General University
Academic Information

Academic Rules and Regulations

The general policies, procedures and minimum requirements for advanced degrees are stated in this section; however, each program has specific degree requirements which are detailed in the respective program descriptions under later sections of this catalogue. Both general and program specific requirements must be fulfilled in order for the graduate student to receive a Master’s degree or PhD degree.

Full-Time Status

Full-time status is defined as the enrollment by the graduate student in

1. A minimum of nine credit hours during the Fall or Spring semester. Full-time and part-time graduate students retain privileges of library, email, and internet access even if not registered in courses in summer sessions on the condition that they have registered in the preceding Spring semester.
2. PhD degree candidacy status.

Full-Time Status for University Graduate Assistants and Graduate Research Assistants

Financial aid covering tuition and stipends in the form of graduate assistantship (GA) or graduate research assistantship (GRA) are available for students at the graduate level in return for assisting faculty members in teaching and/or research for a specified number of hours per week in an academic department. University Graduate Assistants receiving financial support will acquire part-time or full-time student status depending on the number of credits registered for and the percent of support as per table below during the period in which they are receiving such support. GRA stipends and tuition support come from grants, either from the University Research Board (URB) or through external grant support and other sources. They supplement or substitute for the regular graduate assistantships and provide additional tuition or stipend support up to the limit set by the University. The below table provides also definitions for full-time minimum enrollment status for a graduate assistant (GA) or graduate research assistant (GRA)
during Fall or Spring semester and during summer term. GA’s or GRA’s whose load is less than 100% while registered for less than 9 credits are considered part-time students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full-time Status of GA and GRA (master degree level students)</th>
<th>GA Load (%)</th>
<th>Number of Registered Credits paid by AUB</th>
<th>Teaching Aid Service Hours</th>
<th>GRA Load (%)</th>
<th>Research Service Hours paid from Research Grants</th>
<th>Total GA+GRA Load (100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>33%</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full-time Status of GA and GRA for Summer term</th>
<th>GA Load (%)</th>
<th>Number of Registered Credits paid by AUB</th>
<th>Teaching Aid Service Hours</th>
<th>GRA Load (%)</th>
<th>Research Service Hours paid from Research Grants</th>
<th>Total GA+GRA Load (100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PhD students who are on fellowships that provide financial support and tuition coverage have full-time-status at the University.

**Courses and Grades**

Courses taken as part of a student’s graduate study program fall into one of two categories: graduate courses or prerequisite (Undergraduate courses). Each category may have different grading systems depending on the department/program.

**Graduate Level Courses**

- The minimum passing grade for a graduate course is 70 for a Master student and 75 for a PhD student.
- The minimum grade for a graduate student enrolled in a graduate course is 55.
- Results of tutorial courses, projects, or theses are reported as Pass (P) or Fail (F).

**Prerequisite Courses**

Prerequisite courses are undergraduate courses taken to make up for deficiencies in the student’s background.

- Prerequisite courses do not carry graduate credit.
- The minimum passing grade for a prerequisite course is 70; however, a department or program may set a higher minimum passing grade.
Attendance Policy

A student who is absent without excuse for more than one third of the number of sessions in any course may be dropped by the instructor of the course.

Course Loads

Normally, the maximum number of credits that may be taken in a regular semester is 12 credits. The maximum number of credits that may be taken in the summer session is six credits. A student who wishes to enroll in more than the maximum number of credits must petition the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee to obtain permission.

Change of Major within Faculty and Interfaculty Transfer

A student enrolled in a Master’s degree program at AUB may apply to transfer to another program according to the following procedure:

- Change of major within the same faculty: The student may apply, following the set deadlines for graduate admissions process, for change of major within the same faculty by petitioning the department to which he/she is planning to join and securing its approval and the approval of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.

- Transfer to other faculties/schools from within AUB: The student should complete a new application to the desired program following the graduate admissions process and deadlines for consideration for admission in the new major.

- Transfer within an interfaculty program: The student should apply to the relevant interfaculty program committee seeking their approval and the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee of the receiving faculty.

Transfer of Credits into a Master's Degree Program

Graduate courses taken beyond the Bachelor’s degree requirements at AUB, or at other recognized institutions, are not transferable for credit toward Master’s degree requirements, unless the applicant attained a cumulative average of at least 80 in the undergraduate courses taken in the major or related field of study. Only graduate courses in which the applicant earned an equivalent grade of 80 or above can be transferred. No more than nine credits are transferable provided they are not credits earned by internship, thesis, or practicum and degree minimum residency requirement is maintained. Approval by the Faculty/School Graduate Studies Committee is required for all transfers.

