Requirements for the Master’s Degree

In addition to satisfying the general requirements set in the preceding sections, students working toward a Master’s degree must fulfill the minimum requirements described below. Some programs may have additional credit requirements for completion of a Master’s degree.

The award of a Master's degree indicates that a student attained a higher level of knowledge and expertise in a particular field of study. A Master's thesis often serves as the groundwork for future doctoral research.

Course Requirements

There are two types of Master’s degree programs, namely, thesis and non-thesis Master’s degrees. Some programs provide a choice of either a thesis or non-thesis option, others may have only the thesis or the non-thesis option.

- Students following the thesis option are required to complete a minimum of 30 credit hours of which a minimum of 21 graduate credit hours should be in course work and a minimum of 6 credit hours of thesis work. Normally, a maximum of 3 credit hours may be tutorial courses. Exceptions for individual students will require approval of the department chair and the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.
- Students following the non-thesis Master’s program are required to take a minimum of 30 graduate credit hours, 3 credits of which may be a project and should follow a course of study approved by the department/program and by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.
- Students following the Master’s of Public Health (MPH) are required to complete a minimum of 42 credit hours.
- Students following the Master’s of Business Administration (MBA) program are required to take 6 credits of foundation courses (or to pass a related exemption test upon the approval of the program director). In addition, they must complete a minimum of 42 credit hours, a minimum of 39 graduate credit hours in course work, and a minimum of 3 credit hours of MBA project.
- Students holding an MD degree or working on a combined MS-MD degree are required to complete at least 10 graduate course credits and a thesis, in addition to the MD degree requirements.

Students receive credit for graduate level courses only. Students with deficiencies in their
undergraduate preparation may be required to take additional course credits, as determined by
the department/program concerned.

AUB Graduate Catalogue: Page 62

Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

In addition to the particular rules of the various graduate programs as stated in their sections of
this catalog, the following general rules apply to all Doctor of Philosophy programs.

The award of a Doctor of Philosophy degree indicates that a student has attained mastery of a
field and has demonstrated the capacity to perform independent scholarly research. The doctoral
degree is not awarded solely upon completion of a curriculum of courses, even though the
student has done superior work in them; rather, it is awarded in recognition of creative
scholarship as demonstrated by a substantial contribution in the candidate's chosen field.

Program of Study

Each doctorate student is expected to take such courses as may be required for both a strong
foundation in the field and the development of a specialization.

Regular PhD Track Course Requirements for Students Holding Master's Degrees

Each student, in consultation with his/her adviser, should finalize a program of study and submit
it to the department within two semesters of beginning study toward the PhD degree. The
Graduate Council monitors the progress of the student through annual reports on course and
thesis work by chairpersons of the department/program. The following are main features of this
PhD track:

1. It must include a minimum of 48 credit hours beyond those required for the Master’s
degree of which a minimum of 18 credit hours must be in graduate level course work and
a minimum of 24 credit hours of thesis work. Normally, a maximum of 3 credit hours out
of the 18 credits of course work may be tutorial courses. Exceptions for individual
students will require approval of the department chair and the Faculty Graduate Studies
Committee.

2. It will include a zero credit comprehensive examination preparation course and a zero
credit thesis proposal preparation course.

Accelerated PhD Track Course Requirements for Students Holding Bachelor
Degrees

Each student, in consultation with his/her adviser, should finalize a program of study and submit it to the department within two semesters of beginning study toward the PhD degree. The Graduate Council monitors the progress of the student through annual reports on course and thesis work by chairpersons of the department/program. The following are main features of the accelerated PhD track:

1. It must include a minimum of 78 credit hours beyond those required for the bachelor’s degree of which a minimum of 36 credit hours must be in graduate level course work and a minimum of 30 credit hours of thesis work. Normally, a maximum of 6 credit hours may be tutorial courses out of the 36 credits of course work. Exceptions for individual students will require approval of the department chair and the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.

2. It will include a zero credit comprehensive examination preparation course and a zero credit thesis proposal preparation course.

Language Requirements (Other than English)

Depending on the research topic, the thesis committee and the department may require proficiency in one or more foreign language. Examination procedures for these languages should be approved by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.

Residence Requirements

To fulfill the minimum residence requirements for the PhD degree, the student must register for at least six semesters beyond the completion of the Master’s degree or eight semesters for the accelerated track beyond the Bachelor’s degree. Requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy must be completed within five years of starting graduate work beyond the Master’s degree or six years for the accelerated track beyond the Bachelor’s degree. Extension requires Graduate Council approval upon recommendation by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.

PhD Qualifying Exam

All PhD programs require that PhD students pass the qualifying exam. The PhD qualifying exam is two parts. Qualifying Exam Part I is a written comprehensive exam administered by the Department/program or the thesis committee. The Qualifying Exam Part II is an oral thesis proposal defense exam administered by the thesis committee.

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1 Students enrolled in the accelerated PhD track with cumulative average of 80 or above are allowed to transfer to the MA/MS/ME degree program upon recommendation by the department and approval of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee. The Graduate Council is then informed.