

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS – PHD

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PREFACE

The Department of Statistics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison strives to maintain both instructional and research programs of the highest quality. The Ph.D. program provides excellent training in the modern theory, methods and applications of statistics. The Department believes that its graduates should blend a strong theoretical statistics foundation with practical experience working with challenging statistical problems in diverse areas of application. For this reason, the Department's graduate programs, stressing this relationship of theory and practice, are designed to prepare the graduate equally well for an academic, industrial, or governmental position.

The Department would like each graduate student's learning experience in the program to be as productive and rewarding as possible. To help build a successful experience, this handbook has been prepared to provide a variety of information that a graduate student might find useful during their time in the Statistics program. It describes the Ph.D. degree programs and requirements, provides a range of academic information such as course descriptions and criteria for satisfactory progress in the programs, and information on aspects of financial support through teaching, research, and project assistantships. The information in this handbook, while extremely useful, should also be supplemented by individual consultation with faculty and staff, and appropriate departmental committees with regard to advising on academic programs and requirements, financial assistantships, and other matters.

MISSION AND GOALS

STATISTICS PHD PROGRAM MISSION

The PhD program provides excellent training in the modern theory, methods, and applications of statistics and develops graduates into independent statistical researchers who are prepared for positions in academia, industry, or the government.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Articulates research problems, potentials, and limits with respect to the theories, methodologies, and/or applications of statistics.
2. Formulates ideas, concepts, designs, and methods beyond the current boundaries of knowledge within statistics.
3. Creates research that makes a substantive contribution to theoretical and/or applied statistics.
4. Demonstrates breadth in the theories, methodologies, and applications of statistics.
5. Advances contributions of statistics to society.
6. Communicates complex ideas in a clear and understandable manner.
7. Fosters ethical and professional conduct.

PROGRAM AND STUDENT RESOURCES

Below are links to a variety of departmental and campus resources that are beneficial to graduate students in Statistics

GRADUATE SCHOOL ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Graduate School at the University of Wisconsin-Madison sets the policies and regulations that apply to all graduate students at UW-Madison. A number of links to specific policies are included throughout the handbook

document, but students are strongly encouraged to review their website for any relevant policies as it applies to their situation: <https://grad.wisc.edu/academic-policies/>.

FACULTY RESEARCH INTERESTS

Please see the Faculty Research interest page here: <https://stat.wisc.edu/research-interests/>

STATISTICS DEPARTMENTAL STAFF

A listing of the Statistics Departmental Staff: <https://kb.wisc.edu/stat/104849>

STATISTICS GRADUATE STUDENT DIRECTORY

A listing of both alumni and current graduate students can be found on the departmental website at: <https://stat.wisc.edu/students-and-alumni/>.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The University has many Professional Development Opportunities and Student Organizations. Please see some links below including the Statistics Graduate Student Association:

- Graduate School Professional Development: <https://grad.wisc.edu/professional-development/>
 - SuccessWorks (aka L&S Career Services): <https://successworks.wisc.edu/>
 - Wisconsin Involvement Network (student orgs): <https://win.wisc.edu/>
 - Teaching Assistants Association: <https://taa-madison.org/>
 - Morgridge Center: <https://morgridge.wisc.edu/>
 - Statistics Graduate Student Association: <https://sgsa.stat.wisc.edu/#/>
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TA/PA/RA FUNDING

Many students in Statistics are funded through the departments. Information specific to your funding can be found in the Statistics department KnowledgeBase at <https://kb.wisc.edu/stat/internal/104851>. Students funded outside of Statistics should contact that department for funding information.

COMPUTING AND IT RESOURCES

Links to the Statistics Department IT manual and UW IT

- Statistics Department IT: <https://stat.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/870/2019/08/sclmanual-1.pdf>
 - UW Division of Information Technology: <https://it.wisc.edu/>
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COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

The Guide (<https://guide.wisc.edu/courses/stat/>), which is the catalog of all UW-Madison programs and courses is a great resource for finding information like course descriptions.

ONBOARDING MATERIALS AND INFORMATION

If you would like to reference information sent to students during the onboarding process, please go to <https://stat.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/870/2021/07/onboarding-MS-PhD-2021.pdf>

PHD PROGRAM INFORMATION

CRITERIA FOR SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

REVISED MAY 2021.

The progress of every graduate student in the Department of Statistics will be reviewed semiannually. The reviews will take place before the start of the Spring Semester and during the Summer. The review will be conducted by a committee or person to be designated by the Department Chair.

In addition to the Departmental Criteria, the student must satisfy of the Graduate School regulations. It is the student's responsibility to understand the Graduate School rules (<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/satisfactory-progress/>). Students should take particular cognizance of the residence requirements as described in the Graduate School Bulletin.

As a result of each review the student will be deemed either to be making Satisfactory Progress or not. The student will be notified of the results of the review only if the Criteria are not satisfied. The consequences of failing to satisfy the Criteria are given below; the immediate consequence is to make the student ineligible for Departmental support as a TA, RA or PA.

In order to be deemed to be making Satisfactory Progress, graduate students must satisfy minimum requirements in each of the following areas:

- Grade Point Average
- Approved Credits
- Time Limits for core courses
- Time limit for first mentoring committee meeting [PhD]
- Ethics
- Handling of Incompletes

There are exceptions to the Criteria for part-time students; see below. Throughout this document, semester means Fall or Spring; Summer session is excluded (although Summer grades are used to compute grade point averages). To 'Pass' a course means to receive a grade of C or better.

1. GRADE POINT AVERAGE

At the end of each semester the Department will compute the cumulative grade point average (GPA) of each student in the program, with two exceptions. The GPA will not be computed at the end of the first semester of study, nor will it be computed in semesters during or after the passing of the preliminary exam. 'Cumulative' means the GPA in all courses numbered 301 or above in any department since entering the program. The cumulative GPA must equal or exceed 3.00 in order to satisfy this Criteria. If the cumulative GPA is below 3.00, then the student has failed to satisfy the Criteria.

