

REQUIREMENTS FOR DEGREES

Degrees Offered

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences offers graduate programs leading to the Master of Arts, Master of Arts in Education, Master of Arts in Human Services, Master of Fine Arts, Master of Science, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

Degree Completion

Each degree requires a minimum of 30 semester credit hours. The minimum GPA required for graduation is 3.0 for awarded degrees and earned certificates. The total allowable time for completion of master's degrees must not exceed six years. The total allowable time for completion of doctoral degrees must not exceed seven years.

Thesis/Dissertation Committee Composition

For Master's degrees: When required a thesis is written under the supervision of the student's advisory committee. The committee must have no fewer than three members, including the advisor from the program, a second reader from within the program who serves as the committee chair, and a third reader from outside the program or from the student's area of concentration.

For the PhD degree: The examining committee for the dissertation must have no fewer than five members, including the program director, or a graduate faculty member chosen by the program director, the student's advisor, another member of the department, a representative from a related area from within or outside the department, and a member from outside of the major department; this last member represents the Graduate Council and serves as the chair of the committee.

For all degrees: All members of the student's advisory or examining committee should be members of the graduate faculty. With the approval of the advisor, a student may recommend a person who is not on the graduate faculty to serve as a voting member. The program director or advisor must justify the participation of this person based on research, publications, and/or professional activities in an email to the Dean of the Graduate School requesting approval. This email should include the proposed committee members' curriculum vitae.

Final Examination Assessment

The defense must take place by the stated deadline on the academic calendar, or the student will be required to register for a subsequent semester to have their degree conferred. The examination validates the work stated in the thesis/dissertation and demonstrates knowledge in the related areas. The possible committee decisions are unconditional pass, pass upon rectifying minor deficiencies, pass upon rectifying major deficiencies, and fail. If a student fails, they may be reexamined only once.

Unconditional Pass

If all committee members agree that the student has passed unconditionally, there is consensus to pass the examination. The committee chair will sign and submit the ballot to the Graduate School office.

Pass Upon Rectifying Minor Deficiencies

If reservations are expressed by committee members, the chair of the committee will ensure that the reservations are communicated to the student and the Dean by signing and submitting the ballot to the Graduate School office. The student and the advisor are jointly responsible for ensuring that the thesis/dissertation is modified to address the committee's reservations.

Pass Upon Rectifying Major Deficiencies

If reservations are expressed by committee members, the chair of the committee will ensure that the reservations are communicated to the student and the Dean by signing and submitting the ballot to the Graduate School office. The student and the advisor are jointly responsible for ensuring that the thesis/dissertation is modified to address the committee's reservations.

Fail

If, in the opinion of more than one member of the examining committee, the student has failed the examination, there is no consensus to pass. The chair of the committee will advise the student that the thesis/dissertation fails to meet the requirements of the Graduate School. The chair will ensure that the student knows the reason(s) for failure and will submit the ballot to the Graduate School office. If the student resubmits or submits a new thesis/dissertation for consideration, at least three members will be drawn from the original committee. If the modified or new thesis/dissertation fails to meet the requirements, the student will be dismissed.

Requirements for Master's Degrees

Programs of study leading to the master's degree are offered in Bioethics, Biology, Chemistry, Communication, Computer Science, Counseling, Documentary Film, Education, English, Health and Exercise Science, Interpreting and Translation Studies, Liberal Arts Studies, Mathematics and Statistics, Physics, Psychology, Religious Studies, and Sustainability.

Residence Requirements

In general, a minimum of one academic year of full-time work (or the equivalent in Wake Forest online instruction) is required.

General Course Requirements

Required coursework must be taken for a grade and cannot be taken as Pass/Fail. GRAD courses cannot be used toward degree requirements. Students should consult with individual programs for specific course requirements.

Foreign Language or Special Skills Requirement

Some programs may require students to demonstrate a reading knowledge of an appropriate foreign language or competency in one or more special skills. Students should consult with individual programs for special skills requirements.

Admission to Degree Candidacy

A student is admitted to degree candidacy by the Dean after recommendation by the program. The student must have satisfactorily met any foreign language or special skills requirement and is expected to complete the degree requirements during the semester candidacy has been approved.

Thesis Requirement

Students should verify with their program if a thesis is required. If applicable, six of the hours required for the degree are allocated to thesis research. Thesis research courses are graded S (Satisfactory) or U (Unsatisfactory). If a U is assigned, the course must be repeated, and an S earned before the degree can be awarded. A student who receives a grade of U in research in two semesters may be dismissed from the Graduate School upon recommendation of the program.

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Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degrees

Programs of study leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree are offered in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

Residence Requirement

In general, a minimum of three years of full-time study, of which at least two must be in full-time residence at the University (or the equivalent in Wake Forest online instruction) is required.

Course Requirements and Advisory Committee

The number of required courses is not prescribed by the Graduate School. Students should consult individual programs for specific requirements. Courses required by programs cannot be taken as Pass/Fail. The advisory committee is appointed by the program director and consists of the student's advisor and a minimum of two other members of the graduate faculty.

Foreign Language or Special Skills Requirement

Some programs may require students to demonstrate either a reading knowledge of one or more appropriate foreign languages, or competence in one or more special skills. Students should consult with individual programs for special skills requirements.

Preliminary Examination

The preliminary examination, conducted by the program, is typically administered near the end of the student's second year and must be passed at least twelve months prior to degree completion. The examining committee must include at least three members, one of whom represents a related concentration area. The written examination(s) should cover all areas of concentration and collateral studies. There may also be an oral examination in which any faculty member invited may participate. The committee passes or fails the student and notifies the Graduate School of the results. In case of failure, the committee may recommend that the candidate be dropped from the program. A reexamination may be allowed after six months from the date of the first examination. A student may be reexamined only once. PhD candidates must have a GPA of 3.0 at the time of the preliminary examination.

Admission to Degree Candidacy

A student is admitted to degree candidacy by the Dean after recommendation by the program. The student must have satisfactorily met any foreign language or special skills requirement and is expected to complete the degree requirements during the semester candidacy has been approved.

Dissertation Requirement

Under the supervision of an advisor committee, the candidate prepares a dissertation embodying the results of investigative efforts in the field of concentration. Dissertation research courses are graded S (Satisfactory) or U (Unsatisfactory). If a U is assigned, the course must be repeated, and