

Doctoral Degree

The requirements for the Ph.D. degree vary depending on whether the student enters with a Bachelor's or a Master's degree. It is expected that for students entering with a Bachelor's degree, the Master's degree should take roughly 2 years, and the Ph.D. degree roughly 3 years beyond that. For students coming into the program with a Master's degree, 4 years is the expected duration of study for the Ph.D.

Requirements for a Ph.D. degree in HDFS include:

Graduate College Stage I

If entering with a Bachelor's degree, you must successfully complete a MS degree in HDFS. This MS degree includes 24 coursework hours and 8 thesis hours. Specific course requirements are detailed in our HDFS degree checklist. See also the Master's Thesis information above.

If entering with a Master's degree from another institution or from another UIUC Master's program, a thesis equivalency paper must be completed unless a research Master's thesis has been completed elsewhere and is approved by the director of graduate programs. This approval of an outside Master's thesis should occur during your first semester. To request approval, students should submit an email request to the Director of Graduate Studies with a complete PDF of the thesis for review. A final decision will be made prior to the start of the spring semester. If completing a thesis equivalency, follow the guidelines provided above.

Graduate College Stage II

You must successfully complete your required coursework as detailed in the HDFS degree requirement checklist. All required courses must be taken for a letter grade or a satisfactory/deferred grade (cannot be for credit/no credit), and all should be 500-level courses, unless a specific exception is made by the Director of Graduate Programs.

Required courses include all theory, method/statistics, and two of four substantive courses that are required of students in the HDFS concentration. Electives do not have to be completed prior to taking the qualifying exam. Students are expected to earn grades above B- in their course work. Grades of C+ or lower will result in academic probation. Student work must also be original. Plagiarism of any kind will not be permitted. HDFS instructors will report any allegations of plagiarism through the [Faculty Academic Integrity Report](#) (FAIR) portal.

When your required coursework is complete, you must pass the qualifying exam and oral defense. See additional information below.

After passing your qualifying exam, you must pass your Preliminary Exam (aka "oral defense of the dissertation proposal"). See additional information below.

Graduate College Stage III

You will now be considered ABD, which means "all but dissertated."

You must successfully carry out and defend your dissertation as per your dissertation proposal. After a successful final defense, you must submit your dissertation to the Graduate College.