

DOCTORAL DEGREES, GENERAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The following general requirements apply to all doctoral programs administered by the Graduate School.

Transfer Credit

The majority of all course work toward completion of any degree must be taken at Baylor. For doctoral degrees, the accepted number of transfer credits will be determined by the individual academic departments within the following general guidelines:

- course work must be from an accredited university and appear on a graduate transcript, and
- course work must have been taken within five years immediately prior to matriculation, and
- course work must carry a grade of "B" or better (cannot accept P/F, CR/NC or certificates of completion), and
- none of the transfer course work consists of extension, workshop courses, or master's thesis or doctoral dissertation credits

Prior Learning Assessment

The Graduate School allows programs to develop processes for awarding academic credit for Prior Learning and Professional Experiences through formalized Prior Learning Assessment (PLA). The goal is to recognize learning acquired outside of traditional academic settings while maintaining academic rigor and ensuring that credit is awarded only for learning that is equivalent to the learning outcomes of graduate-level courses. The process must include faculty oversight and align with the guidelines of the American Council on Education.

Time Limitation

The maximum time limit for the doctoral degree is eight years from the time the student first matriculates into the doctoral program. After this time the student may request a one-year extension. Once a student's time limit expires, any incompletes with the exception of dissertation or thesis hours will change to an "F". Any student wishing to return to complete their degree after a one year absence, must reapply for admission to Graduate School. If admitted, the student would enter under the current catalog and the appropriate course work for degree completion may be revalidated or not, according to the policy of the individual program in consultation with the Graduate School. Coursework where incompletes have been changed to an "F" may not count in the new program.

Graduation Eligibility

To qualify for a doctoral degree, students must have a minimum overall grade point average of 3.0 and must have satisfied all course work, practica, dissertation, or other academic/professional efforts associated with the degree sought. No member of the Baylor University faculty above the rank of Lecturer may be admitted to candidacy for a graduate degree at the University. Candidates are not allowed to continue in the doctoral program after ten years has elapsed from the semester of enrollment.

Dissertation Examining Committee Composition

The dissertation examining committee will include a minimum of four members. At least two members, including the chairperson, will be Baylor Graduate Faculty from the degree-granting program. (Faculty recognized as "affiliate faculty" (or secondary, joint, etc.) may direct dissertations in their affiliated programs with approval of the Graduate Program Director in the affiliated program.) At least one member must be a member of Baylor's Graduate Faculty whose primary appointment is from a program other than the one conferring the degree. This non-program member helps to ensure a consistent level of quality, rigor, and fairness across all graduate programs at Baylor University. The committee may also include one member from outside of Baylor with approval of the candidate's Graduate Program Director. Non-Baylor committee members are not eligible to serve as the dissertation chairperson. The Graduate Program Director is responsible for ensuring the relevant expertise of the non-Baylor committee member and notifying the Graduate School through the Announcement of Doctoral Oral Examination form. The candidate's dissertation director will serve as the chairperson of the committee and ensure that formal announcement of the examination is made, that the exam is conducted fairly, and that it is open to the faculty. The committee may include additional members beyond the required minimum of four. Preferably, the student and the examiners will be present in person, but in certain cases (e.g., online degree programs, extenuating circumstances, etc.) this may not be logistically possible. A Graduate Program Director may approve alternative formats for examination, including virtual, video-conferenced participation of one or more examiner(s). Such approval needs to be accompanied with justification to the Graduate School.