2. APPROVED CREDITS

Prior to the semester in which the Preliminary Exam is passed, each semester the student must pass at least six credits approved by the academic advisor and in every two consecutive semesters pass at least fifteen credits approved by the academic advisor. Courses used to fulfill the minimum number of credits should be taken from the Course Requirements listed in the PhD Degree Regulations section below. The Department requires no minimum number of credits during the semester in which the Preliminary Exam is passed and subsequent semesters; however, the student should be aware of any Graduate School rules.

The credit limit may be relaxed, at the discretion of the Department, if it is believed a lower requirement is more appropriate for a student's academic goals.

3. TIME LIMITS FOR CORE COURSES

Time limits for students who begin PhD in the Department in the Fall Semester:

1. Pass Statistics 709-710 within four semesters.
2. Pass the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam within six semesters.

Time limits for students who begin graduate study in the Department in the Spring Semester:

1. Pass Statistics 709 within four semesters and pass Statistics 710 within five semesters.
2. Pass the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam within six semesters of the first Fall Semester of enrollment; that is, the first Spring Semester is not included in the count for students who start their program in the Spring.

Students who interrupt their graduate studies with an approved leave of absence will have the above time limits modified in a reasonable manner to be determined by the Department.

4. TIME LIMIT FOR FIRST MENTORING COMMITTEE MEETING

All Ph.D. students are required to meet once per academic year to discuss academic progress. Students who have not yet passed the qualifying examination meet with their academic advisor. Students who have passed the qualifying exam shall select a mentoring committee of 2-4 faculty members, including at least one who is a tenured or tenure-track professor in the Department of Statistics. A Ph.D. dissertation advisor need not be selected by the time of the first meeting and membership of the committee may change over time. The preliminary examination may satisfy the requirement of the annual meeting in the year it is taken.

If the student has not yet completed all course requirements, the student and committee shall complete a form indicating a plan of which courses to take and when. This plan may be modified. Students who have passed the qualifying examination shall prepare a written document which summarizes the research progress over the previous year and anticipated directions for future research to be shared with the committee one week prior to the scheduled meeting. The committee may also discuss the potential timing of the preliminary examination and dissertation defense.

The committee meeting should be completed with paperwork submitted to the graduate coordinator prior to May 1 of each academic year, but the meeting may occur at any point including early in the fall semester. Students who fail to complete and document the required annual meeting will be deemed not to be making satisfactory progress toward the degree, unless an exception is granted by the Director of Graduate Studies.

5. ETHICS

The department of Statistics expects graduate students to demonstrate intellectual honesty, a responsible attitude towards colleagues and clients, and a strong sense of personal integrity. Ethical statistical practice is essential to our profession and failure to act ethically undermines our profession. Training in research ethics is required for students on some federally funded grants. Unethical behaviors include, but are not limited to, academic misconduct in a class or assignment, academic misconduct in an examination, and violation of data confidentiality. Unethical behavior constitutes failure to meet Criteria and will result in sanctions at the university level and at the departmental level.

6. INCOMPLETES

Any student who received an Incomplete in a course must provide the Department with a brief written explanation of the circumstances that led to the Incomplete, including a description of the work that must be completed. For an Incomplete received during Summer or Fall, the explanation must be received before Monday of the week before the next Spring semester classes start. For an Incomplete during Spring, the explanation must be received before June 15 of the same year.

If the explanation either arrives late or is deemed unacceptable by the Department, then the student will be deemed not to be making Satisfactory Progress.

If the explanation is accepted, the student will have one semester to remove the Incomplete; otherwise in the next review the student will fail to satisfy the Criteria. For example, if a student receives an Incomplete in Fall, he/she has until the end of the Spring Semester to complete the work, receive a grade, and report the grade to the Statistics Department. Thus, the student should complete the work in time for the instructor in the course to finish grading by the end of the appropriate semester.

In some cases, several students in a class will be given an Incomplete because the instructor is not able to complete course grading on time. In such cases, the instructor may provide the Department with one letter to cover all students affected. In these cases, the student need not write a letter to the Department.

7. CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE TO MEET CRITERIA

A student who fails to satisfy the Criteria is ineligible for departmental support as a TA, PA, or RA beginning with the following semester (Fall for the summer review, Spring for the pre-Spring review). Three consecutive reviews in which a student fails to meet the Criteria for Satisfactory Progress will result in the Department immediately notifying the student and the Graduate School that the student is no longer eligible to be student in the Department. The student may petition to remain in the Department after three consecutive failures to meet the Criteria. For example, a student who is simultaneously pursuing two Master's degrees may reasonably be allowed four years to complete the degrees.

A student who has failed to satisfy the Criteria for fewer than three consecutive reviews is eligible to take courses, finish degree requirements and receive a degree. Failure to satisfy the Criteria will not appear on the student's transcript.

8. PART-TIME STUDENTS

A student who enters the Department as a part-time student will meet with an advisor to create individualized Criteria to be approved by the Department. It is anticipated that the individualized Criteria will follow the above

guidelines on Grade Point Average and Incompletes, but the requirements on the number of approved credits and time limits will be relaxed.

A student with full-time status who wants to switch to part-time status must petition the Department for permission; permission will not be granted if it appears that a primary reason for the request is to avoid the consequences of failing to satisfy the Criteria.

9. APPEALS AND THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The student may appeal in writing to the Department Chair any decision on Satisfactory Progress. The results of the review will stand, pending the outcome of the appeal. Thus, it is recommended that a student anticipate potential problems and makes an appeal early.

It is the student's responsibility to make sure he/she receives the results of the Department's review. In particular, the student must check his/her departmental mailbox in a timely manner or leave a forwarding address with the staff member in charge of mail. Ignorance of the result of the review is not grounds for an appeal. (We expect students will know they have failed to meet the Criteria before the Department does.) Also, note the student's responsibility regarding Incompletes as explained earlier.