Transfer of Credits from One Master’s Degree to Another

Graduate courses taken at AUB (or at other recognized institutions), in which the applicant earned an equivalent grade of 80 or above, may be transferred to another Master’s degree at AUB. No more than nine credits are transferable provided they are not credits earned by internship, thesis or practicum and degree minimum residency requirement is maintained. Approval by the department or the academic unit concerned, and the Faculty/School Graduate
Studies Committee is required for all transfers.

**Calculation of the GPA**

Credits earned at other institutions or at AUB beyond the requirements of the bachelor degree and transferred into the Master’s program are not included in the calculation of a student's grade average while pursuing Master’s degree. Such courses are reported as pass (P). Transfers of credit earned at the Master’s level from AUB are not subject to the above limitations but require the recommendation of the department chair and the approval of Faculty/School Graduate Studies Committee.

**Transfer of Credits into a PhD Degree Program**

Graduate courses taken beyond the Master’s degree requirements at AUB, or at other recognized institutions, are not transferable for credit toward PhD degree requirements, unless the applicant attained a cumulative average of at least 85 in the graduate courses taken in the major field of study. Only courses taken beyond the Master’s degree requirements in which the applicant earned an equivalent grade of 85 or above can be transferred. No more than six credits are transferable provided they are not credits earned by internship, thesis, or practicum and degree minimum residency requirement is maintained. Approval by the Faculty/School Graduate Studies Committee and the Graduate Council is required for all transfers.

**Leave of Absence**

All graduate students are expected to make steady and satisfactory progress toward the completion of degrees. Students who are not enrolled for a period of more than 12 months will be considered to have withdrawn from the program unless they apply for a leave of absence and secure approval of the department, Faculty/School Graduate Studies Committee, and Graduate Council. The leave of absence application can be up to one year at a time. The maximum period of approved leave of absence is for two years. An approved leave of absence does not count towards maximum residency. Non-enrollment by the student for one semester without securing leave of absence will count towards maximum residency.

Students who seek to return without having secured leave of absence approval after non-enrolment period of 12 months must reapply and will be considered for readmission following regular AUB application/admission procedures.

If re-admitted into the same graduate program then their earlier status as graduate student will count towards maximum residency.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Plagiarism, falsification of data, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty, are serious violation of academic integrity and may result in dismissal. Students are expected to be familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Student Code of Conduct.

**Academic Standing of Student Working for a Master’s Degree**

**Good Standing**

A graduate student is in good standing when his/ her graduate grade cumulative average is 80 or above. A student must be in good standing in order to be awarded a degree.

**Probation and Removal of Probation**

The academic performance of the student is first evaluated by the department upon completion of 9 credits of course work after initial enrollment towards the degree and then is evaluated every semester/term, thereafter.

**Students Admitted on Probation**

1. A student admitted on probation has to complete at least nine credits of graduate level courses within the first two semesters of graduate studies, has to pass all courses, and has to attain a minimum cumulative average of 80 to achieve regular status.
2. If the student fails to meet any of these conditions, s/he will be dropped from the program.

**Students placed on probation during regular status residency**

1. A student is placed on probation if he/she attains a cumulative average of 70 or more, but less than 80 or fails any course taken for graduate credit.
2. A student placed on probation due to average must remove the probation by the end of the following regular semester/term by attainment of a cumulative average of at least 80.
3. A student placed on probation due to course failure should retake the course the next time it is offered and pass the course. In case this condition cannot be met, the student in consultation with the adviser must petition the Faculty/School Graduate Studies Committee.

The department or program in which the student is enrolled may recommend probation to the Faculty Graduate Studies even though the student has attained an adequate cumulative average.

The Registrar sends change in probationary status of enrolled graduate students to their respective Faculties/Schools Dean Offices’ within one week of the start of the semester/term for consideration by the Faculty/School. The Faculty/School Graduate Studies Committee issues through the Dean's Office the statement of the change of probation status to the graduate student with copies to the department chair, student adviser, and Registrar.
Dismissal

The Faculty Graduate Studies Committee may dismiss a Master’s student, in consultation with the department/program, from graduate study if any of the following conditions arise:

1. Probation status due to average is not removed in the semester following the first probation excluding students admitted on probation (see previous section on probation and removal of probation).
2. The student receives probation for a second time during the degree residency.
3. The student attains a cumulative average of less than 70 after completion of 9 credits or fails two courses in one term.
4. The student attains a cumulative average of 70 or above, but less than 80, in any term and fails one course in that term. (This rule does not apply to the first term of study.)
5. The work of the student is considered to be unsatisfactory in the opinion of the department or program, and regardless of the grades obtained.
6. The student fails the comprehensive examination twice or the thesis defense twice.

