DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAMS (ED.D., PH.D., D.M.A.)

The Ed.D., Ph.D. and D.M.A. degree programs at UMKC have the following elements in common:

• Appointment of supervisory committees.
• Approval of doctoral programs or plans of study.
• Satisfaction of a doctoral residency requirement.
• Satisfactory completion of a doctoral comprehensive examination in order to advance to candidacy.

In addition, all Ph.D. programs and the Ed.D. program have the following elements in common:

• A work of original research or scholarship reported in dissertation form.
• Formal defense of the candidate’s dissertation.

The specific requirements for satisfying these common elements may vary from program to program. Doctoral students are also subject to most of the minimum general graduate academic regulations and degree requirements listed in previous portions of this catalog section.

The following general regulations are minimum requirements. Each degree program may have regulations that are more stringent and would take precedence over the minimums stated previously. Refer also to graduate regulations described in previous sections that are common to all graduate or doctoral students and to degree requirements listed under the academic unit sections of this catalog.

Supervisory Committee

At the request of the non-interdisciplinary Ph.D. student, the D.M.A. student or the Ed.D. student, and upon the recommendation of the student’s advisor, the graduate officer for the degree program will appoint a supervisory committee consisting of at least three members of the graduate faculty, including the student’s advisor. While the chair of the initial supervisory committee can be a member of the graduate faculty, once the student has reached the dissertation stage, the committee must be chaired by a member of the University of Missouri doctoral faculty. In some cases, following the procedures of the specific program, the dissertation director need not be the chair of the committee but must be, at a minimum, either a graduate faculty or adjunct graduate faculty member.

Non-interdisciplinary Ph.D. and D.M.A. student dissertation committees must have at least five members and Ed.D. student dissertation committees must have at least four members. The majority of the members of the non-interdisciplinary Ph.D., Ed.D. and D.M.A. dissertation committees must be doctoral faculty or regular graduate faculty members. Three of the five members of Interdisciplinary Ph.D. student supervisory and dissertation committees must hold doctoral faculty status. See the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. academic regulations section (http://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/graduate-studies/minimum-interdisciplinary-phd-academic-regulations-degree-requirements) for additional specifications for Interdisciplinary Ph.D. supervisory committees.

Qualifying Examination

The qualifying examination, if required, will be given before the doctoral program of study is filed with the graduate officer. At the discretion of the school or department and the supervisory committee, a master’s degree from UMKC in the area of intended specialization may be considered as a substitute for the qualifying examination. Students must submit a request to take the qualifying examination to the appropriate department chair in the College of Arts and Sciences or the dean of that professional school. The results of the qualifying examination will be reported to the graduate officer, who will inform the student and the registrar. With approval of the advisor and supervisory committee, students may take the qualifying examination a second time.

Doctoral Programs of Study

Students should plan their programs of study in consultation with their advisors and supervisory committees. Forms for specifying individual programs of study are available from the principal graduate advisor or graduate officer of each academic unit. It is recommended that students file this program of study with the graduate officer in their academic units before 60 percent of the coursework applicable to the degree is completed. (Interdisciplinary Ph.D. students must file their proposed plans of study and form their supervisory committees within 24 months of being admitted.) No more than 40 percent of the program may be 300- and 400-level courses. After the proposed program has been approved, as required by the academic unit, the unit’s graduate officer will distribute copies of the program of study to the registrar, the advisor and the student.

Subsequent changes in the program of study must be approved by the student’s advisor, supervisory committee, the dean or department chairperson of the school in whose area the specialization is offered and the graduate officer, who also will inform the registrar of such changes. If cumulative changes in courses and degree requirements exceed four, a revised program of study should be filed.

Transfer Credit

Graduate credit earned before entering a UMKC doctoral program may be applied to the doctoral degree if it is of acceptable quality and appropriate to the student’s program of study as determined by the student’s academic unit and supervisory committee. The total amount of graduate credit earned from all other academic institutions before admission to a UMKC doctoral program and applied to the doctoral degree cannot exceed half the number
of credit hours, exclusive of dissertation research credits, required for the degree. For graduate coursework completed at UMKC prior to admission to a doctoral program, any number of credit hours required for the doctoral degree, exclusive of dissertation research, can be satisfied using previous UMKC graduate credit if approved by the student’s academic unit and supervisory committee. All graduate coursework, completed prior to admission and not used to earn the master’s degree or educational-specialist degree, must be no more than seven years old at the time the doctoral program of study is approved.