EXAMPLES OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The list below is not exhaustive and focuses on examples most relevant to students taking courses. Individual instructors may have different expectations. Students are responsible for seeking out information when unsure of what is expected.

Copying or attempting to copy someone else's work, communicating answers during an exam, or using concealed information. For a take-home exam, communicating about the exam with anyone else other than the instructor, without the instructor's consent. Using any resource not allowed by the instructor (internet, books other than those allowed, other students or friends) is cheating. Example of collaboration on homework: 3 students meet to work on their 609 assignment. The right way: They talk about the homework, write down some ideas on the board. Then they separate and individually write up their solutions. The wrong way: There are 3 problems on the assignment. Student A is in charge of problem 1; Student B is in charge of problem 2; and Student C is in charge of problem 3. Student A presents her solution to problem 1 and students B, C copy down this solution. Repeat with Student B on problem 2, etc. This is cheating. Students are encouraged to cite who they worked with on what problems, just like authors acknowledge colleagues in research publications. If someone else's code was used to do your homework, or the proof to a key step from a book or a paper, these references should be cited. Altering university documents is academic misconduct, such as altering a previously graded exam for the purpose of obtaining a grade change or altering a student's progress form after it was signed by the student's advisor.

GUIDELINES FOR THE FIRST MENTORING COMMITTEE MEETING

Before the meeting: Start the process as soon as you pass the qualifying exam. Build in time to identify a research area of interest and potential committee members, including a dissertation advisor ideally. Ask potential committee members to serve on your committee. Tell them about your research interests at this time, then schedule the meeting. Two months in advance is not too early to schedule the meeting, especially in the summer.

At the meeting: get prepared to give an oral report and discuss the following topics: Past research activities, such as background readings on the anticipated research area and early preliminary results. Description of anticipated

directions for future research. Elective courses already taken and planned coursework, in relation to the anticipated dissertation area.

After the meeting: Follow the directions provided by the mentoring committee. Do not hesitate to seek more guidance from committee members, either individually or through regular committee meetings.

ADVISOR SELECTION

During your first year of graduate studies, academic advising is provided by designated advisors during Welcome Week. After your initial appointment during Welcome Week, please feel free to seek advice from any of the faculty members throughout the year.

After your first year of study, you may continue to meet with your advisor listed above or with any faculty member who agrees to be your academic advisor. Students typically work with a research advisor for at least several months and potentially much longer prior to taking the PhD preliminary examination. Students are strongly encouraged to seek a research advisor shortly after passing the PhD qualifying examination, typically during the second year of the program.

When considering a prospective advisor, the following might be helpful to think about. Many of these questions are not simple and may not elicit a quick answer. However, any advisor should be willing to discuss these important issues with you. You may also want to discuss these issues with any students that are currently in the prospective advisor's group/lab. This list is by no means complete; you should spend some time thinking about what is most important to you in your graduate training.

- What thesis projects would be available to me if I were to join your group?
- Would these projects expose me to a variety of different approaches?
- In general, how available will you be to answer questions I might have?
- What is your philosophy regarding the amount of guidance the advisor should provide to a student during preparation of the thesis proposal, thesis, etc.?
- What are your expectations for the amount of time I should spend each day/week in your group/lab?
- Do you include your graduate students in professional activities that will familiarize them with their field of interest/research, such as reviewing manuscripts and meeting with visiting speakers?
- How long do you think it should take me to get my degree?
- What are your former graduate students (if any) doing now?
- What is your general philosophy of graduate training and what goals do you have for your graduate students?

If you wish to change your assigned advisor, please fill out this online [form](https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b8VR8i7kx2cuoQt) (https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b8VR8i7kx2cuoQt)

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

Please see the link to Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures on committees here: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/committees/>

The Statistics Department requires five (5) members to be on the Doctoral Committee.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate School has sent a number of enrollment requirements for all graduate students. Please visit their policies page for the most up-to-date information regarding enrollment requirements for your specific situation (course level, funding type, students visa, term, etc.): <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/enrollment-requirements/>

However it should be noted that department requirements may be stricter than the Grad School requirements – for example, **full-time students in the Statistics department need to make sure to enroll in a minimum of 15 credits over the fall and spring semesters (one semester in 6 credits, the other semester in 9 credits).**

Here is a quick reference guide from the Graduate School's website

Categories	Minimum enrollment for full-time status: Fall or Spring	Minimum enrollment for full-time status: Summer (general 8-week DHH session)
Dissertator	Exactly 3 credits directly related to research	Not required unless receiving summer degree or if RA, trainee (with 12-month appointment), or fellow (with 12-month appointment), 3 cr. required.
RA, non-dissertator	8 cr.	2 cr.
TA/Lecturer (SA) 33%, non-dissertator	6 cr.	Not required unless receiving summer degree, 2 cr. minimum.
TA/Lecturer (SA) 50%, non-dissertator	4 cr.	Not required unless receiving summer degree, 2 cr. minimum.
PA 33%, non-dissertator	6 cr.	Not required unless receiving summer degree, 2 cr. minimum.
PA 50%, non-dissertator	4 cr.	Not required unless receiving summer degree, 2 cr. minimum.
Fellow, non-dissertator	8 cr.	2 cr. for 12-month appointments. Not required for 9-month appointments.
Trainee, non-dissertator	8 cr.	2 cr.
International student (F-1/J-1 visa), non-dissertator, if no other category in this list	8 cr.	4 cr. when summer is admit semester (2 cr. when summer is admit semester and student holds RA appointment or at least 33% TA or PA appointment)
If none of the above, full time enrollment is:	8 cr.	4 cr.