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 of the faculty.
- 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.

**Language Requirements (Other than English)**

Individual departments and programs may set their own non-English language requirements. Examination procedures for these languages should be approved by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.

**Residence Requirements**

To meet the minimum residence requirements for the Master’s degree, a student must register and be in residence as a graduate student for at least two semesters, one semester and two summers, or four summers.

All requirements for the Master’s degree must be completed within a period of four years after admission to graduate study. Students attending only summer sessions must complete all requirements within a period of six summers after admission to graduate study. Extension beyond the maximum allowed period of study requires approval from the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.

**Comprehensive Examination**

All Master's programs must require that the student register and pass a zero-credit comprehensive examination course. Comprehensive examinations often are written exams, sometimes oral, and sometimes both written and oral. They are usually taken after completing most of the course requirements for the degree. Timing of the examination is set by the department/program. The Pass (P) or Fail (F) is entered online or is reported to the Registrar immediately on the date the comprehensive examination is passed any time during the semester.

In general, a comprehensive examination is a test that covers a broad base of material. The purpose of the examination is to assess the student's knowledge and capacities to earn a given graduate degree in the field of specialization. Depending on the degree program, it may test course knowledge, knowledge of the student's proposed research area, and/or the general knowledge in the field. The student's thesis committee or the department administers the
comprehensive exam.

A student who does not pass the comprehensive examination may take it a second time in the following semester. Students who are unable to pass a program's comprehensive exam twice are dropped from the graduate program. Students who pass the comprehensive exam after one failure will have their initial failure deleted and replaced by the passing comprehensive record showing on their transcript.

**Institutional Review Board (IRB)/ Animal Care Committee (ACC) Requirements**

All students conducting Human Subject Research or animal related research for Master’s theses or projects must obtain prior written Institutional Review Board and/or Animal Care Committee approval/confirmation or exemption, respectively.

**Supervision of Master’s Thesis or Project**

**Thesis Proposal**

When following a graduate program leading to the Master’s degree with thesis option, the student is expected to meet with faculty members in the department to discuss with them possible thesis topics and arrange to have a thesis adviser. Normally, the thesis adviser is from among the full-time professorial faculty of the department/program or from another department/program in the University. In interdisciplinary programs, the thesis adviser is from an appropriate program at the University.

The student is expected to select a research topic in consultation with the thesis adviser and prepare a thesis proposal by the end of the second regular semester. The proposal must clearly state the problem addressed and the proposed contributions. The thesis proposal should also state the thesis objectives, scope of work with relevant literature, research methodology, and expected results.

A thesis committee is formed by the thesis adviser and the student in coordination with the chairperson/director of the unit according to the following conditions:

- Thesis committee should normally consist of at least three members from the professorial ranks chaired by the thesis adviser.
- In departments/programs, normally at least two members of professorial rank of the thesis committee must be members of the student’s department. The remaining member(s) can be from other departments at AUB or from an institution other than AUB.
- In case the thesis adviser is from another department at AUB, the chairperson will consult with the chairperson of the department to which the thesis adviser belongs.
- In interdisciplinary programs, the members of the thesis committee are drawn from full-time faculty members at AUB.
Thesis committee must be approved by the chairperson/director of the student’s department/program. The student must submit the thesis proposal to the committee and secure their approval. The committee members shall evaluate the proposal in consultation with the thesis adviser.

The student shall submit the thesis proposal with a completed Thesis Proposal form as required by Faculty or Program (Website) to the chairperson of the department, signed by the thesis adviser and all the members of the thesis committee, with the proposed dates of the comprehensive examination, and thesis defense, and courses taken so far. The student should indicate if the proposed research involves human subject research or animal related research and seek approval/confirmation or exemption of the Institutional Review Board and/or the Animal Care Committee.

Once approved, the chairperson forwards the thesis proposal with the names of the thesis committee members to the Faculty/School Graduate Studies Committee for its approval.

