

Requirements for Degrees

Georgetown University establishes minimum requirements for admission and the award of degrees; departments and programs are encouraged to set higher standards. Students should therefore familiarize themselves with all the rules, regulations, and procedures relevant to their pursuit of a Graduate School degree, including those published in the University Bulletin as well as those disseminated by their department or program.

“Thesis” and “Non-Thesis” Programs

“Thesis” programs include all doctoral degree programs (all of which require a dissertation or doctoral project), all master's degree programs in which a thesis is required, and any master's degree program offering a thesis option, if the individual student has chosen the thesis option to fulfill degree requirements. “Non-thesis” programs include any master's degree program offering a thesis option if the individual student has not chosen the thesis option to fulfill degree requirements, and any master's degree program in which a thesis is neither required nor optional.

Thesis, Doctoral Project, and Dissertation Guidelines

Failure to submit a properly prepared thesis, doctoral project, or dissertation may delay the award of the degree. Information about preparation of theses, doctoral projects, and dissertations may be found at Dissertation, Doctoral Project, and Thesis Resources on UOGS website. For additional information see Section V.B. Publication of Theses, Doctoral Projects, and Dissertations.

Thesis, Doctoral Project, or Dissertation Proposal

All doctoral students and master's students who are preparing a thesis must file a Thesis, Doctoral Project, or Dissertation Proposal (<https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/vx5gswfkutds4zlbw67akh1nio5tax3v>) form with UOGS. The form must be on file before the student can defend the thesis, doctoral project, or dissertation, if the department or program requires a defense. The proposal must include an outline of the proposed topic of study, the proposed procedure or method of study, and a preliminary bibliography. The Proposal form should list the names and bear the signature of the Thesis Advisor and other members of the student's examining committee, as have been identified at that time, and the Director of Graduate Studies before it is submitted to UOGS.

Research on Human Subjects

Students whose research will involve human subjects must contact the Office of Human Subjects Protection to obtain approval or exemption, as appropriate, from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before beginning their research. The IRB protocol or exemption number must be included on the Thesis, Doctoral Project, or Dissertation Proposal form, with a copy of the IRB's approval or exemption memo attached, at the time of submission to UOGS.

Language Requirements

Departmental and program language requirements vary and are articulated in the respective school handbooks.

See Section II.E.3. Language Study Scholarships for information regarding graduate student enrollment in language skills courses. As a rule, no degree credit is granted for language courses.

The Master's Degree

The minimum requirement for a master's degree is either twenty-four credits of coursework and submission of an acceptable thesis or a minimum of thirty credits. As these are minimum requirements, students should determine the actual requirements of their individual degree programs.

Comprehensive Examination for the Master's Degree

Some programs may require comprehensive exams; the nature and timing of comprehensive examinations are determined by individual departments and programs. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all rules and regulations governing comprehensive examinations in their degree program.

In the event that a student's performance in the comprehensive examination is not satisfactory, the examining committee may allow a second opportunity in accordance with program guidelines. If a student who had previously failed the Comprehensive Examination receives a passing result on a second attempt, the failing result will be removed from the transcript and the passing result will be posted to the graduate transcript.

Examination reports are never provided to students.

See further Section III.A.4.a. Appeals Contesting Grades or Other Forms of Assessment.

Final Defense of the Master's Thesis

A final oral defense is required for some master's theses; other programs may require only faculty review of the master's thesis. In all cases, a Master's Thesis Reviewers' Report (<https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/bp5vtjyf8jwm4yjr34k9puhq4rydfjd>) must be completed by the thesis committee and submitted to UOGS one week prior to the final oral defense. A defense may be held only if the reviewers unanimously agree that the thesis is ready for defense.

The results of all final defenses are reported to the University Registrar on a Thesis, Dissertation, Doctoral Project Defense Report form.

Completed Defense Report forms are never provided to students.

It is common for the faculty examiners or the thesis advisor to require students who have successfully passed the final defense to make additional revisions to the text of the thesis before it is submitted in electronic form (via ProQuest (<https://library.georgetown.edu/scholarly-communication/dissertations-theses-instructions-submit-proquest>)) to UOGS. The student's mentor, the members of the examining committee, and the Director of Graduate Studies must all indicate their approval (<https://grad.georgetown.edu/academics/current-students/dissertation-doctoral-project-and-thesis-information/>) of the final version of the thesis.