** Credit requirements (except F-1 and J-1 visa requirements) must be satisfied by graded courses taken at 300 or above; courses numbered below 300, audit, and pass/fail do not satisfy enrollment requirements. Lecturer (LSA) is included in the same category as TA.*

Information regarding how to enroll can be found in your onboarding materials: <https://stat.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/870/2021/07/onboarding-MS-PhD-2021.pdf>

PHD DEGREE REGULATIONS

GUIDE INFORMATION

The Guide, which serves as the official catalog for all academic programs at UW-Madison is the official repository of program requirements. All students must follow the requirements published in the Guide for the catalog year in which they entered the program. Here is a link to the current catalog for the Statistics PhD:

<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/statistics/statistics-phd/#text>. Previous catalog years can be accessed at <https://guide.wisc.edu/archive/> in a PDF format.

REGULATIONS

Adopted April 2017

1. COURSE REQUIREMENTS (51 CREDITS)

[Statistics, Ph.D. < University of Wisconsin-Madison](#)

2. QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

The student must pass the PhD Qualifying Examination within six semesters from the first fall semester of registration as a graduate student in the Department. The examination may be attempted a maximum of two times.

Master's degree students who successfully complete the Department's MS Degree Requirements within four semesters and are then admitted to the PhD program must pass the PhD Qualifying Examination within four semesters after entering the PhD program.

The examination is a written exam and is based on a syllabus made available by the PhD Qualifying Examination Committee. Students choose whether they will do Option A (based on the material of 709 and 710), or Option B (based on the material of 609, 610, 849, and 850).

The Qualifying Examination is generally given during the last week of August. Occasionally it may be offered right before the start of the Spring semester also, although in recent years there has not been enough interest from students to hold an exam at that time.

Passing or failing this examination will not affect the student's candidacy for the Master's degree.

3. PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

The student must pass an oral preliminary examination on a topic selected with the approval of the student's advisor. The examination is given by a committee of at least four faculty members appointed by the advisor. Prior to the actual examination, the student must prepare a 15 to 20-page paper outlining the area to be covered. The paper must be written in a clear style with consistent notation. The paper should indicate the scope and depth of the student's dissertation research and should be submitted to the committee at least one week prior to the examination.

The examination typically consists of a 20 to 30-minute talk by the student and questions by the committee. The committee may ask questions during and after the talk. The student may consult notes but is expected to display a mastery of the subject matter as defined by the list of references. The scope of the questions will normally be directed to the subject matter of the paper but may, by natural extension, include any relevant topic. The student's advisor may not serve as chair of the committee but does appoint the chair.

At least three weeks before the scheduled Preliminary Examination, students should contact the graduate coordinator, who will request a preliminary warrant from the Graduate School. Upon review, the Graduate School will return the warrant to the Graduate Coordinator for committee members to sign after the examination. Please request your warrant with this online [form](https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_09tfEfbjV1z0Ee1). (https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_09tfEfbjV1z0Ee1)

4. DISSERTATION

The primary requirement for the PhD degree is the completion of a significant body of original research and the presentation of this research in a dissertation. The research is carried out under the guidance of a member or members of the Department. The candidate must defend the dissertation in a final oral examination.

At least three weeks prior to the final oral examination, the student should contact the graduate coordinator, who will submit a request for a "PhD Final Oral Committee Approval Form" to the Graduate School. Upon review, the Graduate School will return the warrant to the Graduate Coordinator, which will then need to be signed by the Committee and Department Chair following a successful defense. The Statistics Department requires five (5) members to be on the Doctoral Committee.

Please request your warrant with this online [form](https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_09tfEfbjV1z0Ee1) (https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_09tfEfbjV1z0Ee1)

Students are responsible for ensuring that they meet Graduate School requirements and deadlines: <http://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/degree/>.

5. BREADTH REQUIREMENTS

There are three options that fulfill the breadth requirement. For all options, students must complete PhD Breadth Requirement form and have it signed.

Option A (External): Fulfill the minor requirement as specified by another department or program other than Statistics. Students should contact the individual department or program for details.

Option B (Distributed minor):

- At least 9 credits in one or more departments other than Statistics.
- At least 3 credits must be from courses numbered 600 or higher.
- Some courses numbered lower than 600 may not be included*.
- Any course covering the same material as existing courses in Statistics cannot be included* except that at most one course cross-listed with Statistics may be included if it is not staffed by the Statistics department. (*Students should check with the Graduate Coordinator if they have questions on whether specific courses can be applied to the Option B minor.)
- Courses must be completed with grades BC or higher with an average of B or higher.

Option C (Breadth): Fulfill at least two of the following three:

- Participatory seminar experience: Take two one-credit seminar courses outside of the Statistics and Biostatistics and Medical Informatics (BMI) departments. These must involve some level of active participation, such as an oral presentation or written report.
- Collaborative research experience: This provides students with direct experience in interdisciplinary collaborative research activity under the guidance of a faculty trainer. The student must report the results

of this activity in an advertised seminar. Students may fulfill this requirement by rotating through directed study/research credits with Statistics or Biostatistics degree option faculty trainers, or with faculty from other departments.

- Breadth course: Take a 2-3 credit graduate course outside of the Departments of Statistics or BMI. This must be at or above the 600 level, or be from the approved list of outside courses for the Biostatistics Degree Option.

For option B, the student must complete a PhD Minor Agreement Form signed by the student's advisor and the Department Minor Advisor before starting the second minor course.

For option C, the student must present a tentative proposal signed by the student's advisor and the Department Breadth Advisor before starting the second part of this option. The student must write a letter to the Chair of the Curriculum and Degree Requirements Committee (CDRC) detailing how the requirements are fulfilled and submit with PhD Breadth Requirement form.

Students who do not yet have a major professor and who want some preliminary advice on the kinds of programs likely to be approved may speak with a Graduate Advisor for New Students.