The Faculty/School Graduate Studies Committee will then inform the chairperson of the proposal approval or lack thereof, and the chairperson will communicate the decision to the thesis adviser.

It is the student’s responsibility, in coordination with thesis adviser, to keep members of the Thesis Committee informed on the progress of his/her work and to seek their input.

**Thesis format**

An AUB-approved thesis manual is available on the University Libraries webpage. The manual provides the style guide for all theses prepared by AUB students, and application of its instructions is mandatory for all theses-dependent degrees. Theses not conforming to the publication style outlined in the thesis manual are not accepted by the University. Students are welcome to visit the Archives and Special Collections, Jafet Library, any time during the semester.

For all matters not discussed in the Thesis Manual, theses must follow the form and style outlined in the latest edition of K.L. Turabian, *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University of Chicago Press), or any other style specified by the department or program, provided the style conforms to the Thesis Manual.

**Thesis Defense**

A student is not allowed to defend his/her thesis unless he or she has passed the comprehensive examination. In order to defend the thesis, the student must be registered for the thesis in the session in which the student expects to graduate.

The thesis defense is open to the public and must be carried out no later than October 30, March 1, or June 10, for students who wish to graduate at the end of the summer session, the fall, or the spring semester, respectively.
The final draft of the thesis shall be submitted to each member of the Thesis Committee at least two weeks before the date of the thesis defense. The Thesis Defense shall be announced at least two weeks in advance. The total time allocated for the Thesis Defense should allow for answering all questions and should not normally exceed 120 minutes.

The thesis defense session is normally chaired by the Thesis Adviser and the student will be notified of the final decision by Thesis Committee immediately after completion of the thesis committee deliberations.

Pass (P) or Fail (F) is reported for the combined thesis and thesis defense. If Fail (F) is reported, the student may resubmit the thesis and defend it after a period of at least three months. Failure on the second attempt results in discontinuation of the graduate work.

If the thesis work involves human subject research or animal related research, the Thesis Committee must forward to the department chair a copy of the approval/confirmation or exemption letter of the Institutional Review Board and/or Animal Care Committee.

**Project and Project Defense**

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the non-thesis Master’s degree, a student may be required to submit a project. Each student is then assigned an adviser who serves as the project adviser. The Master’s project topic proposal, and selection of the adviser and project committee members, should be approved by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.

The Master’s project committee should be composed of at least two members recommended by the department/program. The project topic proposal and selection of the adviser, and selection of project committee members, should be approved by the Faculty/school Graduate Committee at least four months before the project defense.

If the project work involves human subject research or animal related research, the Thesis Committee must forward to the department chair a copy of the approval/confirmation or exemption letter of the Institutional Review Board and/or Animal Care Committee.

The project defense is open to the public and must be carried out no later than October 30, March 1, or June 10, for students who wish to graduate at the end of the summer session, the fall, or the spring semester, respectively.

Pass (P) or Fail (F) is reported for project defense. If Fail (F) is reported, the student may resubmit the project and defend it after a period of at least three months. Failure on the second attempt results in discontinuation of the graduate work.

**Deposit of the Project/Thesis in the Library**

After passing the project/thesis defense examination, the student is required to deposit copies of the thesis in the library: The **Jafet Memorial Library** requires one hard copy of the Master’s project/thesis from students at the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, Faculty of Arts and Sciences and Suliman S. Olayan School of
Business. The Saab Medical Library requires **one** hard copy of the Master’s project/thesis from students at the Faculty of Medicine, the Hariri School of Nursing, and the Faculty of Health Sciences. The student should also provide the relevant library with a soft copy of the thesis saved as PDF (Portable Document Format) file. A library receipt must be delivered to the Office of the Registrar before the student is awarded the degree. The Registrar shall ensure that all names of students recommended to the senate for award of the Master’s degree in the thesis option have submitted their thesis copy to the library. The student should sign a release form indicating whether or not the library is authorized to supply copies of the thesis/project to other libraries or to individuals. The non-authorization option is valid for a period of two years only, after which copies of the project/thesis are supplied upon request.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Master’s candidates Graduation in</th>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for approval of thesis topic and committee</td>
<td>June 20</td>
<td>October 1</td>
<td>February 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for thesis defense</td>
<td>October 30</td>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>June 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for thesis deposit at library</td>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>June 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Master’s Degree Graduation Requirements**

To be eligible for graduation with a Master's degree from the American University of Beirut, a graduate student

- must have attained a cumulative course average of 80 or above.
- is not placed on probation by the time the course work is completed
- must have completed the minimum credit hours of course work designated by the specific program.
- must have passed comprehensive exam.
- must have completed thesis requirements for thesis option degrees.
- must have completed project requirements for the non-thesis option degrees.
- must have met the residence requirements specified for the Master's degree.

