DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Musical Arts (DMusA) and Doctor of Audiology (AuD) are the highest academic degrees conferred by CU Boulder. The requirements stated below are minimal requirements for all candidates for the PhD degree; additional conditions are found in department announcements. Additional requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/music/programs-study/musical-arts/musical-arts-doctor-musical-arts-dma) are available from the College of Music. Additional requirements for the Doctor of Audiology (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/speech-language-hearing-sciences/audiology-doctor-audiology-aud) are available from the Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences.

A graduate student is responsible for becoming informed about and observing all regulations and procedures required by the graduate program pursued. Ignorance of a rule does not constitute a basis for waiving that rule. Any exceptions to the policies stated in this catalog must be approved by the dean of the Graduate School.

Admission

If a student is admitted to a master’s program and wants to continue on to a doctoral program in the same department, they should consult their home department on the proper procedure.

Minimum Registration Requirement

The minimum registration requirement for doctoral students is six semesters beyond the attainment of an acceptable bachelor’s degree. Two semesters of minimum registration credit hours may be allowed for a master’s degree from an accredited institution; however, at least four semesters of minimum registration credit hours, two of which must be consecutive in one academic year, must be earned for work taken at CU Boulder.

For purposes of deciding minimum registration credit hours toward a graduate degree, a student must be registered as a full-time student. One semester of minimum registration credit hours may be earned for full-time registration during the fall or spring semester or during two summer semesters. Doctoral students who have not passed the comprehensive examination are considered full time during the spring and fall semesters if they are enrolled for at least 5 credit hours of course work at the graduate level, 8 credit hours of combined undergraduate and graduate credit hours, 12 credit hours of course work at the undergraduate level or at least 1 doctoral dissertation credit hour. DMA students who have not passed their comprehensive exam may also be considered full time if they are taking 1 credit hour of course work numbered 8200-8399 or TMUS 8019. Doctoral students who have passed the comprehensive examination must register for at least 5 doctoral dissertation credit hours to be considered full-time students. DMA students who have passed their comprehensive examination must register for 1 credit hour of course work numbered 8200-8399 or TMUS 8029 to be considered full time. Doctor of audiology students are considered full-time students if they are enrolled for at least 5 credit hours of course work at the graduate level, 8 credit hours of course work of combined undergraduate and graduate credit hours or 12 credit hours of course work at the undergraduate level. Full- and half-time standards may be different for students receiving federal or state financial aid. Students should contact the Office of Financial Aid to see if these standards apply. These different standards are for financial aid purposes only.

Degree Requirements

The minimum requirements for the PhD or DMusA degree are 30 credit hours of course work at the 5000 level or above. Those students pursuing the PhD shall complete a minimum of 30 credit hours of dissertation work beyond the minimum course work requirement. The minimum requirements for the AuD degree are 97 credit hours of course work at the 5000 level or above.

Unless otherwise specified by departmental requirements, all courses taken at the 5000 level or above that were taken for the master’s degree at CU Boulder may be applied toward the PhD degree. Course work taken in pursuit of a doctoral degree cannot be applied toward a subsequent master’s degree.

Preliminary Examination

Each department determines for itself (by examination or other means) that students who wish to study for the doctoral degree are qualified. The means by which each department makes this evaluation are specified in departmental requirements. Students who are thus evaluated are notified immediately of the results.

Language Requirement

There is no campuswide foreign language requirement for the doctoral degree. The decision regarding the foreign language requirement for each graduate degree is the responsibility of the graduate program.

Dissertation Credit-Hour Requirement

To complete the requirements for the PhD degree, a student must register for a minimum of 30 dissertation credit hours. Distribution of those credit hours is as follows:

1. A student may not register for more than 10 dissertation credit hours in any one semester.
2. Not more than 10 dissertation credit hours taken in semesters prior to the semester in which the comprehensive examination is passed may be counted in the 30 dissertation credit hours required for the degree.
3. Not more than 10 dissertation credit hours taken the semester in which the comprehensive examination is passed may be included in the 30 dissertation credit hours required for the degree.

