

# Doctoral Degree Requirements

## Application for Admission

*Applications must be submitted online at [www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org). Application is made through the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies. Most doctoral programs require supplemental application materials. Contact the academic program for additional information.*

## General Requirements

The candidate must earn a minimum of 60 hours of graduate credit beyond the master's degree or 90 hours beyond the bachelor's degree.

This quantitative requirement must be regarded as a minimum. The quantity of course work to be completed by each candidate is arranged individually by the supervisory committee, subject to the approval of the graduate dean, and may be modified both as to quantity and as to type during the progress of the student's course work.

## Minor Field

The candidate for the doctoral degree ordinarily is required to select a minor field. A minor is defined as graduate work completed outside the student's major department or school. Minor areas of study can only be chosen from academic areas in which the University of North Texas is already authorized to offer a major or where specific Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approval has been given to offer courses for the purposes of a minor.

When an official minor is required or opted, the candidate's graduate advisory committee must include a faculty member from that area who will verify accountability in the minor area through comprehensive examinations, dissertation projects or other appropriate means.

For doctoral degrees, the student must complete at least 12 hours in a single area to have the area count as a minor. All hours counted toward a minor must carry graduate credit and must be numbered 5000 or above. No more than one-half of the required hours toward a minor may be transferred from another institution unless an approved graduate school minor articulation agreement is in effect.

Twelve hours of undergraduate credit or appropriate graduate-level work are the usual prerequisite for a minor in any field. (*Exception:* In the case of a minor in a foreign language, the student is required to have completed the second term/semester of the sophomore year of study in the intended minor language.) In departments that offer no freshman courses only 6 hours of undergraduate credit are required as prerequisite to a graduate minor in that field.

Minors are not required on certain graduate degrees. Consult subsequent sections of this publication for specific regulations governing the degree sought.

## Entrance Examinations

Doctoral programs may require an admission examination. Entrance examination requirements vary according to the requirements of the different departments and colleges. Entrance requirements ordinarily must be completed before the close of the first term/semester of doctoral study. Consult the appropriate graduate advisor for specific entrance examination requirements.

## Residence Requirement

Every candidate for the doctoral degree must complete the appropriate residence requirement at UNT as prescribed by the individual departments and schools. The minimum residence requirement consists of two consecutive long terms/semesters at UNT (fall and the following spring, or spring and the following fall), or a fall or spring term/semester and one adjoining summer session/term at UNT. During the long terms/semesters a minimum of 9 graduate hours must be taken. During the combined summer sessions/terms a minimum load of 9 graduate semester hours must be taken. Enrolling in courses during the summer does not affect doctoral residence begun the previous spring and completed the following fall. Some departments have established more stringent residence requirements appropriate to their programs.

## Level of Work Required

All of the courses required for the doctorate above the level of the master's degree must be numbered 5000 or above. Hours counted toward earning a master's degree cannot be counted toward hours necessary to complete the doctorate.

*A maximum of 12 semester hours earned in non-degree or certification status prior to admission to a degree program may be counted toward doctoral degree requirements.*

## Time Limitation

All work to be credited toward the doctoral degree beyond the master's degree must be completed within a period of 10 years from the date doctoral credit is first earned. No course credit beyond the master's degree that is more than 10 years old at the time the doctoral program is completed will be counted toward the doctorate.

Time limits are strictly enforced. Students exceeding the time limit may be required to repeat the comprehensive exam, replace out-of-date credits with up-to-date work, and/or show other evidence of being up-to-date in their major and minor fields. Students anticipating they will exceed the time limit should apply for an extension of time *before* their ninth year of study. For information regarding extensions go to [graduateschool.unt.edu/extension.htm](http://graduateschool.unt.edu/extension.htm). Holding a full-time job is not

considered in itself sufficient grounds for granting a time extension.

Time spent in active military service of the United States will not be considered in computing these time limits. However, career members of the armed forces should consult the graduate dean concerning credit given to work completed before or during active military service.

### Leave of Absence

Leave of absence applies to students admitted to the master's or doctoral degree who wish to discontinue work toward the degree for a specified period of time due to exigent circumstances. Leave of absence may be granted by the academic program, which then notifies the Graduate School. If the student has begun the dissertation and is under the continuous enrollment requirement, a waiver of continuous enrollment must also be requested and approved by the Graduate School. Degree requirements and graduation must be completed within the appropriate time limit for completion of the degree.

### Transfer and Extension Work

Depending on the student's previous preparation and needs, as many as 24 hours of advanced study beyond the master's degree or its equivalent completed at another institution may be accepted and credited toward the doctorate, provided the candidate's advisory committee recommends acceptance of transfer credit to the graduate dean.