**Academic Standing of Student Working for PhD Degree**

**Good Standing**

A PhD student is in good standing when his/her graduate grade cumulative average is 85 or higher. A student must be in good standing in order to be awarded a degree.
Probation and Removal of Probation

A student working for a PhD degree who has not yet advanced to candidacy can be placed on academic probation if s/he fails to make normal progress towards the degree.

The academic performance of the student is first evaluated by the department upon completion of the first 9 credits of course work towards the degree and then is evaluated every semester/term thereafter:

1. A student is placed on probation if s/he attains a cumulative average of 75 or more, but less than 85 or fails any course taken for graduate credit.
2. A student placed on probation due to average must remove the probation at the end of the following semester/term by attainment of a cumulative average of at least 85.
3. A student placed on probation due to course failure should retake the course the next time it is offered and pass the course. In case this condition cannot be met, the student in consultation with the adviser must petition the Faculty/School Graduate Studies Committee.

The department or program in which the student is enrolled may recommend probation to the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee even though the student has attained an adequate cumulative average. Probation of a PhD student may be removed by the Graduate Council upon recommendation from the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.

The Registrar sends change in probationary status of enrolled PhD students to their respective Faculties/Schools Dean Offices' within one week of the start of the semester/term. The Faculty/School Graduate Studies Committee issues the statement of the change of probation status to the graduate student with copies to the department chair, student adviser, the Graduate Council, and Registrar.

Dismissal

The Graduate Council upon recommendation from the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee and the Chair of Department may discontinue a PhD student from graduate study if any of the following conditions arise:

1. Probation status is not removed in the semester following the first probation.
2. The student receives probation for a second time during the degree residency.
3. The student attains a cumulative average of less than 75 or fails two courses in one term.
4. The student attains a cumulative average of 75 or above, but less than 85, in any term and fails one course in that term. (This rule does not apply to the first term of study.)
5. The work of the student is considered to be unsatisfactory in the opinion of the department or program, and regardless of the grades obtained.
6. The student fails the Qualifying Examination Part I (Comprehensive Examination) or Part II (Thesis Proposal Defense) twice.
7. The student fails the thesis defense twice.
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

* 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.
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.

**Qualifying Exam Part I: Comprehensive Exam**

All PhD programs require that PhD students register and pass a zero-credit comprehensive examination course. Comprehensive examinations are written exams taken after completing a minimum of 15 credits of course requirements for the regular degree track and a minimum of 30 credits of course requirements for the accelerated degree track. Timing of the examination is set by the department/program no later than the fourth semester of the PhD student enrolment in the regular PhD program and no later than the sixth semester of the PhD student enrolment in the accelerated PhD track.

In general, a comprehensive examination provides assurance that all PhD candidates have acquired sufficient knowledge/background in their major field of study. For more details on the examination, the student should refer to his/her specific department/program requirements. The thesis committee or the department/program administers the comprehensive exam.

A student who does not pass the comprehensive exam may take it a second time in the following semester. Students who are unable to pass a program’s comprehensive exam twice are dropped.
from the PhD program. Students who pass the comprehensive exam after one failure will have their initial failure deleted and replaced by the passing comprehensive record showing on their transcript.

**Qualifying Exam Part II: Defense of Thesis Proposal**

All students must successfully complete a qualifying examination defending their PhD thesis proposal. The second part of the qualifying exam (thesis proposal defense) is to be taken at least two semesters prior to thesis defense and is conducted by the student thesis committee. (More details on the policy regarding the defense of thesis proposal are provided following the section on PhD Thesis Proposal)

**Supervision of Doctoral Thesis**

During the first semester of graduate study, the department or program assigns an academic adviser to the student. The adviser guides and helps the student plan a course of study. Not all credits need to be in courses offered by the department/program in which the student is enrolled, but all credits must be in courses that, in the judgment of the department/program, are relevant to the field in which the student is specializing.

Normally by the end of the second semester, each student enrolled in a PhD program is assigned a thesis adviser who must be a full-time professorial rank faculty member. Normally, the thesis adviser is a full-time professorial rank faculty member of the department/program.