Comprehensive Examination

Before admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree, students must pass a comprehensive examination in the field of concentration and related fields.

The following rules apply to the doctoral comprehensive examination.

1. Students must be registered (pass/fail or credit) on the Boulder campus as regular degree-seeking students when they pass the comprehensive examination.
2. Notice of the examination must be filed by the major department with the Graduate School at least two weeks before the examination.
3. The examination is conducted by an examining board appointed by the chair of the major department and approved by the dean of the Graduate School. The board consists of the major advisor and additional members as necessary to a minimum of five. The chair must have a regular or tenured graduate faculty appointment.
Successful candidates must receive affirmative votes from a majority of the members of their examination board. A candidate who fails the examination may attempt it once more after a period of time determined by the examination board.

4. The examination, which may be oral, written or both, tests mastery of a broad field of knowledge, not merely formal course work. The oral part is open to members of the graduate faculty.

**Admission to Candidacy**

A student must formally apply for admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree on forms supplied by the Graduate School upon passing the comprehensive examination. Before being admitted to candidacy a student must earn at least three semesters toward the minimum registration requirement, and pass the comprehensive examination.

**Graduation**

Students must meet all posted graduation deadlines in order to receive a degree in any given semester.

**Continuous Registration Requirement**

A PhD student is required to register continuously for a minimum of 5 dissertation credit hours in the fall and spring semesters of each year, beginning with the semester following the passing of the comprehensive examination and extending through the semester in which the dissertation is successfully defended (final examination). DMusA students must maintain continuous registration for at least 1 credit hour of course work numbered 8200–8399 (or TMUS 8029). AuD students must maintain continuous registration for appropriate course work in the fall and spring semesters of each year through the semester in which the final exam is passed.

1. A student not required to maintain full-time status and not using campus facilities may claim off-campus status, which allows registration for 3 rather than the minimum of 5 dissertation credit hours. Off-campus status (3 credit hours of dissertation) is considered part-time. All CU Boulder considerations for part-time status apply.

2. A student who fails to register continuously for dissertation credit hours after passing the comprehensive examination must retake and pass the comprehensive examination in order to regain status as a student in good standing in the Graduate School. The department may require that the student validate course work more than five years old. At its discretion, the department may petition the dean of the Graduate School for a time limit for completion of all degree requirements of up to one year after the retaking of the comprehensive exam. The department must petition the dean of the Graduate School to waive the requirement to retake the comprehensive exam. Students who are required to maintain continuous registration may petition for an exception in order to take a leave of absence due to extenuating circumstances. Requests for leave of absence for parental leave do not require a petition. Taking a leave of absence does not extend the student’s time limit, but may be used as a reason if applying for an extension.

3. A PhD student must be registered full time for a minimum of 5 dissertation credit hours during the semester (including summer session) in which the dissertation defense is passed. DMusA students must be registered full time in course work numbered 8200–8399 (or TMUS 8029) during the semester in which the dissertation defense is passed. AuD students must be registered full time for 5 credit hours of graduate level course work or 8 credit hours of combined undergraduate and graduate credit hours during the semester in which the final exam is passed.

**Time Limit**

Doctoral degree students are expected to complete all degree requirements within six years from the semester in which they are admitted and begin course work in the doctoral program. The phrase “all degree requirements” includes the filing of the dissertation and all accompanying forms with the Graduate School. Students who fail to complete the degree in this six-year period may be dismissed from their program with the concurrence of the major advisor and/or appropriate departmental personnel. To continue, the student must file a petition for an extension of the time limit with the dean of the Graduate School. Such petitions must be endorsed by the student’s major advisor and/or other appropriate departmental personnel and may be granted for up to one year. If the dean of the Graduate School and the department chair/program director cannot agree on whether a student should continue, the Graduate School’s executive advisory council makes the final decision.

