

Doctoral Programs

Admittance to a Specific Doctoral Program

Admittance to the College of Graduate Studies does not guarantee acceptance into a specific doctoral program. Standards for admittance to a specific doctoral program are set by the doctoral program faculty. Students must therefore check the admission requirements to the doctoral program of interest before they seek admission to the College of Graduate Studies. The admission requirements to a specific doctoral program may exceed the minimum requirements noted below. The graduate coordinator or program director must accept the student before the student is admitted to the program.

Minimum Requirements for Admission to Doctoral Degree Programs

- a. Students desiring acceptance into a doctoral program must meet the following minimum admission requirements.
 - i. Have an acceptable undergraduate and graduate GPA.
 - ii. Have an official Graduate Record Examination score or other program specific entrance exam taken within the last five years. Specific programs may have defined minimum score requirements.
- b. An application for admission must be submitted to the Office of Admissions via <https://graduateadmissions.tamuk.edu/portal/program-explorer>.
- c. Official transcripts must be submitted for all undergraduate and graduate work.
- d. An official copy of the Graduate Record Examination or other program specific entrance exam must be submitted to the Office of Admissions directly from the testing service.
- e. Individual departments may establish additional requirements for admission to a specific degree program. Applicants will be required to fulfill any additional requirements established by the major department.
- f. Each department will review each application and make a recommendation regarding admission status to a degree program.
- g. A student is granted either full admission or full admission with stipulations.
- h. A doctoral student who has not enrolled for *two long semesters* must reapply for admission under current admission standards.
- i. A doctoral student who drops or withdraws from a program must reapply and meet the current standards for program application and admission.

Minimum Requirements for the Doctoral Degree

Degree Plan

Upon acceptance into a doctoral program, a student will meet with an adviser to develop an initial degree plan in DegreeWorks. The student should contact the major department for adviser assignment. The official degree plan will be maintained by the program coordinator/director.

Course Requirements

All courses applied toward a doctoral degree must be approved by the appropriate program administrator and Graduate Dean. No more than fifteen graduate credit hours beyond the master's degree taken prior to admission to a doctoral program can be applied toward a doctoral degree.

Other Requirements

Requirements

Electives and other course requirements are determined by each program.

Transfer of Credit

Credit for work taken from other accredited graduate schools in the United States and abroad is granted in accordance with an evaluation by the specific program director/coordinator and the Office of Admissions. Time limitations on transfer courses are the same as for Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Transfer credit will be granted for only those courses in which the student received a grade of "B" or better (3.0 minimum GPA per course). Only grades earned at Texas A&M University-Kingsville will be utilized in calculating a student's grade point average.

Independent Studies

Registration in an independent studies, research or similar courses shall imply an expected level of effort on the part of the student comparable to that associated with an organized class with the same credit value. No more than twelve graduate semester hours of independent studies courses may be applied to a doctoral degree. Independent studies course credit cannot be used toward fulfilling the residency requirement.

Grades

A grade point average of 3.00 or better on all graduate work on the approved degree plan, is required for graduation. If a course is retaken, the last grade will be counted toward graduation and computation of the overall grade point average. A course in which an "F" is received is considered a course completed and the course must be retaken at the same institution.

Academic Probation and Suspension from Degree Programs

A student who fails to achieve and maintain an overall 3.00 grade point average during any semester of enrollment will be placed on academic probation. A student who fails to achieve a 3.00 overall grade point average by the end of the next semester of enrollment will be placed on academic suspension for a minimum of two semesters (two summer terms count as one semester). After the academic suspension is served, the student may be allowed to re-enroll only upon the recommendation of the major department and with the approval of the Graduate Dean. Failure to achieve an overall 3.00 grade point average during any subsequent semester of enrollment will result in dismissal, and the student will not be allowed to pursue further study toward the doctoral degree at this institution. Courses taken from other institutions will not be transferable if taken during a period of suspension from Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Students on academic suspension from another institution will not be admitted to Texas A&M University-Kingsville until their specific period of suspension expires. Students who fail to meet the professional expectations of the field for which they are preparing may be suspended from further study in that program by the department administering that program.