After admission to the doctoral program, if a student wishes to take graduate coursework at another institution and apply it to their doctoral program, the student must receive written approval from the doctoral program’s graduate officer and from the student’s supervisory committee chair, as appropriate, before the coursework is taken. Such coursework is not considered as transfer credit. Upon completion of the coursework, the student must have the official transcript forwarded to the UMKC registrar.

Residency Requirements

Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Students

Interdisciplinary Ph.D. students must satisfy the doctoral residency requirement by satisfactory completion of at least 18 credits in no more than 24 consecutive months. When satisfying the residency requirement, all Interdisciplinary Ph.D. students are subject to the following restrictions:

1. The doctoral residency requirement must be satisfied no later than the end of the semester in which the student completes his or her comprehensive examinations.
2. Students must achieve a cumulative graduate grade-point average of at least 3.0 in all courses counted toward satisfying the residency requirement.
3. Dissertation research credits (696 to 699) may not be counted toward satisfying the doctoral residency requirement.

Non-Interdisciplinary Ph.D. and Ed.D. Students

The residency requirement for the Ed.D. student or non-interdisciplinary Ph.D. may be satisfied using the same guidelines stipulated for Interdisciplinary Ph.D. students, or in any one of the following alternate ways:

1. Two consecutive semesters of 12 credits each term of resident coursework at UMKC.
2. Three terms of eight credits each term of resident coursework at UMKC, to be completed within 18 months.
3. Two consecutive semesters of nine credits each term of resident coursework at UMKC while employed at least half time for the University in teaching or research.

D.M.A. Students

The residency requirement for the D.M.A. may be satisfied in any one of the following ways:

1. Two consecutive semesters with a minimum of nine credits each.
2. One semester with a minimum of nine credits and two summer sessions with a minimum of five credits each, provided that the full-time semester is adjacent to one of the summer sessions. It is expected that the summer sessions be consecutive.
3. Completion of 24 credits within 18 consecutive months.

Comprehensive Examination

To advance to degree candidacy, doctoral students are required to pass a comprehensive examination. D.M.A. students selecting a non-dissertation option may satisfy the comprehensive examination requirement during their final semester. For all other doctoral students, the comprehensive examination must be successfully completed at least seven months before the date of graduation:

- For graduation in May: Nov. 1.
- For graduation in July: Dec. 1.
- For graduation in December: May 1.

The following requirements must have been met before students can take the comprehensive examination(s):

1. Assignment of a supervisory committee. (In Counseling Psychology and Psychology the examination committee is separate from the dissertation committee).
2. Successful completion of the qualifying examination, if required.
3. Filing and approval of the program of study and completion of essentially all coursework required for the degree.
4. If required by the academic unit, satisfactory demonstration of foreign language proficiency through accepted coursework or other evidence specified by the student’s supervisory committee.
5. Completion of residency in most cases.

The comprehensive examination may be written, oral or both. The exam is scheduled either through their advisor or in some departments the exam is set on a calendar basis (e.g., Counseling Psychology and Psychology). Through either their advisors or their department, students will apply to either
their graduate officer in their academic unit or their department for an examining committee to be composed of a minimum of five members of the graduate faculty with the exception of Counseling Psychology which requires four members. In most cases the examination committee is also the dissertation advisory committee, in other cases the dissertation committee is formed after successful completion of the comprehensive examination. If an oral examination is required as part of the comprehensive examination, all members of the examining committee are required to attend the entire exam. Synchronous modes of communication or committee substitutes are allowed if approved by the graduate officer where the degree or primary discipline resides, in consultation with the chair of the student’s examining committee, when physical presence conflicts with a major commitment.