Starting in Fall 2021 students interested in completing a Graduate/Professional certificate in a program outside of the student's doctoral major program may do so. Please see Option C here:

<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200>

6. GRADUATE SCHOOL HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- A PhD degree requires 51 credits (not including audits or pass/fail). [Minimum Graduate Degree Credit Requirement]
- At least 32 of these credits must be taken in-residence at UW-Madison. [Minimum Graduate Residence Credit Requirement]
- Half of the degree course work (26 credits out of 51 total credits) must be completed with a combination of Statistics courses numbered 600 or higher (which our department considers to be graduate courses), and, if doing the Biostatistics option, courses considered graduate courses from other departments used to satisfy the Biostatistics requirements (including, but not limited to, Genetics 466, Zoology 570, Biocore 303, Population Health 795, and Medical Sciences 622-721). [Minimum Graduate Course Work (50%) Requirement]
- With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 9 credits of graduate course work from other institutions toward the graduate degree credit and graduate course work (50%) requirements. Course work earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements. [Prior Course Work Requirement]
- With program approval, up to 6 statistics credits from a UW-Madison undergraduate degree at the 600 level or above are allowed to count toward minimum graduate degree credits. Course work earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements. [Prior Course Work Requirement]
- With program approval, and payment of the difference between special and graduate tuition, up to 15 statistics credits completed at UW-Madison while a University Special Student at the 300 level or above are allowed to count toward minimum graduate degree and graduate residence credit requirements. Of these credits, those at the 700-level or above may also count toward the minimum graduate course work (50%) requirement. Course work earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements. [Prior Course Work Requirement]

BIOSTATISTICS DEGREE OPTION

The Biostatistics Degree Option (BDO) is a collaborative program with both the Department of Statistics and Biostatistics and Medical Informatics. Students pursue course work in theory, methodology, and application of statistics.

PhD students are required to satisfy the general requirements for their degree in Statistics with additional coursework noted below.

COURSES

Seven Required Statistic Courses (23 credits) – cover core topics in probability, mathematical statistics, and statistical methodology, including distribution theory, asymptotic analysis, theory of estimation and testing, general regression techniques, and also specialized statistical methods for clinical studies.

- [Statistics: Biostatistics, Ph.D. < University of Wisconsin-Madison](#)

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE: This unique aspect of the BDO program provides the student with experience in interdisciplinary collaborative research under the supervision of a faculty trainer. Students can accomplish this requirement by rotating through directed study/research credits with various faculty trainers.

- Lab rotations should be completed during the first three years of the program
- Lab rotations need to be established at the beginning of the semester, plan accordingly!
- Students must give a presentation of their research at the end of the same semester

QUALIFYING EXAM: Students take their qualifying exam in August after completing their 1st year in the Statistics program.

MENTORING COMMITTEE MEETING: Within one year of passing the qualifying exam, students must hold a meeting with a minimum of three BDO faculty advisors. The student will present a short oral report of his/her research and review the anticipated future research.

PRELIMINARY EXAM: After the selection of a thesis advisor, the student will prepare a short paper and present their thesis plans to a faculty committee.

SEMINARS: Students are expected to attend seminars from the Statistics Department (Wednesday, 4:00pm), the BMI Department (Friday, 12:00pm)

FINAL EXAM: A final oral thesis presentation on novel developments in biostatistics will be presented to the thesis committee.

BREADTH: For the BDO student, the breadth requirement is satisfied by: (1) the biological sciences course and (2) the collaborative research experience.

OTHER: Rules governing courses and timing, operation, and requirements of the qualifying, preliminary, and final exams are as in the parent program, as are the criteria for satisfactory progress. Issues specific to the BDO are governed by the BDO trainers within the two sponsoring departments.

ADDITIONAL QUALIFYING EXAM INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The qualifying exam has two options. Students will pick one of the two and write one exam.

1. Option A. Based on Statistics 709 and 710
2. Option B. Based on Statistics 609/610, and 849/850.

Both exams (Option A and Option B) will have 4 questions, with multiple parts. Candidates will be expected to answer all four questions. Both exams will be 4 hours in length.

The examination is a written exam and is based on the syllabus below made by the PhD Qualifying Examination Committee. Students choose whether they will do Option A (based on the material of 709 and 710), or Option B (based on the material of 609, 610, 849, and 850).

The Qualifying Examination is generally given during the last week of August.

Syllabus: <https://stat.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/870/2020/08/PhD-QE-Syllabus.pdf>

Sample Registration form: <https://stat.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/870/2020/08/Fall-2020-Qual-Exam-Registration-Form.pdf>

After a student signs up for the exam please contact the Graduate Coordinator for access to previous test examples if desired.

MS EXAM

PhD students interested in taking the MS exam should follow the guidelines found on pages 10 and 11 in the MS Student Handbook here: <https://stat.wisc.edu/graduate-studies/ms-program/>

DISSERTATOR STATUS

The Graduate School sets the policies as it relates to the dissertator status, please see their policy information online at: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/dissertator-status/>

Dissertator is a unique fee status for students who have completed all requirements for a doctoral degree except for the dissertation. To be eligible for dissertator fee status, a student must:

- Pass the preliminary examination(s);
- Satisfy the doctoral minimum credit requirement;
- Complete all minor requirements, if the major program requires a minor;
- Complete all program requirements except the dissertation;
- Clear all Incomplete grades or Progress grades in non-research courses (progress grades in 990 research may remain);
- Earn at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA;
- Return the signed preliminary exam warrant to the Graduate School.

Dissertator status is effective at the start of the semester following completion of all dissertator requirements for the doctoral degree except for the dissertation. In order to initiate the change to dissertator status, the prelim warrant must be sent to the Graduate School. Students can check on dissertator status by contacting the program's graduate student coordinator.

All dissertator requirements must be met before the first day of classes to be a dissertator for any given semester. If all dissertator requirements are completed before the first day of classes but the signed prelim warrant does not reach the Graduate School by that deadline, the student can still become a dissertator that semester. Submit the warrant to the Graduate School as soon as possible and enroll for 3 credits (usually 990 research) for that semester.