**PhD Thesis Committee**

The thesis committee should be composed of at least five members, one of whom should be from outside the department/program and one from outside the university. The thesis adviser and at least three of the thesis committee members must be of professorial rank. All members of the thesis committee must hold a doctoral degree in a relevant field. The chair of the thesis committee must be a full professor who is not the PhD thesis adviser (Requirement of the Lebanese Ministry of Higher Education).

Members of the doctoral thesis committee are recommended by the student's thesis adviser and approved by the department, the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee, and the Graduate Council.

The doctoral thesis committee approves the thesis topic, research plan, conducts the thesis proposal defense (Part II of the Qualifying Exam) and conducts the thesis defense. The thesis proposal and the selection of the thesis committee should be approved at least two semesters before the student defends his/her thesis. The PhD thesis topic, examining committee, and admission to candidacy require Graduate Council approval.
**PhD Thesis Proposal**

When following a graduate program leading to the PhD degree, the student is expected to meet with faculty members in the department to discuss with them possible thesis topics and arrange to have a thesis adviser. The thesis adviser is from among the full-time professorial faculty of the Department/program or from another department/program at the University.

The student is expected to select a research topic in consultation with the thesis adviser and prepare a thesis proposal by the end of the fourth regular semester. The proposal must clearly summarize the thesis problem and the planned approach. The purpose of the thesis proposal is to inform the thesis committee members and the department, in concise statements, of the candidate's research plan. It should state the thesis objectives, scope of work with relevant literature, research methodology, and expected results. The proposal must provide sufficient literature citations to indicate awareness of previous work and enough detail to show how the proposed work is expected to advance knowledge in the field.

The student must submit the thesis proposal to the thesis committee and get their preliminary approval to defend the proposal. The student, upon committee approval, will arrange for the thesis proposal defense date and time as applicable.

The student should indicate if the proposed research involves human subject research and/or animal related research and seek approval/confirmation or exemption of the Institutional Review Board and/or the Animal Care Committee.

**Qualifying Exam Part II: Defense of Thesis Proposal**

All students must successfully complete a qualifying exam defending their PhD thesis proposal. The second part of the qualifying exam (thesis proposal defense) is to be taken at least two semesters prior to thesis defense and is conducted by the student thesis committee. The student is expected to demonstrate the intellectual capacity to pursue and complete an independent research work that advances knowledge in the field of study. The student should register in the zero credit course preparation for thesis proposal or equivalent as recommended by the relevant program during the semester he or she intends to take the oral qualifying exam or the thesis proposal defense.

The criterion for passing the thesis proposal defense requires that the research topic is of PhD standard, original, clear in its contribution to existing knowledge, and the proposed methodology is appropriate. When the thesis proposal defense is public, the student who fails the thesis proposal defense (part II of Qualifying Exam) should repeat it in a subsequent regular semester after addressing the comments of the Thesis Committee compiled by the Thesis Committee chair in the examination report. When the thesis proposal defense is not public, the members of the thesis committee individually approve and sign the thesis proposal.

The chair of the doctoral thesis committee upon satisfactory completion of the proposal defense and/or approval of the thesis proposal will send his/her assessment (Pass or Fail) to the department chair on the zero-credit course "preparation for thesis proposal" along with a signed copy of the thesis proposal by all members of the committee. The chair sends the
recommendation and the doctoral proposal to the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee for approval. Upon approval, the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee forwards the decision to the Graduate Council which informs the Registrar, the Dean of the Faculty, Department Chair, and Adviser of the final decision of passing the oral qualifying exam and the approval of the thesis proposal. The chair will enter the P/F grade on the SIS.

**Institutional Review Board (IRB)/ Animal Care Committee (ACC) Requirements**

All students conducting Human Subject Research or animal related research for PhD theses must obtain prior written Institutional Review Board and/or Animal Care Committee approval/confirmation or exemption, respectively before admission to candidacy.

**Admission to Candidacy**

Students are admitted to candidacy at least two semesters before obtaining their PhD degree. Students enter Degree Candidacy upon passing the qualifying exam (comprehensive exam and thesis proposal defense) and while in good standing. Students who are enrolled in degree candidacy are considered full-time students. While in Degree Candidacy, it is the responsibility of both student and adviser to maintain contact to ensure continuous progress towards the completion of the degree.