The student beginning doctoral study at UNT should bear in mind transfer credit is not allowed on the doctorate until all requirements governing admission to candidacy have been met and such credit must in all cases be individually evaluated by the supervisory committee, recommended by the major department and approved by the graduate dean. The rule governing the time limit for doctoral credit applies also to transfer credits. Extension credit earned elsewhere may not be applied toward the doctorate at UNT.

If transfer credits, earned either before or after the first doctoral enrollment at UNT, do not show a B average, the student is required to make up the deficiency either at the institution where the credit was earned or at UNT.

To be applied to a doctoral program at UNT, courses completed elsewhere must have been taken at an institution that offers the master's or doctoral degree in the area in which the courses were taken, or in a closely related area.

In accordance with the rules of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, at least one-third of the semester hours required for any graduate degree must be completed in course work on the campus of UNT.

### Foreign Language or Tool-Subject Requirement

Foreign language or tool-subject requirements differ for the various doctoral degrees and majors. Some departments require students to satisfy the foreign language requirement while other departments have established other tool-subjects.

Students should consult subsequent sections of this publication or the graduate advisor of the major department or school for the specific requirements of the degree sought.

Foreign language requirements may be satisfied in any one of the following ways:

1. By passing the Foreign Language Proficiency Examination administered each term/semester and summer session/term by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (contact the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures for examination requirements). The application, together with information on a prerequisite screening test, must be obtained in the office of the chair of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures; scheduled dates for taking the examination in the current academic year appear in the online academic calendar at [www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar.htm](http://www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar.htm); or
2. By submitting a transcript of undergraduate credit showing completion of at least the sophomore year in a single foreign language, provided the grade point average on all language courses is 2.75 or higher.

Language requirements must have been satisfied no earlier than 10 years prior to the date on which the student completes the qualifying examination and is admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree. If the student's language proficiency or proficiencies have been demonstrated at an earlier date, they must be validated in a manner to be prescribed by the Graduate Council;

3. A student may use their native language (other than English) to satisfy this requirement if their native language is relevant to their degree program and proficiency can be established by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

To satisfy all or part of a tool-subject requirement, individual doctoral degree programs may use undergraduate courses as long as those courses are not part of, or equivalent to, the UNT core curriculum. With the exception of language courses, courses used to satisfy all or part of the tool-subject requirements are in addition to degree plan hours and must have been completed no earlier than five years prior to the date on which the degree plan is filed.

As an option for academic units, examination(s) may be used to satisfy all or part of the tool-subject requirement.

Candidates for graduate degrees to be awarded at the close of any summer session/term must have satisfied the foreign language requirements for the degree sought prior to the first class day of the second term of the session. Candidates for graduation at the close of the spring or fall term/semester must have satisfied the foreign language requirements prior to the last day for filing dissertation in the office of the graduate dean. Consult the online academic calendar (visit [www.unt.edu/catalog/](http://www.unt.edu/catalog/) and select "Online Academic Calendar") for the proper deadline.

## Degree Plan

A degree plan listing all courses required for the doctoral degree should be completed by the student, approved by the student's advisory committee and department chair, and submitted to the graduate dean at an early point in the student's progress toward the degree, preferably soon after the first term/semester of doctoral study has been completed.

The major professor and committee members are chosen on the advice of the department or division chair or graduate advisor in the major area. All subsequent requests for degree plan changes must be submitted in writing by the major professor to the graduate dean.

Doctoral degree requirements are determined by the *Graduate Catalog* currently in force at the time the degree plan is **approved** by the graduate dean.

Courses listed on the degree plan must carry letter grades, with the exception of those courses in which the student is engaged in individual research and is not attending an organized class. These courses, with the approval of the department, may be assigned pass/no pass grades.

The student should review the entire *Doctoral Requirements* section of the **current** catalog to prepare the degree plan. The degree plan should also be reviewed by the student in the semester **prior** to graduation in order to update any changes to the plan with the major professor and the office of the graduate dean.

## Qualifying Examination and Admission to Candidacy

The student who has completed all courses required for the degree (exclusive of dissertation) and has satisfied all admission, residency, language and other tool-subject requirements should request that the major professor arrange for the qualifying examination to be held. Consult the graduate advisor in the major area for information about the qualifying examination requirement.

Ordinarily no dissertation enrollment is permitted until this examination has been passed. Students are admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree by the graduate dean upon successful completion of the qualifying examination and other requirements. The department should notify the office of the Graduate Dean when a student passes the qualifying examination and is admitted to candidacy.