Removal of Dissertator Status: A dissertator who enrolls for more than 3 credits will be removed from dissertator status for the fall or spring term in which the enrollment exceeds the 3-credit maximum. During the summer, however, an enrolled dissertator may ask their advisor to request an overload of 1-2 additional credits in a short session and still retain dissertator fee status, if the course is related to dissertation research or professional training that is not offered in regular semesters.

The removal of dissertator status may have the following consequences:

- Graduate assistant (TA/PA/RA) salary rates may have to be adjusted to the non-dissertator rate, or percent limitations. See Maximum Levels of Appointments.
- Fees are assessed at the non-dissertator rate.
- Full-time status may change to part-time, possibly affecting loan deferral, visa status, etc.

If a dissertator wants to pursue a graduate degree or certificate in another area, the dissertator fee status will be discontinued and regular graduate fees will be assessed, with possible consequences listed above.

COMPLETING YOUR PHD DEGREE

Information regarding deadlines (<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/deadlines/>) and resources for preparing your doctoral dissertation (<https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/doctoral-guide/>) can be found online at the provided links.

PhD students in their final semester will need to contact the Graduate Coordinator to request their graduation warrant (<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/warrants/>). Online Warrant request form here: https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_09tfEfbjV1z0Ee1

All graduating students or those leaving the department before completing their degree are asked to fill out the departmental exit forms: <https://stat.wisc.edu/documents/statistics-ms-phd-exit-form/> and <https://stat.wisc.edu/documents/statistics-department-graduate-survey/>

ACADEMIC EXCEPTION PETITION

Academic exceptions are considered on an individual case by case basis and should not be considered a precedent. Deviations from normal progress are highly discouraged, but the program recognizes that there are in some cases extenuating academic and personal circumstances. Petitions for course exceptions/substitutions or exceptions to the Satisfactory Progress Expectations (academic or conduct) shall be directed to the Director of Graduate Studies or relevant committee chair (example Curriculum Chair). The following procedures apply to all petitions:

1. The specific requirement/rule/expectation pertinent to the petition must be identified.
2. The student's academic advisor must provide written support for the petition.
3. All course work substitutions and equivalencies will be decided by appropriate area-group faculty or curriculum chair.

More generally, the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the student's advisor, may grant extensions to normal progress requirements for students who face circumstances (similar to tenure extensions) as noted in university regulations, this includes childbirth, adoption, significant responsibilities with respect to elder or dependent care obligations, disability or chronic illness, or circumstances beyond one's personal control. Where warranted, the petition should provide good evidence of plans and ability to return to conformance with the standard and to acceptably complete the program. The normal extension will be one semester; anything beyond this will be granted only in the event of highly extraordinary circumstances. Extensions will be granted formally with a note of explanation to be placed in the student's file.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS – CONDUCT

Students should avoid even an appearance of improper behavior or lack of ethical standards while in Graduate School at UW-Madison, in all professional settings, and in their personal lives. Students should conduct themselves according to the standards expected of members of the profession to which the student aspires. Concerns about infractions of Professional Conduct may be effectively handled informally between the instructor/advisor and the student. If a resolution is not achieved, a graduate program representative may be included in the discussion. Separate and apart from a violation of Professional Conduct, a student may face University disciplinary action with regard to the same action. Students are responsible for reading the information here as well as the information published on all the relevant web sites. Lack of knowledge of this information does not excuse any infraction.

1. **Professional Ethics:** Students shall show respect for a diversity of opinions, perspectives and cultures; accurately represent their work and acknowledge the contributions of others; participate in and commit to related opportunities; aim to gain knowledge and contribute to the knowledge base of others; understand the UW Student Code of Conduct; represent their profession and the program; and strive to incorporate and practice disciplinary ideals in their daily lives. Resumes/CVs must reflect accurate information.
2. **Honesty and Integrity:** Students shall demonstrate honesty and integrity as shown by their challenging of themselves in academic pursuits; honesty and ethics in research and IRB applications—including honesty in interpretation of data, commitment to an unbiased interpretation of academic and professional endeavors; and the need to document research activities, protect subject/client confidentiality and HIPAA regulations. Students shall follow-through and pull their weight in group activities and understand where collaboration among students is or is not allowed; not plagiarize others or past work (self-plagiarism), cheat, or purposefully undermine the work of others; and avoid conflicts of interest for the duration of their time in the program. As a professional, honesty and integrity also extends to personal behavior in life outside of the academic setting by realizing that students are representatives of the program, UW-Madison, and the profession as a whole.
3. **Interpersonal and Workplace Relationships:** Students shall interact with peers, faculty, staff and those they encounter in their professional capacity in a manner that is respectful, considerate, and professional. This includes and is not limited to attending all scheduled meetings, honoring agreed upon work schedules, being on-time and prepared for work/meetings, contributing collaboratively to the team, keeping the lines of communication open, offering prompt response to inquiries, and employing respectful use of available equipment/technology/resources. Chronic or unexplained absences are unprofessional in the workplace and could be grounds for termination or removal of funding. To facilitate the free and open exchange of ideas, any criticism shall be offered in a constructive manner, and the right of others to hold different opinions shall be respected.

4. **Commitment to Learning:** Students are expected to meet their educational responsibilities at all times. Be actively prepared for class and be ready for questions and answers. Be on time for every class and always show courtesy during class or if you have to leave class early. If possible, students should notify the instructor at least one day in advance of a planned absence. Students who are unable to attend class are responsible for finding out what occurred that day and should not expect instructors to give them individual instruction. Recognizing that the pursuit of knowledge is a continuous process, students shall show commitment to learning by persevering despite adversity and seeking guidance in order to adapt to change. Students shall strive for academic excellence and pursue and incorporate all critique, both positive and negative, in the acquisition of knowledge in order to understand and respect the community in which they work.
5. **Professional Appearance:** Students shall convey a positive, professional appearance in order to represent the program in a dignified manner. Appearance includes a person's dress, hygiene, and appropriate etiquette/protocols for the environment (including safety protocols and protective clothing in environments that require them).

