

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY PROGRAMS (PHD)

- Core & Elective Courses: 72 graduate semester credits • Per credit tuition: \$225

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree is a terminal degree reflecting independent mastery of a specialized field of knowledge, and the successful pursuit of original research. The Ph.D. effort requires academic discipline together with a significant commitment of time and effort. It involves highly focused study in a particular area of interest culminating in an original research effort, which adds to the general body of knowledge in the field. This degree program is delivered through distance learning.

ELIGIBILITY

The applicant must have a master degree in the general field in which the application for Ph.D. has been submitted. The applicant must have earned a GPA of 3.0 on a scale of 4.0 or its equivalent grading in the master degree program, or received a minimum combined score of 1400 on the three sections of the GRE, or a minimum score of 500 on the GMAT. Distance Education applicants whose native language is not English must complete the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a score of 500 written or 175 computer-based prior to graduation or within two years following enrollment, whichever comes first.

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

A maximum of thirty (30) semester credits of graduate-level course work may be transferred into the doctoral program. Only graduate-level academic credits earned at recognized institutions with a grade of “C” or better may be transferred toward the program. The candidate will complete at least 42 graduate credits of course work to complete the program.

PH.D. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- 72 semester credits beyond the bachelor degree.
- 21 - 51 semester credits of elective course work.
- 9 semester credits for Research Focus (RF) courses
- 9 semester credits for Dissertation support (DS) courses
- 3 semester credits for Comprehensive Exam course (DR 7000)
- The candidate may transfer a maximum of 30 semester credits into the program from their master degree.

OVERVIEW OF THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE

The Ph.D. degree represents the culmination of extended academic study into a particular field of knowledge. Every doctoral program should be unified in relation to a clear objective. That is, it should have the approval of the student’s supervising professors, include focused academic course work that supports the research effort, and should include a tangible element of independent doctoral research. Those who earn the Ph.D. must demonstrate significant intellectual achievement and must contribute to the scholarly knowledge in their field of investigation. Therefore, candidates for Ph.D. degrees should have earned their Master degree in the field of study chosen for their doctoral work.

ACADEMIC COURSE WORK

Seventy-two semester credits of graduate course work beyond the bachelor degree are required for the Ph.D. Most students will transfer 30 semester credits from their master degree, and will complete forty-two credits through additional courses. The typical program begins with three core and four elective courses selected by the student in consultation with his or her Supervising Professor. When the core and elective courses are completed, the candidate will enroll in the Comprehensive Exam Course, DR 7000. The Comprehensive Exam course evaluates the student’s mastery of knowledge in the area of study and verifies the candidate’s readiness to

advance to the formal research stage of the doctoral program. The student's *Seminar* course is designed to guide the candidate's review of current literature, contemporary knowledge and recent research findings in the topical area of the dissertation. Ideally, the outcome of the *Seminar* course will be a comprehensive literature review covering the breadth of the research topic. Likewise, the three elective courses will be selected to support the specific area of the student's dissertation research. The primary focus of the academic course work is to provide the student with a comprehensive background in the chosen research area.

DURATION OF THE PROGRAM

The normal duration of the Ph.D. program for full-time students is 36 months. Elective course work of 21 semester credits may normally be completed in 18 months. The Research focus and dissertation support courses may be completed in the remaining 18 months. The maximum duration of the Ph.D. program is 108 months.

THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation is an essential aspect of Ph.D. studies. It is a formal written document representing sustained research or investigation into an important intellectual issue. The dissertation must be an independent effort, which contributes to the accumulated wisdom of the field in which it is written. The required Research Focus and Dissertation Support courses will help the student to focus his or her research effort, and provide general guidelines for research approach and report preparation. All dissertations must meet rigorous academic standards and be professionally prepared in a format suitable for reproduction. Dissertations will be reviewed and approved by the candidate's Supervising Professor and Preston University's Academic Review Committee.

DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS

Every candidate for the Ph.D. must prepare and submit a dissertation that shows independent investigation and is acceptable in form and content. The dissertation should normally be written in English and typewritten. Under certain circumstances, a dissertation may be completed in a language other than English, such as in the case of a Ph.D. in a foreign language.

The dissertation should follow the guidelines contained in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* for overall style, page format, citation format and reference listings.

One paper copy of the dissertation suitable for quality reproduction, unbound, with an appropriate abstract must be submitted for evaluation.

STYLE GUIDE FOR REPORTS, THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

The standard format and style reference guide for all academic writing for Preston University is the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. This handbook should be consulted to determine the format, style, reference citation criteria and standard conventions for writing all reports, papers, theses and dissertations. Deviations from this standard are permitted only with the expressed permission of the student's academic advisor.

DOCTORAL**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PH.D.)**

ALL COURSES ARE THREE (3) SEMESTER CREDITS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

RF 6500 Contemporary Research Sources

Core course for master and doctoral programs. This course reviews modern search methods and information sources that support contemporary research efforts. The topics cover the use of online systems, physical libraries, search engines, media selection, research optimization, and source documentation requirements.

RF 6800 Writing for Research and Publication

A core course for students who plan to complete dissertations or thesis research projects. Covers key elements of effective writing including proper use of reference sources and citations. Provides clear directions for entering notes, charts, tables, graphs, and figures within the text of reports.

DR 7000 Comprehensive Exam Course

The doctoral dissertation requires original research, which adds to the body of knowledge in the field of study. It is a formal academic document reflecting the candidate's thorough understanding of the topic studied.

RF 7100 Statistical Methods for Research

This course reviews qualitative and quantitative methods for researchers. It covers common statistical and non-parametric methods for data analysis and provides practice in the use of common statistical tools using software programs including MS EXCEL, SPSS, and Minitab.

RF 7200 Research Preparation

This advanced course prepares the student for the research effort. It covers the principles of research, discusses alternative philosophies of research and describes a disciplined procedural approach to the research process. The course results in a well-documented research approach including some preliminary findings in the topical area.

RF 7300 Advanced Research Methods

This advanced course is designed to guide the student toward a well-defined research topic as the focus of the dissertation effort. The course results in a detailed research methodology suitable to guide the subsequent research.

DS 7800 Dissertation Preparation Modules I & II

The doctoral dissertation describes an original research project. A distinct methodology and process is used to craft the dissertation to meet academic standards, while making it a useful and practical document. These two modules guide the candidate through the dissertation development process. (3 credits per module)

DS 7900 Dissertation Defense

The final stage of any doctoral study is a verbal defense of the research effort and review of the resulting dissertation. This course covers the methodology for preparation and delivery of the verbal defense.

XX 7300 Series Doctoral-Level Seminar Courses

As part of the doctoral core courses, these seminars guide the student through an in-depth review of contemporary writings within the range of the candidate's research focus. The result of this course is a comprehensive literature review reflecting the existing knowledge associated with the student's area of research interest.

Ph.D. Concentration Elective Courses

The concentration course work assigned is unique to each student's field of study. The courses are identified by the student in consultation with the supervising professor. Each course is selected to support the research effort, while providing the knowledge and insights required for mastery of the topical area of study.

Academic Departments for Ph.D. Programs**Business Administration****Computer Science****Education****Engineering****Finance****Health Care****Interdisciplinary Studies****International Studies****Law****Management****Political Science****Psychology****Public Administration****Science****Sociology****Standard Ph.D. Program**

COURSE	CREDITS
RF 6500 Contemporary Research Sources	3
RF 6800 Writing for Research and Publication	3
DR 7000 Comprehensive Exam Course	3
RF 7100 Statistical Methods for Research	3
RF 7200 Research Preparation	3
RF 7300 Advanced Research Methods	3
DS 7800 Dissertation Preparation Modules I & II	6
DS 7900 Dissertation Defense	3
XX 7300 Series Doctoral-Level Seminar Courses	3
Ph.D. Concentration Elective Courses (4 Courses)	12

TOTAL REQUIREMENT: 42 SEMESTER CREDITS