Residency

After admission to a doctoral degree program, each student is required to engage in activities that fulfill departmental residency requirements. Please check the major department for specific requirements. Successful completion of residency is determined by approval of the department. The departmental residency plan specifies requirements in the following areas:

- a. involvement in events that broaden intellectual growth,
- b. use of academic support resources,
- c. faculty-student interactions that promote scholarship, mentoring and opportunities for evaluation,
- d. involvement with cognate disciplines and research scholars in those disciplines and
- e. engagement in meaningful peer interactions.

Please check with the major department for specific requirements. Successful completion of residency is determined by approval of the department.

Graduate Dual Degrees

A student may not pursue two different doctoral degrees concurrently.

Doctoral Tuition and Fees

All post-master's, doctoral course work (including the dissertation), must be satisfactorily completed by the doctoral student in a maximum of 99 semester credit hours. If the Graduate Dean approves in writing that a student may proceed beyond the 99 credit hour limit, the student will be assessed out-of-state tuition.

Research Tools

Candidates for the doctoral degree must possess proficiency in the use of the research skills necessary to successfully complete the doctoral dissertation. Students should demonstrate these proficiencies early in their program; however, students must demonstrate such proficiency prior to taking the qualifying examinations.

Comprehensive Examinations

Doctoral students take written and oral comprehensive examinations upon the completion of approximately two full years of study. The examinations must be taken and passed before the degree is conferred. The comprehensive examinations are designed to test the student's knowledge in the major and supporting fields or cognate area and are administered under the direction of an advisory committee.

Admission to Candidacy for Doctoral Degree

After the qualifying examinations have been satisfactorily completed and all requirements have been verified by the College of Graduate Studies, the student will be admitted to candidacy.

Time Limitation for Degree

All degree requirements beyond the master's must be completed within ten calendar years from the date of admission to the doctoral program. Also, no course work beyond the master's degree which is over ten years at the time the doctoral degree is to be conferred can be used toward the doctoral degree. Graduate credits older than ten years are not applicable toward a doctoral degree without written approval from the Graduate Dean.

Advisory Committee

The student should check with the Graduate Coordinator/Program Director concerning the membership of the dissertation committee. The committee will consist of a minimum of three faculty members from the student's major area of study and at least one additional TAMUK faculty member selected from outside of the student's primary academic department. This faculty member will be selected by the student in consultation with their primary dissertation advisor and must be a TAMUK graduate faculty member. The faculty member will fill the role of the Graduate Faculty Representative.

Approval Forms and Documents Prior to Proposal

The student should secure from the College of Graduate Studies, the Program Director, or the Texas A&M University-Kingsville website the following documents:

- a. Institutional Review Board (IRB) Application or other program specific research approval document,
- b. Dissertation Committee Membership Form (submitted to the Graduate Dean by the Chair of the Dissertation Committee), and
- c. Thesis and Dissertation Manual.

Proposal

Upon successful defense by the student and approval by the dissertation committee, the Dissertation Status Report form and the abstract page should be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies.

Dissertation Final Defense

Student must successfully defend a dissertation. A quorum of the members of the dissertation committee is required for the final defense. The Graduate Faculty Representative must be in attendance for the defense.

Dissertation

A candidate must complete a dissertation which is acceptable to the student's advisory committee and the Graduate Dean. To be acceptable, the dissertation must give evidence that the candidate has pursued a program of research, the result of which reveals superior academic competence and a significant contribution to knowledge.

Filing for Graduation

The candidate must file for graduation online via Blue & Gold. A student must be in good standing with the College of Graduate Studies in order to complete graduation requirements.

- a. Students applying for graduation must have a final degree plan in DegreeWorks.
- b. Students who do not meet their final requirements by the deadline must re-submit the application for candidacy for the next semester.