## Dissertation Requirement

### Continuous Enrollment

A dissertation is required of all candidates for the doctorate. Only 12 semester hours of dissertation credit are applied to the degree program, even though more dissertation hours may be accumulated. The student is required to enroll for dissertation credit in the major department under the course number 6950 and must maintain continuous enrollment in a minimum of 3 semester hours of 6950 during each fall and spring term/semester until the dissertation has been accepted by the graduate dean. Maximum enrollment in 6950 is 9 hours in a fall or spring term/semester. Dissertation registration in at least one summer session/term is required if the student is using university facilities and/or faculty time during that summer session/term or to graduate in August. Doctoral students must maintain continuous enrollment subsequent to passing the qualifying examination for admission to candidacy. Grades of PR will be recorded at the end of each term/semester of enrollment until the dissertation is filed with the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies and approved by the graduate dean.

Students admitted to doctoral study who wish to complete a pass-through master's degree that requires a thesis must also maintain continuous enrollment in a minimum of 3 semester hours each fall and spring term/semester and in at least one summer session/term if the student is using university facilities or faculty time during that summer session/term. Continuous enrollment is required through the graduating semester.

Failure to maintain continuous enrollment through the semester in which the defended dissertation is filed with the office of the graduate dean will either invalidate any previous dissertation credit or will result in the student's being dismissed from the degree program, unless granted an official leave of absence by the graduate dean in advance. Strict adherence to the on-time filing deadlines for graduation is required or additional registration in 6950 may be necessary.

### Composition of the Dissertation Examination Committee

Membership of dissertation examination committees will include representatives of the major field and the minor field, if the student is pursuing a minor area. Selection of committee members from disciplines other than the major or minor field is highly encouraged, whenever appropriate. The number of members on such committees will normally be three to five, and at least three are required. In cases in which the academic unit has specified particular departmental or college procedures for dissertation committee members, the student will follow these procedures.

The dissertation chair is the student's mentor and guide through this process of the demonstration of independent scholarship. Therefore, the chair of the dissertation committee, who must be willing to serve, is selected by the student in consultation with the appropriate graduate faculty, doctoral advisor or department chair in the student's discipline. The dissertation chair must hold full membership in the graduate faculty. Students should consult the departmental policy for the selection of the remaining committee members.

A person who is not a regular member of the University of North Texas graduate faculty may receive a temporary graduate faculty appointment from the graduate dean in order to serve on a committee. For these appointments, the dissertation committee chair should submit an associate membership nomination form, a justification for the appointment and a vita of the prospective committee member. Associate members may not chair a thesis or dissertation committee. No more than one committee member without regular UNT faculty status may serve on a committee.

### Format

Before beginning the dissertation, the student should consult the graduate reader for information concerning the proper form for preparation of the paper.

### Openness of Theses and Dissertations

The University of North Texas, as a member of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), ascribes to the fundamental tenant on openness and access of theses and dissertation research as stated in the CGS policy manual *The Doctor of Philosophy Degree: A Policy Statement* (CGS, 2005). In compliance with CGS, it is the policy at the University of North Texas that "an essential aspect of [thesis] and dissertation research and scholarship is the free and full dissemination of research results. Restrictions, either in the conduct of [thesis] and dissertation research

or in the sharing of its results, are antithetical to that spirit." Therefore, research that is classified by a government agency or that is proprietary in nature and restricted, insofar as it must be held to secrecy and cannot be openly evaluated or published, is unsuitable for master's or doctoral research (CGS, 2005, pp. 29–30).

Faculty advisors of students conducting thesis and dissertation research shall advise their students and abide by the following:

1. If the faculty director of the thesis or dissertation is covered by a nondisclosure agreement (NDA), if either the faculty director and/or the student know in advance that the information or work planned for use in the thesis or dissertation is under an NDA or other restriction in which the work must be held to secrecy, or if at the time the topic of the thesis or dissertation is set there is any other substantial possibility that the work will lead to a thesis or dissertation that is secret (either in whole or in part), the student will not include this information or work as part of the thesis or dissertation.
2. If in the process of the student's thesis or dissertation research the student is developing a patentable work, the Vice President for Research and Economic Development must be notified as soon as possible and the utility patent filed so as to allow an open defense and publication of the thesis or dissertation.
3. In the circumstances in which the dissertation is close to completion or has been completed and a patentable work was unforeseen, the defense examination will be open only to the student's committee and departmental faculty and the dissertation held from publication until the utility patent has been filed or for no longer than 90 days after the defense examination, whichever is the shorter time period, unless the Vice President for Research and Economic Development requests an additional limited period of time for the utility patent.
4. Students may restrict access to their thesis or dissertation. Restriction limits access to the UNT community only (persons with valid EUID) for a period of five years. Interlibrary loans are not permitted during the restriction period. The restricted electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) will be made available to the entire Internet, via the UNT Libraries online catalog, beginning on the first day of the month following the fifth anniversary of the student's graduation. Students may request a one-time extension for an additional two years. To allow students to receive informed guidance from their faculty advisors, restrictions must be approved by the major professor at the time the ETD is filed with the Graduate School.