This graduate program, the Graduate School, and the Division of Student Life all uphold the UW-System policies and procedures in place for academic and non-academic misconduct. In addition, graduate students are held to the same standards of responsible conduct of research as faculty and staff. Furthermore, unprofessional behavior towards clients/subjects, faculty, staff, peers and public are significant issues in the evaluation and promotion of students. In turn, we hold expectations for the highest level of academic integrity and expect professional, ethical, and respectful conduct in all interactions. Students may be disciplined or dismissed from the graduate program for misconduct or disregard for professional conduct expectations regardless of their academic standing in the program. Separate and apart from a violation of Professional Conduct, a student may face University disciplinary action with regard to the same action. Students are responsible for reading the information here as well as the information published on all the relevant web sites. Lack of knowledge of this information does not excuse any infraction.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct is an act in which a student (UWS 14.03(1)):

1. seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
2. uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
3. forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
4. intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
5. engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance; or
6. assists other students in any of these acts.

Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to:

1. cutting and pasting text from the Web without quotation marks or proper citation;
2. paraphrasing from the Web without crediting the source;
3. using notes or a programmable calculator in an exam when such use is not allowed;
4. using another person's ideas, words, or research and presenting it as one's own by not properly crediting the originator;
5. stealing examinations or course materials;
6. changing or creating data in a lab experiment;

7. altering a transcript;
8. signing another person's name to an attendance sheet;
9. hiding a book knowing that another student needs it to prepare for an assignment;
10. collaboration that is contrary to the stated rules of the course; or
11. tampering with a lab experiment or computer program of another student.

Additional information regarding Academic Misconduct:

- Graduate School Policy & Procedure: Misconduct, Academic:
<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/misconduct-academic/>
- Dean of Students Office: Information for Students: Why should I know about academic misconduct? How do I avoid academic misconduct? What happens if I engage in academic misconduct? What should I do if I know a classmate is cheating? <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/> (near bottom)
- Dean of Students Office: Academic Misconduct Flowchart:
<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/documents/academic-misconduct-flow-chart/>
- University of Wisconsin System: Chapter UWS 14: Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures:
https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/14

NON-ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The university may discipline a student in non-academic matters in the following situations:

1. for conduct which constitutes a serious danger to the personal safety of a member of the university community or guest;
2. for stalking or harassment;
3. for conduct that seriously damages or destroys university property or attempts to damage or destroy university property, or the property of a member of the university community or guest;
4. for conduct that obstructs or seriously impairs university-run or university-authorized activities, or that interferes with or impedes the ability of a member of the university community, or guest, to participate in university-run or university-authorized activities;
5. for unauthorized possession of university property or property of another member of the university community or guest;
6. for acts which violate the provisions of UWS 18, Conduct on University Lands;
7. for knowingly making a false statement to any university employee or agent on a university-related matter, or for refusing to identify oneself to such employee or agent;
8. for violating a standard of conduct, or other requirement or restriction imposed in connection with disciplinary action.

Examples of non-academic misconduct include but are not limited to:

1. engaging in conduct that is a crime involving danger to property or persons, as defined in UWS 18.06(22)(d);
2. attacking or otherwise physically abusing, threatening to physically injure, or physically intimidating a member of the university community or a guest;
3. attacking or throwing rocks or other dangerous objects at law enforcement personnel, or inciting others to do so;
4. selling or delivering a controlled substance, as defined in 161 Wis. Stats., or possessing a controlled substance with intent to sell or deliver;

5. removing, tampering with, or otherwise rendering useless university equipment or property intended for use in preserving or protecting the safety of members of the university community, such as fire alarms, fire extinguisher, fire exit signs, first aid equipment, or emergency telephones; or obstructing fire escape routes;
6. preventing or blocking physical entry to or exit from a university building, corridor, or room;
7. engaging in shouted interruptions, whistling, or similar means of interfering with a classroom presentation or a university-sponsored speech or program;
8. obstructing a university officer or employee engaged in the lawful performance of duties;
9. obstructing or interfering with a student engaged in attending classes or participating in university-run or university-authorized activities;
10. knowingly disrupting access to university computing resources or misusing university computing resources.

Additional information regarding Non-Academic Misconduct:

- Graduate School Academic Policies & Procedures: Misconduct, Non-Academic: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/misconduct-nonacademic/>
- Dean of Students Office: Non-Academic Misconduct Standards Statement: <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/nonacademic-misconduct/>
- Dean of Students Office: Non-Academic Misconduct Process: <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/nonacademic-misconduct/nonac-procedures/>
- University of Wisconsin System: Chapter UWS 17: Student Non-Academic Disciplinary Procedures: https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/17
- University of Wisconsin System: Chapter UWS 18: Conduct on University Lands: https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/18

RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

Much of graduate education is carried out not in classrooms, but in laboratories and other research venues, often supported by federal or other external funding sources. Indeed, it is often difficult to distinguish between academic misconduct and cases of research misconduct. Graduate students are held to the same standards of responsible conduct of research as faculty and staff. The Graduate School is responsible for investigating allegations of research misconduct. This is often done in consultation with the Division of Student Life as well as with federal and state agencies to monitor, investigate, determine sanctions, and train about the responsible conduct of research. For more information, contact the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Policy, 333 Bascom Hall, (608) 262-1044.