For admission to candidacy, students are expected to have:

- Completed all graduate course work requirements beyond the Master’s degree in the regular PhD track.
- Completed all graduate course work requirements beyond the bachelor’s degree in the accelerated PhD track.
- Attained a cumulative average of at least 85 while in the regular or accelerated track doctoral programs.
- Completed other than English language requirements when applicable.
- Passed the first and second part of the qualifying exam (written comprehensive examination and thesis proposal defense) as set by the department.
- Is in good standing (not on probation)

Enrollment in Degree Candidacy requires the approval of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee upon department recommendation. Faculties must inform the Graduate Council when students have met all requirements and are ready to enter Degree Candidacy. Once a student is admitted to candidacy, enrollment in Degree Candidacy status must be continuously maintained for the academic year (i.e. Fall and Spring) until the degree is awarded. The only exception to this policy of continuous enrollment is if the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee and the Graduate Council have granted the student a formal leave of absence.
PhD Thesis Format

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy, a student must submit a thesis based on results of original, independent research. Except in departments/programs in which the medium of instruction is not English, a thesis must be in English.

An abstract not exceeding 350 words must be submitted with the thesis. If a thesis is in a language other than English, the abstract must be written both in the project’s language and in English.

An AUB-approved thesis manual is available on the University Libraries webpage. The manual provides the style guide for all theses prepared by AUB students, and application of its instructions is mandatory for all PhD degrees. Theses not conforming to the publication style outlined in the thesis manual are not accepted by the University. Students are welcome to visit the Archives and Special Collections, Jafet Library, any time during the semester.

For all matters not discussed in the Thesis Manual, theses must follow the form and style outlined in the latest edition of K.L. Turabian, Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (University of Chicago Press), or any other style specified by the department or program, provided the style conforms to the Thesis Manual.

Copies of the thesis should be submitted by the student to the thesis committee members at least two weeks before the thesis defense. Copies must be legible and durable. Additional copies may be required, as specified by the department or program concerned.

PhD Thesis Defense

The thesis/project defense is open to the public and must be carried out no later than October 30, March 1, or June 10, for students who wish to graduate at the end of the summer session, the fall, or the spring semester, respectively. In order to defend the thesis, the student must be registered for the thesis, in the session in which the student expects to graduate.

Final doctoral thesis defense will be announced to the university community so that interested members from faculty and student body may attend. The date, time and location for the defense must be sent at least two weeks in advance to the Graduate Council. A copy of the thesis abstract must accompany the defense announcement.

Pass (P) or Fail (F) is reported for the combined thesis and thesis defense. If Fail (F) is reported, the student may resubmit the thesis and defend it after a period of at least four months. Failure on the second attempt results in discontinuation of the PhD work.

If the thesis work involves human subject research and/or animal related research, the Thesis Committee must forward to the department chair a copy of the approval/confirmation or exemption letter of the Institutional Review Board and/or Animal Care Committee.

Deposit of the Thesis in the Library

After passing the thesis defense examination, the student is required to deposit copies of the thesis in the library: The Jafet Memorial Library requires one copy of the doctoral thesis from
students at the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture and Faculty of Arts and Sciences. The student should also provide the library with a soft copy of the thesis saved as one PDF (Portable Document Format) file. A library receipt must be delivered to the Office of the Registrar before the student is awarded the degree. The Registrar shall ensure that all names of students recommended to the senate for award of the PhD have submitted their PhD thesis copy to the library. The student should sign a release form indicating whether or not the library is authorized to supply copies of the thesis to other libraries or to individuals. The non-authorization option is valid for a period of two years only, after which copies of the thesis are supplied upon request.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For PhD Candidate Graduation in</th>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>deadline for approval of thesis topic and committee</td>
<td>February 20</td>
<td>June 20</td>
<td>October 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deadline for thesis defense</td>
<td>October 30</td>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>June 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deadline for thesis deposit at library</td>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>June 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**PhD Degree Graduation Requirements**

A student can graduate at the end of any academic semester provided the student has satisfied the following requirements:

- Attained a minimum cumulative course average of 85 excluding courses taken prior to admission to the program.
- Passed the Doctoral Qualifying Exam Parts I and II (Comprehensive and thesis proposal defense Examinations) as set by the department.
- Met program specific requirements for publication of thesis work by the time of graduation.
- Successfully defended a thesis of original scholarly work.
- Met the residence requirements and all pertinent AUB regulations.