[Attributions: Portions of this policy were taken from *The Doctor of Philosophy Degree: A Policy Statement* (Council of Graduate Schools, 2005) and *Openness in Research* (Stanford University Research Policy Handbook, Document 2.6, 2001).]

### Completion

When the dissertation is completed and has received preliminary approval of the advisory committee, the student's major professor will schedule the final defense and will notify the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies of the date and time of the examination. Students should apply for graduation with the graduate school in accordance with the graduate graduation deadlines and at least 10 days prior to the final defense of their dissertation. The dissertation may not be submitted to the dean of the student's college or the graduate dean until this final examination has been passed.

No dissertation credit will be recorded until the dissertation has been approved by the student's advisory committee, submitted to the graduate dean's office and finally approved by the graduate dean. Instructions for submission of the dissertation may be obtained from the graduate dean's office.

## Requirements for the Second Doctorate

Applicants who hold an earned doctorate from a regionally accredited institution may be admitted to the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies to work toward a second doctorate, subject to the following provisions.

1. The applicant must meet all requirements governing admission to the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies and to the degree program to be pursued.
2. The applicant must meet all requirements of the program to be pursued as to acceptable test (GRE, GMAT, etc.) scores, admission examinations, auditions, portfolios of work, letters of reference, etc.
3. The applicant must complete a minimum of 36 semester hours of approved course work in residence at UNT in accordance with the specifications of an approved degree plan. In most cases, the applicant's major on the first doctorate will be counted as the minor on the second doctorate, thus the reduction in the minimum required hours to 36.

This minimum program will ordinarily include dissertation credit amounting to 12 hours. Provision of a minimum number of credits to be earned in no way restricts the major department from requiring additional deficiency work and/or additional work on the doctoral program itself.

## Continuous Enrollment

A student must maintain continuous enrollment in a minimum of 3 semester hours of dissertation during each fall and spring term/semester, including the term/semester the dissertation is accepted by the dean of the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies.

Dissertation registration in at least one summer session/term is required if the student is using university facilities and/or faculty time during that summer session/term or to graduate in August.

Doctoral students must maintain continuous enrollment subsequent to passing the qualifying examination for admission to candidacy.

Failure to maintain continuous enrollment through the semester of graduation will either invalidate any previous dissertation credit or will result in the student's being dropped from the degree program, unless granted an official leave of absence by the graduate dean in advance. Strict adherence to the on-time filing deadlines for graduation is required or additional registration in 6950 may be necessary.



## Milestones for the Doctoral Student

**Dean** — Dean of Toulouse School of Graduate Studies  
**ADCom** — Advisory Committee  
**MP** — Major Professor

**GA** — Graduate Advisor  
**DC** — Department Chair

Procedure	Initiate Through	Approved By	Time
1. Apply for admission. Submit all official transcripts and an official copy of the appropriate standardized test score.	Dean	DC and Dean	At least six weeks prior to registration (seven to eight months prior to registration for foreign students). <b>Note:</b> Some programs have specific deadlines in advance of these suggested time periods.
2. Become familiar with general regulations and appropriate doctoral degree section of catalog.	Student		Before registration.
3. Meet with graduate advisor assigned by department chair to plan course of study for first semester.	DC and GA	GA	Before first semester registration.
4. Establish advisory committee; prepare proposed degree program.	GA and DC	MP, DC and Dean	Upon or before completion of 12 semester hours.
5. Submit degree plan to the Graduate School for approval.	ADCom, MP, GA and Student	Dean	Upon or before completion of 12 semester hours.
6. Complete course work detailed on proposed degree program and meet foreign language or tool-subject requirement.			Prior to qualifying examination. (See specific degree requirements for details.)
7. Take written/oral qualifying examination.	MP		Per departmental requirements.
8. Submit results of the qualifying exam to the graduate school.	MP		Prior to attaining ABD (all but dissertation) status.
9. Submit form to add university member to doctoral committee.	MP	Dean	Well in advance of dissertation proposal presentation.
10. Submit proposal for dissertation.	MP and ADCom		Well in advance of expected graduation date.
11. Prepare dissertation.	ADCom		Per departmental requirements.
12. Apply to graduate.	Student	Dean	During final semester. (See deadline at <a href="http://www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar.htm">www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar.htm</a> ).
13. Schedule final defense of dissertation.	ADCom	Dean	No later than four to five weeks prior to filing deadline. Notify graduate school of date and time. (See deadline date.)
14. Submit final defended copy of dissertation.	ADCom and Dean	Dean	See deadline at <a href="http://www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar.htm">www.unt.edu/catalog/calendar.htm</a> .
15. Arrange for cap and gown at University Bookstore.			By deadline date for placing order.