The examination will be arranged and supervised by the advisor or other department official in the case of Psychology and Counseling Psychology. It will generally terminate within one month after it starts, but longer periods may be required in specific disciplines. Upon satisfactory completion of the examination, the student’s advisor sends a report of the results of the examination, with the signatures of all members of the examining committee, to the graduate officer, who, in turn, informs the student and the registrar.

A student is considered to have passed the comprehensive examination if all, or all but one member, of the examining committee vote that the candidate passes. If failure is reported, the examining committee will either recommend termination of status as a doctoral student or suggest additional work or other remedial measures. Furthermore, a student who has failed may not take a second examination for at least 12 weeks. Failure of a second comprehensive examination shall automatically preclude candidacy at this institution.

Non-Interdisciplinary Students in Counseling Psychology and Psychology

The Ph.D. programs in Counseling Psychology and Psychology have specific procedures in place for their respective comprehensive exams that are designed to meet the unique requirements of preparing professional psychologists. Please refer to the respective programs for details about their comprehensive examinations.

Program Time Constraints

The doctoral student must take and pass the doctoral comprehensive examination and advance to candidacy within five years from the beginning of doctoral coursework (within four years if entering with a master’s degree in the same or closely related field). After the establishment of degree candidacy, a maximum of five years will be allowed for completion of degree requirements. Failure to complete the work within the periods specified will necessitate re-evaluation of the entire program and may result in a notice of termination. In compelling circumstances and on the written recommendation of a majority of the student’s supervisory committee members, the dean of the School of Graduate Studies may grant a one-year extension. Some academic units may impose more stringent time requirements.

Required Enrollment

See Continuous Graduate Enrollment Requirement, included in the Graduate Academic Regulations part of this section.

Dissertation and Completion of Degree

Dissertation Definition

A dissertation is a written coherent treatise culminating from original in-depth research, that is of publishable quality for a peer refereed journal and deserving of the highest academic degree, a Doctor of Philosophy. The work should move the field forward by making significant contributions to the existing body of knowledge. It may include statement of goals, an in depth review and critical analysis of the existing literature and background information, a plan of research or methodology, collection and analysis of data to present as results, a discussion of the findings, and citations.

Doctoral Dissertation Requirement

All UMKC Ph.D. degrees and the Ed.D. degree require a dissertation as the final component of the program. The dissertation is also a requirement in some D.M.A. programs and an option in others. The doctoral faculty view the dissertation as one of the most important aspects of the student’s experience because:

• It is a work of original research or scholarship that makes a contribution to existing knowledge.
• It is an educational experience that demonstrates the candidate’s mastery of research methods and tools of the specialized fields.
• It demonstrates the candidate’s ability to address a major intellectual problem.

For regulations pertaining to formatting the dissertation and the process for approval, the reader is directed to Thesis and Dissertation Preparation and Approval Process, included under Graduate Academic Regulations in this catalog section.

Final Dissertation Examination

Final examinations in defense of the dissertation are open to all members of the doctoral faculty, who may attend as interested observers. The format and procedures of the defense are determined by the supervisory committee and its chair. The date, time and location must be announced and published at least two weeks before each final examination takes place. This examination may be conducted only after the dissertation has been approved by the dean of the School of Graduate Studies, and may not be administered when UMKC is not officially in session. All members of the dissertation committee, or substitutes approved in consultation with the chair of the committee by graduate officers in the academic units where the degree or primary discipline resides, are required to attend the entire examination. Synchronous electronic modes of communication are allowed for committee members when physical presence conflicts with a major commitment upon approval of the graduate officer.
The defense of the dissertation is approved when a majority of the supervisory committee recommend approval and sign the Report of the Result of Final Doctoral Examination form. Within 48 hours of the defense, the supervisory committee chair will report the results of the final dissertation examination in writing to the candidate. For non-interdisciplinary doctoral candidates, the supervisory committee chair also will report the results of the defense to the principal graduate advisor (Arts and Sciences) or graduate officer. The departmental principal graduate advisor (Arts and Sciences) or graduate officer, in turn, informs the registrar.

**Deposit of Approved Dissertation with Libraries**

For regulations pertaining to deposit of the approved dissertation with the libraries, refer to Thesis and Dissertation Preparation and Approval Process, included under Graduate Academic Regulations in this catalog section.