Theses that have been accepted by UOGS are publicly available online (<https://repository.digital.georgetown.edu/>).

Award of a Master's Degree "In Passing" or as a "Terminal" Degree

A student who is enrolled in a doctoral program may be eligible to apply to be awarded a master's degree in the same major field. Depending on whether or not the student will continue to pursue the Ph.D., the master's degree may be referred to as being awarded "in passing" or as a "terminal" degree. There is no substantive difference between a master's degree awarded "in passing" and a "terminal" master's degree. The same degree is awarded in either case and is acknowledged with identical diplomas and transcript entries.

Whether applying for an "in passing" or a "terminal" degree—and regardless of whether the candidate for a "terminal" degree is leaving the doctoral program voluntarily or involuntarily—the student must request award of the master's degree by submitting a "Student Petition for a Master's in Passing or Terminal Master's" (<https://grad.georgetown.edu/academics/current-students/academic-forms/>)."

The Doctoral Degree

A doctoral degree is awarded in recognition of the student's scholarship or, in the case of some fields, applied work.

In addition to coursework, a Ph.D. student may be required to pass a qualifying examination or write a qualifying paper, pass a comprehensive examination, complete and successfully defend a dissertation, and have an acceptable copy of that dissertation formally accepted by UOGS.

Beyond the completion of coursework, students in doctorates of the practice must complete and successfully defend a Scholarly Doctoral Project, and must have an acceptable copy of the doctoral project formally accepted by UOGS. The doctoral project requirements and guidelines are provided by the relevant departments and programs.

Other doctoral degrees may have a different set of requirements appropriate to their specific fields. These are defined by the handbooks of individual programs and schools.

Qualifying and Comprehensive Examinations for the Doctoral Degree

Georgetown does not require all doctoral students to pass a Qualifying Examination. The nature and timing of any required Comprehensive Examinations are determined by individual departments and programs. Students are responsible for knowing all rules and regulations governing Qualifying or Comprehensive Examinations in their degree program.

Students must be registered for coursework or for the appropriate section of Thesis Research or Continuous Registration during the semester or Summer Session in which they plan to take either a Qualifying or Comprehensive Examination. See Section II.F. Standard Modes of Registration and Enrollment Time Status for further information on enrollment status and fees associated with these categories of registration.

In the event that a student's performance in the Qualifying or Comprehensive Examination is not satisfactory, the examining committee may recommend a second opportunity. In extremely rare

cases, a student may ask the department or program to petition their school to allow a third examination. The final decision on whether or not to allow an exception rests with the school dean.

See further Section III.A.4.a. Appeals Contesting Grades or Other Forms of Assessment.

Doctoral Candidacy

Students formally advance to doctoral candidacy when they have completed all required coursework and passed all required exams (or their equivalent). Submission of an acceptable dissertation proposal is generally a requirement fulfilled after candidacy has been achieved, but practices may vary in some disciplines.

If the graduate program has a general language requirement, it must be completed before candidacy is awarded. Programs may require special language proficiency or specific research techniques (e.g., statistics) for particular dissertations; these requirements may be fulfilled during the candidacy period.

Students in doctoral candidacy must identify a primary faculty mentor or co-mentors to oversee their thesis research. If a primary mentor is identified who is not a member of the Georgetown faculty, a member of the Georgetown faculty must serve as co-mentor to regularly monitor the candidate's research and progress toward the degree.

Each graduate program's graduate student handbook will specify regular milestones, both before and after candidacy has been achieved, at which point each student's progress will be assessed. Students who are found not to be making satisfactory progress toward the degree, and who are therefore unlikely to complete a successful dissertation within the allowed time, will be identified and terminated from the program at the earliest possible time.

Dissertation/Doctoral Project Committee

Each program's graduate student handbook defines a valid dissertation or doctoral project committee. At a minimum, a dissertation or doctoral project committee must comprise three members, one of which may or may not be the mentor. At least two of the minimum three must be members of the Georgetown faculty (either tenure-line or non-tenure-line faculty). Members of the committee are appointed by means of the "Thesis, Doctoral Project, or Dissertation Proposal" form. Some subset of the full committee may be designated as readers. Readers from outside the University must hold the terminal degree required for a faculty appointment.