Students who need to leave CU Boulder for a period of time may apply for a graduate leave of absence for up to one year. Doctoral students who are required to maintain continuous registration may petition for an exception in order to take a leave of absence due to extenuating circumstances. Requests for leave of absence for parental leave do not require a petition. Taking a leave of absence does not extend the student’s time limit, but may be used as a reason if applying for an extension.

Students whose registration at CU Boulder is interrupted by military service may apply to the dean of the Graduate School for an extension of time.

**Dissertation Defense/Final Exam**

After the PhD dissertation has been accepted for defense by the student’s committee, a final examination on the dissertation and related topics is conducted. For DMA and AuD students, a final examination is conducted in place of the dissertation defense.

The following rules apply to the dissertation defense.

1. A student must be registered as a full-time, regular, degree-seeking student at CU Boulder for a minimum of 5 dissertation credit hours during the semester in which the final examination is passed. DMusA students must be registered full time in course work numbered 8200–8399 (or TMUS 8029) during the semester in which the dissertation defense is passed. Doctor of audiology students should be registered during the final exam for 5 credit hours of course work at the graduate level or 8 credit hours of combined undergraduate and graduate credit hours.

2. Students must notify the Graduate School of their final oral examination at least two weeks before their scheduled examination date.

3. This examination is wholly or partly oral, the oral part being open to anyone.

4. The examination is conducted by a committee appointed by the chair of the major department and approved by the dean of the Graduate School, which consists of at least five persons, one of whom must be from outside the student’s major department. Three of the members must be CU Boulder graduate faculty. The chair and outside member of the committee must have regular or tenured graduate faculty appointments. The other committee members must have either regular or special graduate faculty appointments. The chair and a majority of the committee must be present on the Boulder campus.
for the examination. More than one dissenting vote disqualifies the
candidate in the final examination.

5. A student who fails the examination may attempt it once more after a
period of time determined by the examining committee.

Dissertation Requirements

A PhD student must write a dissertation based upon original
investigation, showing mature scholarship and critical judgment, as well
as familiarity with tools and methods of research. The subject must be
approved by the student’s major department.

1. Every dissertation presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for an advanced degree must represent the equivalent of at least 30
credit hours of work.

2. The student is responsible for notifying the Graduate School of the
exact title of the dissertation on or before the posted deadlines during
the semester in which the doctoral degree is to be conferred.

3. The dissertation must comply in mechanical features with the
specifications for theses and dissertations available in the Graduate
School.

4. After the dissertation defense, the student is responsible for
submitting the dissertation and signature page on or before the
posted deadline during the semester in which the doctoral degree is
to be conferred.

The final grade is withheld until the dissertation is completed. In progress
(IP) grades are assigned during each semester until the defense is
successfully completed and the final copy of the dissertation is accepted
by the examination committee, at which time the final grade for all
dissertation credit hours is submitted to the Graduate School.

Sequestration of Dissertations

Dissertations approved by the departments and the Graduate School are
released to ProQuest/UMI and kept on file electronically at Norlin Library.

Occasionally, the primary academic advisor, after consultation with the
student, may find it necessary to sequester the student’s dissertation to
protect university rights to intellectual property. The university accepts
the obligation to protect potentially publishable creative works and
potentially patentable subject matter from premature public disclosure
so as to preserve entitlement to patent protection while the technology
is being evaluated. This sequestration should take place only when it is
absolutely required and only for the minimum time necessary.

With just cause, the student may request that an embargo be placed on
the publication/sale of the thesis for a reasonable amount of time. This
request is made upon the electronic submission of the document.

Graduate Faculty Appointments for
Courses and Exams

All courses, 5000 level or above, completed to fulfill graduate degree
requirements must be taught by members of the graduate faculty.
In addition, any faculty member serving on a master's or doctoral
examination/defense committee must hold a current graduate
faculty appointment. Membership on the university faculty does not
automatically constitute an appointment to the graduate faculty. Contact
the departmental graduate program assistant for questions concerning
these appointments.