

Department of Computer Science
University of Houston

Rules and Regulations of PhD Program

Approved April 21, 2004
Effective Fall 2004

1. Program Requirements

- 1.1 A student must complete a minimum of 72 credit hours subject to the following restrictions:
 - a) At least 36 credits of approved, regular or special topics (xx97) courses. At most 9 of these hours may be outside the Department with the approval of the student's research advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.
 - b) At least 24 credits of dissertation.
- 1.2 Satisfactory completion of the core requirement.
- 1.3 Obtain a research advisor.
- 1.4 Satisfactory performance on the preliminary examination.
- 1.5 Maintenance of satisfactory progress.
- 1.6 Preparation of a written dissertation and satisfactory defense thereof.

2. Time Limitations

Program requirements 2-4 must be done within certain strict time limitations. The time limitation period begins as soon as the student has 18 or more hours of credits applicable to a graduate degree (MS or PhD) in Computer Science. These include transferred credits as well as credits earned at UH. The time limitations apply to MS students who later decide to continue in the PhD program as well as to PhD students.

3. Core Requirement

A student satisfies the core requirement for the PhD in Computer Science by taking a set of 4 or more courses from the lists below. At least 2 courses must be from the Theory list and at least 2 courses must be from the Systems list. The Director of Graduate Studies may in exceptional cases waive at most 1 of the 4 courses based on similar courses taken at another university.

- 3.1 Theory
 - Data Structures and Algorithms (6320)
 - Numerical Analysis (6364)
 - Theory of Computation (6369)
- 3.2 Systems
 - Computer Architecture (6385)
 - Languages and Compilers (6361)
 - Operating Systems (6360)

The student must complete the core requirement with (1) a combined grade point average of 3.40 or better on all the core courses taken, and (2) obtain

a grade of B or better in at least four of the core courses. All courses taken from the lists will count and no course in the lists may be repeated. Full-time students must complete the core requirement in at most 2 long semesters after the time limitation period begins. Part-time students (6 hours or less every semester) must complete the core requirement in at most 4 long semesters after the time limitation period begins. Failure to complete the core requirement with the required GPA within the time limitation normally results in an MS student not being allowed to continue into the PhD program and a PhD student being removed from the PhD program.

4. Research Advisor

Students are urged to find a research advisor as early as possible. Full-time and part-time students should have a research advisor by the end of the second long semester after completing the core requirement. As part of the process of finding a research advisor all PhD students are required to take/attend the Graduate Colloquium course, 6110, no later than the first fall semester after completing the breadth requirement. See the section entitled Maintenance of Satisfactory Progress for the adverse consequences of failing to have a research advisor by the end of the second long semester after completing the breadth requirement.

5. Preliminary Examination

The student must pass a preliminary examination administered by the student's dissertation committee. The dissertation committee consists of the student's research advisor and at least 4 other members. At least one member of the committee must be from outside the department and the majority of members must be voting faculty of the Computer Science Department. The examination is open to the public. The purpose of the examination is to determine the fitness of the student for PhD level research. The exact content of the examination is at the discretion of the dissertation committee. All faculty members in attendance as well as the committee members may ask the student questions. The committee may have a closed session with the student at the end of the examination. The committee will submit a written report to the Director of Graduate Studies concerning the student's performance on the preliminary examination and assign an overall

evaluation of satisfactory or unsatisfactory. A student who passes the preliminary examination is classified as a PhD candidate.

Full-time and part-time students should take the preliminary examination no later than the end of the third long semester after completing the core requirement. See the section entitled Maintenance of Satisfactory Progress for the adverse consequences of failing to take and pass the preliminary examination within this time period.

6. Maintenance of Satisfactory Progress

The director of Graduate Studies will review a student's progress at the end of every long semester after completing the breadth requirement subject to the following rules.

- 6.1 If a student does not have a research advisor by the end of the second long semester after completing the core requirement and any subsequent semester then the student is automatically classified as not making satisfactory progress.
- 6.2 If the student has not taken the preliminary examination and received a satisfactory evaluation from the dissertation committee by the end of the third long semester after completing the core requirement and any subsequent semester then the student is automatically classified as not making satisfactory progress.
- 6.3 At the end of each semester that the student has a research advisor, the advisor must give the Director of Graduate Studies a written report concerning the student's progress and specify whether the student is or is not making satisfactory progress.

A student, who is evaluated as not making satisfactory progress on two consecutive reviews is normally removed from the PhD program.

A decision to remove a student from the PhD program for failure to successfully complete the breadth requirement within the time limitation or for two consecutive unsatisfactory reviews will be brought to the entire faculty for a vote.

7. Dissertation Defense

A candidate will be required to present her/his dissertation in a public defense. The dissertation committee decides the acceptability of the dissertation. Candidates are expected to publish results of their dissertation research prior to the dissertation defense.

8. University Academic Regulations and Degree Requirements

Students must satisfy all the university academic regulations and degree requirements for a PhD degree. See the Academic Regulations and Degree Requirements section of the online graduate catalog at http://www.uh.edu/grad_catalog/

<<END OF DOCUMENT>>

Transition Rules for the New PhD Requirements

Approved April 30, 2004

1. Students who have taken one or more qualifying examinations by the end of this semester (Spring 2004) must continue under the old rules until they finish the qualifying examination.
2. Students who have not taken any qualifying examinations by the end of this semester must go under the new rules.

These 2 rules imply that students who have not taken any qualifying examinations before this semester can choose whether to take a qualifying examination this semester or not. If they choose to take a qualifying examination this semester then they must continue under the old rules until they finish the qualifying examination. If they choose not to take any qualifying examinations this semester then they must go under the new rules.

3. Students who are under the new rules and who have already taken courses in the core requirement must choose to either i) keep all such courses and the grades or ii) forfeit all such courses and the grades. If a student chooses to forfeit all such courses and grades the student must file a petition to that effect by September 3, 2004.
4. The time limitation period for a student who is already in the program will start when the student has 18 or more hours of credits applicable to a graduate degree (MS or PhD) in Computer Science or in the Fall 2004 whichever comes last.