Final Defense of the Dissertation/Doctoral Project

The policies and procedures described below are the minimum requirements for conducting the final defense of a doctoral dissertation or doctoral project. Each program's graduate student handbook defines the specific rules under which all defenses in that program will be conducted. Such program-specific rules may be more stringent than those set out in this *Bulletin*.

A final public defense is required for all doctoral dissertations and doctoral projects.

Instructions for electronic submission of a thesis are available here (<https://grad.georgetown.edu/academics/current-students/dissertation-doctoral-project-and-thesis-information/>). UOGS will review the submitted dissertation or doctoral project for compliance with formatting requirements. Formal acceptance of the dissertation

or doctoral project by UOGS is required before the student can be cleared for graduation. Dissertations or doctoral projects that have been accepted by UOGS are available online (<https://repository.digital.georgetown.edu/>).

Dual-Degree and Joint-Degree Programs

Accelerated Programs

Some schools offer accelerated programs that combine a master's degree with a bachelor's degree. Only Georgetown undergraduates are permitted to pursue a graduate degree in an accelerated program format.

Dual-Graduate Degree Programs

Students enrolled in dual-degree programs pursue studies leading to the award of two graduate degrees from Georgetown University.

Dual-degree programs are typically structured so as to double-count some number of earned course credits so that they are applied to the completion of both degrees. While the policies governing double-counting of course credits vary by program, a minimum of 24 graduate course credits solely devoted to each graduate degree program is required for successful completion of the dual-degree program.

Joint-Degree Programs

Georgetown University also offers a limited number of joint-degree programs in which study at both Georgetown and a partner university leads to the award of a single degree and a single diploma bearing the seals of both universities.

A current list of dual-degree and joint-degree programs can be found here (<https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/824fsu5wmrnyd7zkzmfk7wey6rix5h3j>). The requirements differ for each dual-degree and joint-degree program. Program descriptions and other information is available in the online summary of degree programs (<https://grad.georgetown.edu/programs/>) or directly from the participating departments or programs. Individuals who wish to pursue a dual-degree program must make their intentions known when they apply to Georgetown University.

Georgetown University does not allow students to combine two Georgetown University graduate degree programs into a joint-degree program that awards a single degree.

Concurrent-Degree Programs

Occasionally an applicant whose particular interdisciplinary interests do not fit within existing dual-degree programs will seek admission to two separate programs that they wish to pursue concurrently. Georgetown University does not actively discourage such applicants, but anyone considering such a challenging course of study should be aware that, if admitted, they will need to fulfill the requirements of both degree programs independently; there will be no courses shared between the two programs; and they will be charged full tuition for both programs, subject to the University's billing policies.

Anyone considering pursuing a concurrent-degree program must make their intentions clear to their school and the faculty of each program at the time of application. They also should confer with both Billing & Receivables and the Office of Student Financial Aid concerning the

charges they will incur and the amount of need-based financial aid that may be available to them.

Individualized Dual-Degree Programs

Georgetown's specialized graduate programs have often attracted the interests of students pursuing degrees at other universities. Schools may consider proposals to create individualized dual-degree programs involving Georgetown University and another university. Final approval from UOGS is required. Such a program, based on an individually negotiated agreement between the two universities, will permit a specific student to receive two post-baccalaureate degrees, with some coursework at each school accepted by the other toward fulfillment of its degree requirements.

Only one other institution may be involved in an individualized dual-degree arrangement. The other university must be an accredited, degree-granting institution of higher education and agree to reciprocate in the dual-degree arrangement.

In order to complete an individualized dual-degree program, a student must have a minimum of 24 Georgetown graduate course credits devoted solely to the Georgetown degree program.

Course credits from the other university will be recorded on the Georgetown graduate transcript with a notation that they have been applied toward satisfaction of degree requirements at both institutions. Such notations will be posted only upon receipt of an official transcript from the other university showing satisfactory completion (grade of "B" or better, or its equivalent). The Georgetown degree will not be awarded until that official transcript has been received.

Georgetown tuition scholarships cannot be applied toward courses taken at the other university.