be delegated to the department or program sponsoring the degree.

At the time of admission to candidacy, a doctoral committee is appointed by the graduate and research committee to direct the work of the candidate.

Admission to Candidacy: It is good practice for a doctoral student to apply for candidacy no later than a year after completion of the Master's degree or its equivalent and after passing qualifying examinations if they are required by the major department. The prospective Ph.D. candidate must submit to the doctoral committee a written program proposal that includes a discussion of proposed dissertation research. The program should be planned to lead to a general mastery of the major field and to a significant grasp of any minor field(s) that may be added. Upon receiving approval of the proposal, the candidate submits the proposal, signed by the committee members, to the Research and Graduate Programs Office for action by the Graduate and Research Committee. The office will advise the student in writing of the committee's decision.

If the dissertation research involves human or animal subjects, University procedures must be followed (see *Protection of Human Subjects in Research* and *Humane Care and Treatment of Laboratory Animals*, Appendix).

General Examinations: The general examination for the doctorate is designed to test the student's capacity and proficiency in the field of study although it is not necessarily confined to the content of courses that have been taken at Lehigh University or elsewhere. The examination is ordinarily taken no earlier than the end of the second year of work, nor later than seven months before the degree is conferred. The student's doctoral committee is in charge of the examination, which may be both written and oral.

If a candidate fails the general examination, a second one will be scheduled five or more months after the first. If the results of the second examination are unsatisfactory, no additional examination is scheduled.

Dissertation and Defense: Ph.D. candidates are required to write a dissertation prepared under the direction of a Lehigh University professor. The dissertation must treat a topic related to the candidate's specialty in the major subject, show the results of original research, provide evidence of high scholarship, and make a significant contribution to knowledge in the field.

Upon approval of the advising professor, the dissertation draft is submitted to the Research and Graduate Programs Office for inspection at least six weeks before the degree is to be conferred. (Exact dates are published on the Registrar's and Arts & Sciences Graduate websites). See Dissertation Guidelines (p.34-42) for approved format and timeline. Please contact MaryAnn Haller in the Research and Graduate Programs Office at 610-758-4280 or mh0h@lehigh.edu to schedule your draft appointment.