

MULTIDISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE-DIRECTED PHD

This option is designed to meet the needs of highly qualified and motivated doctoral students who have academic interests that cannot be met by a single, existing UWM doctoral program. The program crosses traditional disciplinary boundaries and opens new areas of instruction and research.

Those who have been admitted to this program typically have identified a multidisciplinary research topic before applying to a UWM doctoral program. It is the applicant's responsibility to identify members of the UWM graduate faculty who would provide the necessary expertise and guidance for developing the multidisciplinary program proposal, and to obtain confirmation from these faculty that they are willing to serve as committee members through the completion of the program.

Students in this program are subject to all general Graduate School requirements for doctoral programs, including, but not limited to, minimum credits, residency, time limit, preliminary examination, proposal hearing, committee membership, and the dissertation defense.

For more information about the program, contact the Doctoral Specialist (gs-doctoralservices@uwm.edu).

Requirements

1. Prospective students who have an interest in a multidisciplinary PhD degree program should apply to the UWM doctoral degree program that is most closely related to their major interest.
2. When an existing doctoral program receives an application from a student who is considering a multidisciplinary degree program, it will treat it as it would all other applications for admission; all normal admissions criteria will be invoked. Since there can be no assurance of an alternate degree route for the student at the time of admission, the doctoral program must assume full normal responsibility for any student it admits, including guidance toward the completion of its designated doctoral degree.
3. The application for the special committee degree must be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School on behalf of the student by the proposed major professor, and with the approval of the major professor's doctoral program. All proposals for this degree program must meet minimum PhD requirements of the Graduate School. The application should clearly state:
 - The reasons the special committee program is needed with an explanation of why the student's needs cannot be met within existing programs.
 - The exact title of the proposed degree.
 - The proposed course and seminar program envisaged.
 - Any tool requirements of the dissertation (language, etc.) and how these requirements will be met.
 - The nature and scope of preliminary examinations.
 - The nature of the dissertation (general subject area).
 - The names of the chairperson and (a minimum of) four other graduate faculty members who have agreed to serve on the committee.
4. The major professor must be an approved doctoral advisor of the program to which the student is originally admitted. In signing off on

the application for the Multidisciplinary Committee-Directed PhD the program agrees to retain and keep all the student's records.

5. Multidisciplinary degree program proposals must come to the Graduate School within one year after admission to the doctoral program (or before the student has completed 12 credits in courses in the doctoral program). They must come to the Graduate School in a timely fashion—that is, when there is still a substantial portion of the program ahead of the student.
6. All applications must be approved both by the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) and the Dean of the Graduate School. In all cases the Graduate School and the GCC will review applications to determine whether the proposed multidisciplinary program can be carried out within an established department or program, utilizing major and minor requirements or other available mechanisms. The suitability and degree of commitment of the supervisory committee for the proposed program will be examined.
7. Students in multidisciplinary degree programs are eligible for all categories of financial aid. They may be assigned teaching assistantships in participating departments or research or project assistantships with appropriate faculty members. Nominations for Graduate School and Distinguished Dissertation Fellowships, AOP and other awards may be made by the GCC. Limitations set by the Fellowship Committee on the number of nominations to be made by individual programs will apply to the GCC, for multidisciplinary students.
8. The Graduate School is vitally concerned about maintaining active participation by all members of special degree committees in the on-going PhD programs of the students, and asks the individual members of the committees to assume all of the responsibilities which a department or program faculty provides in a conventional program.