

**MU Graduate School Forms Page:** <https://gradschool.missouri.edu/current-students/forms-cs/>

**Credit requirements:** (<https://gradschool.missouri.edu/current-students/doctoral/>)

Full-time enrollment for graduate students is defined as enrollment in 9 credit hours per semester in the fall and spring semesters and/or 4.5 hours in the summer session. Full-time enrollment for doctoral candidates (after successful completion of their comprehensive examinations) is 2 credit hours in the fall and spring semesters and 1 hour in the summer session. Without special permission of the Dean of the Graduate School, the maximum number of credit hours in which a graduate student may enroll is 16 credit hours per semester in the fall and spring and/or nine in the summer.

A minimum of 72 credit hours, including 15 hours of 8000-9000 level coursework exclusive of readings, research, problems and independent study experiences, beyond the bachelor's degree for the PhD degree.

A student's doctoral program committee must approve all course work used to satisfy the credit-hour requirement and may require additional course work beyond these minimums.

### **Doctoral Academic Process:**

#### Choose a Doctoral Program Committee (D1 form).

The doctoral program committee is composed of a minimum of four members of MU graduate faculty. Three members must come from the student's academic department or interdisciplinary degree program. The fourth may come from either a different academic department/interdisciplinary degree program at MU or from within the student's home unit. The fourth member's role includes ensuring procedural fairness and objectivity, maintaining appropriate standards for scholarly work, offering interdisciplinary perspectives and complementary expertise. As such, having a fourth member from outside the department or program is an important consideration. At least two of the doctoral committee members, including the student's advisor, must be MU doctoral faculty. Pathobiology has no formal requirements for how often a committee meets with a student, however typically students meet with their committees once a year to give an update to their committee on their progress and to allow the student to ask questions or get other feedback from their committee.

Note that no qualifying exam is required for Pathobiology.

#### Submit Plan of Study (D2 Form).

The doctoral advisory committee provides academic program approval of the student's plan of study — a list of the courses and the credit to be earned in each of them — that will, when completed, prepare the student for research or scholarly investigation in the chosen field of study and satisfy the graduate faculty requirement for a minimum of 15 hours of MU coursework at the 8000/9000 level (exclusive of research, problems and independent study experiences).

As part of the plan of study, the committee also recommends to the Dean of the Graduate School any request for transfer of graduate credit. The doctoral committee may recommend that up to 30 hours of post-baccalaureate graduate credit from a regionally accredited University be transferred toward the total hours required for the doctoral degree. All transfer credits are considered general electives. They cannot be used toward the 8000-level requirement, but are considered as credit hours toward the completion of the degree.

Time Limits on Transfer Credits. All courses to be applied to the plan of study must be completed within eight years of filing the plan. With program approval, up to 30 hours of coursework for which professional credit was received may be counted toward the 72 credit-hour requirement.

#### Comprehensive exam (after completed, submit D3 form)

A doctoral student must successfully complete the comprehensive examination within a period of five years beginning with the first semester of enrollment as a PhD student. The comprehensive examination may consist of written and oral sections. It must be completed at least seven months before the final defense of the dissertation. The two sections (oral and written) of the examination must be completed within one month of each other.

In Pathobiology the format of the comprehensive exam is determined by the student's committee. Students and their committees are encouraged to communicate clearly (preferably in writing) what the expectations for the comprehensive exam will be, and when materials to be reviewed by the committee will be submitted prior to the exam.

For the comprehensive examination to be completed successfully, the doctoral advisory committee must vote to pass the student on the entire examination, both written and oral sections, with no more than one dissenting or abstaining vote. A report of this decision, the [Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Results form](#) (D3), with the signatures of all committee members, must be sent to the Graduate School and the student no later than two weeks after the comprehensive examination is completed. A failure of either the written or oral section of the exam constitutes failure of the comprehensive exam. If a failure is reported, the committee also must include in the report an outline of the general weaknesses or deficiencies of the student's work. This report should be sent to the Graduate School as well. The student and the committee members are encouraged to work together to identify steps the student might take to become fully prepared for the next examination.

If at any time the student believes the advice given by the committee is inadequate, the student may send a written request for clarification to the committee. A copy of this request should be sent to the Graduate School as well. The committee must respond to this request in writing within two weeks and a copy must be filed with the Graduate School.

A student who fails may not take a second comprehensive examination for at least 12 weeks. Failure to pass two comprehensive examinations automatically prevents candidacy.

Students must maintain continuous-enrollment status after successful completion of their comprehensive exam. Continuous enrollment status as a doctoral candidate begins at the onset of the term immediately following successful completion of the comprehensive examination. To maintain continuous enrollment, students must register for at least 2 hours during the Spring and Fall semesters and 1 hour during the Summer semester using [myZou](#). Students who have enrollment difficulties should contact their director of graduate studies or the Graduate School' doctoral academic advisor for registration assistance.

#### **Dissertation: (after completion submit D4 form)**

The dissertation must be written on a subject approved by the candidate's doctoral program committee, embody the results of original and significant investigation, and be the candidate's own work and not be coauthored. The doctoral student should ask their advisor about specific formatting requirements or citation style. MU Specific formatting guidelines can be found at <https://gradschool.missouri.edu/current-students/thesis-dissertation/thesis-dissertation-guidelines/>. Students and their committees are encouraged to communicate clearly (preferably in writing) what the expectations for the dissertation will be (format, number of chapters, etc), and when the dissertation will be submitted to the committee prior to the defense.

All dissertation defenses must be open to the general faculty. The Graduate School and Pathobiology have no restrictions on whether the defense is in person or virtual.

A Report of the [Dissertation Defense form](#) (D4) and the approval page for the written dissertation must be signed by all members of the doctoral committee and be submitted to the Graduate School before the [deadline](#) preceding the anticipated date of graduation.

For the dissertation to be successfully defended, the student's doctoral committee must vote to pass the student on the defense with no more than one dissenting or abstaining vote. In addition, the doctoral committee must approve the written dissertation by signing the approval page (an unsigned copy of the approval page is included in the submitted dissertation). Both the oral and written defense must be completed successfully to complete the degree. After successfully defending the dissertation, the student makes any needed adjustments in format and corrections or clarifications based on input from the committee. If a student is unable to make adjustments and have them approved by the committee prior to the Graduate School deadline, they have one additional semester to complete them. They will be unable to graduate until the D4, written dissertation, and approval page are submitted.

### **Graduation Checklist**

1. Complete all [doctoral graduation requirements](#).
2. Complete the online [application](#) for graduation.
3. [R.S.V.P](#) for the commencement ceremony and order regalia and announcements from the [Mizzou Store](#).
4. Submit your report of the dissertation defense ([Report of the Dissertation Defense](#)) and incomplete grades from previous semesters.
5. Submit the dissertation with [supplemental materials](#) before the deadline. Please note, these are firm deadlines due to the degree processing timelines the Graduate School must follow.

### **Seminars Series**

There are multiple opportunities for students in Pathobiology to present their work. Pathobiology students are welcome to contact the Pathobiology DGS about presenting their work in the Pathobiology seminar series or for information about other forums in which to present (ex. bacterial pathogenesis or virology works in progress series at MU).