Please see section on “Grievance Procedures and Misconduct Reporting” for further information on reporting research misconduct of others. Here are links for additional information regarding Research Misconduct and

Responsible Conduct:

- Graduate School Policies & Procedures: Responsible Conduct of Research: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/responsible-conduct-of-research/>
- Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education’s - Office of Research Policy: Introduction & Guide to Resources on Research Ethics: <https://research.wisc.edu/compliance-policy/research-ethics/>

- Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education's Office of Research Policy: Policies, Responsibilities, and Procedures: Reporting Misconduct:
<https://kb.wisc.edu/gsadminkb/page.php?id=34486>
- Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education's Office of Research Policy: Policies, Responsibilities, and Procedures: Responsible Conduct of Research Resources:
<https://kb.wisc.edu/gsadminkb/search.php?cat=2907>

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Graduate students should seek to understand their rights and obligations related to intellectual property, including how patents and copyrights protect their work and when invention disclosure policies apply. This is especially important if there are special considerations related to external funding sources.

Faculty and instructors should discuss these topics with graduate students, making IP education part of their research culture. Graduate programs should keep abreast of educational opportunities on the topic of intellectual property and inform their graduate students and faculty about these.

The primary campus resource for intellectual property policy and information is the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education's website, <https://research.wisc.edu/intellectual-property/>. Additionally, the Graduate School Office of Professional Development plans to maintain a collection of online resources (not available at the time of handbook publication) aimed at highlighting intellectual property topics of interest to graduate students.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND DISMISSAL

Failure to meet the program's academic or conduct expectations can result in disciplinary action including immediate dismissal from the program. If a student is not making satisfactory progress in regard to academic or conduct expectations, the advisor will consult with the program committee to determine if disciplinary action or dismissal is recommended.

Possible Departmental Disciplinary Actions

- Written reprimand
- Denial of specified privilege(s)
- Imposition of reasonable terms and conditions on continued student status
- Removal of funding
- Probation
- Restitution
- Removal of the student from the course(s) in progress
- Failure to promote
- Withdrawal of an offer of admission
- Placement on Leave of Absence for a determined amount of time
- Suspension from the program for up to one year with the stipulation that remedial activities may be prescribed as a condition of later readmission. Students who meet the readmission condition must apply for readmission and the student will be admitted only on a space available basis. See the Graduate School Academic Policies & Procedures: Readmission to Graduate School:
<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/readmission/>
- Suspension from the program. The suspensions may range from one semester to four years.

- Dismissal from the program
- Denial of a degree

Depending on the type and nature of the misconduct, the Division of Student Life may also have grounds to do one or more of the following:

- Reprimand
- Probation
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Restitution
- A zero or failing grade on an assignment on an assignment/exam
- A lower grade or failure in the course
- Removal from course
- Enrollment restrictions in a course/program
- Conditions/terms of continuing as a student

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

UW-Madison has a holistic resource for all things wellness called “UWell”. The site includes information and opportunities for wellness for your work/school, financial, environmental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and community. Go to <https://uwell.wisc.edu/>.

Students who pay segregated fees are eligible for University Health Services (<https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/>).

There is no charge to students for many basic services including counseling sessions, because services are paid through tuition and fees. Personal health and wellness services are also available in addition to medical services.

SECURING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

Graduate students who hold an appointment as an assistant of 33.33% or more or who have a fellowship may be eligible for health insurance and other benefits beyond University Health Services. Contact the staff benefits and payroll coordinator in the unit where you have been hired to select one of several health care plans within 30 days of your hire date. Please note that MSDS students are not allowed to hold a tuition remitting position.

Graduate students without an assistantship or fellowship who are currently enrolled can use the services of University Health Services (UHS), the campus health clinic. Many services are provided at no extra cost, including outpatient medical care during regular business hours, Monday through Friday. UHS is located in the Student Services Tower at 333 East Campus Mall, 608-265-5000. For more info, visit the UHS web site at <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/>.

Prescription medications, emergency room visits and hospitalization are not included in UHS benefits. Therefore, supplemental insurance covering these drugs and services is recommended for all students and is required for international students. The UHS Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) is an excellent option for many students. Contact the SHIP office at 608-265-5600 for more information.

DISABILITY INFORMATION

Students with disabilities have access to disability resources through UW-Madison's McBurney Disability Resource Center. As an admitted student, you should first go through the steps to apply for accommodations at <https://mcburney.wisc.edu/apply-for-accommodations/>.

Additional [non-academic] disability campus resources (not found through the McBurney Center) can be found at <https://mcburney.wisc.edu/> (under other resources).

The UW-Madison Index for Campus Accessibility Resources can be found at <https://www.wisc.edu/accessibility/>.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES ON AND OFF CAMPUS

University Health Services (UHS) is the primary mental health provider for students on campus. UHS Counseling and Consultation Services offers a wide range of services to the diverse student population of UW-Madison. They offer immediate crisis counseling, same day appointments and ongoing treatment. Go to <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/> or call 608-265-5600.

UHS service costs are covered for students through tuition and fees.

There are many mental health resources throughout the Madison community, but UHS Counseling and Consultation Services is the best resource for referrals to off-campus providers. Call 608-265-5600 for assistance in finding an off-campus provider.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

If a student feels unfairly treated or aggrieved by faculty, staff, or another student, the University offers several avenues to resolve the grievance. Students' concerns about unfair treatment are best handled directly with the person responsible for the objectionable action. If the student is uncomfortable making direct contact with the individual(s) involved, they should contact the advisor or the person in charge of the unit where the action occurred (program or department chair, section chair, lab manager, etc.). Many departments and schools/colleges have established specific procedures for handling such situations; check their web pages and published handbooks for information. If such procedures exist at the local level, these should be investigated first. For more information see the Graduate School Academic Policies & Procedures: Grievances & Appeals: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/> and the Guide "Grievance and Appeals" section: <https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/statistics/statistics-ms/statistics-statistics-ms/#policiestext>.

Within the department of Statistics MS and PhD students can reach out to the following people:

- Sara Rodock (rodock@wisc.edu), Senior Student Services Coordinator
- Dr. Bret Larget (bret.larget@wisc.edu), Director of Graduate Studies
- John Schuppel (john.schuppel@wisc.edu), Graduate Program Coordinator