Submission of Dissertation

Registration in the dissertation course is required the semester that the dissertation is submitted. After a successful defense, the student will submit the following final requirements:

- a. Submit the final manuscript ONLINE as a Word Doc file. No hardcopy is needed,
- b. If the student followed a particular journal's format, the student must provide the link of the journal guidelines to the College of Graduate Studies,
- c. Submit the final requirement forms,
- d. After final approval of dissertation, the final manuscript will be emailed to the student with instructions for uploading the Word file into ProQuest,
- e. The student will go to the following URL ProQuest webpage to register and create a personal ProQuest account and follow the instructions to submit the full document. The student can upload from any computer with internet access or they can contact the College of Graduate Studies for guidance.

Commencement

The degree is conferred at the commencement ceremony following the fulfillment of all requirements.

General Requirements for Graduation with a Doctoral Degree

The Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) is a nonvoting member of the doctoral student's Advisory Committee. The GFR has the same responsibilities as other members of the committee except for voting on the technical merits of the graduate work. The GFR is charged with:

- a. assuring that the doctoral student is treated fairly and impartially by his advisory committee; and
- b. assuring that the quality of the dissertation is reasonable and consistent with the status of Texas A&M University-Kingsville as an internationally recognized research institution.

In order to satisfy these charges, the student is to provide the GFR with a copy of the degree plan, the dissertation proposal and the dissertation in a timely manner. The dissertation proposal and final dissertation must be presented to all committee members at least ten working days before the scheduled presentation. This ten day policy can be waived if all committee members agree. The following is a brief summary of functions and responsibilities of the GFR:

General Functions

The Graduate Council is represented on a student's dissertation committee by a graduate faculty member. This faculty member must be outside the student's primary academic department. The Graduate Council recognizes that a GFR will not possess technical expertise in all elements considered

in research outside his or her field or specialization. Therefore, an individual serving as a GFR must exercise careful judgment in fulfilling the following general functions:

- Reviewing the student's approved degree plan in order to gain familiarity with the nature of the student's program.
- Reviewing the student's proposal for the dissertation.
- Ensuring that the oral portion of the preliminary exam and the final defense are conducted in a fair and unbiased but also a thoroughgoing manner.
- Reviewing the student's dissertation in order to attest that it meets generally accepted standards of scholarship.
- Coordinating with the student and other committee members on dates/times for the proposal presentation and the final defense.
- Participating in additional Advisory Committee meetings which may be scheduled by the Chair of the Advisory Committee.
- Notifying the College of Graduate Studies in writing of any irregularity in procedure at the time of the scheduled examination (e.g. the absence of a committee member) in order to obtain instructions.

Responsibilities of the GFR to the Doctoral Student

- To participate in the student's preliminary and final oral examination.
- To review documents such as the proposal and the dissertation in a timely manner. The student must provide the paper ten working days before the presentation. This ten day policy can be waived if all committee members agree.
- If unable to be present at the examinations and called meetings of the Advisory Committee, the GFR shall notify the Graduate Dean. The Dean shall appoint a substitute.

Responsibilities of the Doctoral Student to the GFR

- To keep the GFR informed of progress toward the degree, the student will provide the GFR with copies of the proposal and the dissertation ten working days before the presentation.
- To coordinate with the GFR with possible dates and times for preliminary and final oral examinations.
- To provide a copy of the dissertation to the GFR before the final oral examination (at least ten working days before the presentation).

Pathways to the Doctorate Program

The goal of the Pathways to the Doctorate is to attract high achieving students within The Texas A&M University System to pursue careers in higher education.

The Texas A&M University System Graduate Faculty

The Texas A&M University System has established a System Graduate Faculty that enables and facilitates collaborative research and teaching among faculty members of the nine universities and the Health Science center within the System. By acquiring status through the System Graduate Faculty, faculty members are able to co-chair and serve on graduate student committees within The Texas A&M University System.