INFORMATION STUDIES, PHD

PhD Overview

The Doctor of Philosophy in Information Studies prepares graduates for academic and professional careers where an in-depth knowledge of research processes and evaluation is needed. The program emphasizes the study of the representation, storage, retrieval, use, and impact of information resources on society. Graduates will contribute to the knowledge base of the discipline and will take on leadership roles as scholars and administrators in the discipline and the profession.

SOIS Overview

Related Certificates

- Certificate of Advanced Study in Archives and Records Administration (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/archives-records-administration-certificate)

The School of Information Studies prepares students for careers in libraries and the information professions. The School’s array of graduate programs provides students with the opportunity to develop attitudes associated with progressive information services, and to develop an understanding of the value, role, and application of modern technology as it relates to library operations and the transfer of information.

In harmony with the mission of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, a major urban research institute, the School of Information Studies strives to make significant contributions towards extending and enhancing the quality of information services and the promotion of information and technological literacy to a diverse society. The School of Information Studies is committed to excellence in instruction, research, and service.

Goals of the school are:

1. To prepare professionals who are able to provide leadership and adapt to change in a technological and knowledge-based environment for careers in libraries, school media centers, information systems, and related areas, according to accepted professional standards.
2. To enrich the library and information science profession through recruitment of students with strong academic skills from diverse cultural, geographic, and subject backgrounds.
3. To enable undergraduate students to achieve qualifications to pursue careers in the information professions through the provision of degree and certificate programs.
4. To enable students to develop specializations in the information professions at the graduate level through the provision of single and dual degree programs.
5. To promote a research orientation through participation in the Doctor of Philosophy degree program.
6. To contribute to the international knowledge base of library and information science through research and publication.
7. To facilitate the development, provision, and evaluation of library and information services through consultation services to individual organizations and leadership in professional associations locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally.
8. To offer opportunities for professionals and the wider community to update their skills and knowledge through advanced and continuing education courses, workshops, and programs offered nationally and internationally.

Admission Requirements

Application Deadlines

Application deadlines vary by program, please review the application deadline chart (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines) for specific programs. Other important dates and deadlines can be found by using the One Stop calendars (https://uwm.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines).

Admission

Students begin the Information Studies doctoral program in the fall. Applications are accepted only for the fall semester.

An applicant must meet Graduate School requirements plus these departmental requirements to be considered for admission to the program in regular status:

- Have a cumulative GPA in coursework for the Master’s degree of at least 3.5 and an undergraduate GPA of 3.0. Applicants possessing a Master of Library and Information Science, or a master’s degree in an allied discipline, are encouraged to apply.
- Submit verbal and quantitative scores for the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/#gre) taken within the past five years.
- Submit three letters of recommendation from qualified persons who can attest to the applicant’s aptitude for doctoral study. At least one letter must be from an academic.
- Submit a writing sample that demonstrates the applicant’s analytical and critical thinking skills. This may take the form of a published research paper, term paper from a previous graduate program, or earlier completed thesis.
- Applicants are encouraged to bring at least two years of relevant professional experience prior to entering the PhD program.

Applications lacking the requisite GPA or academic area may be considered for admission on probation, and may be required to complete preparatory coursework.

Credits and Courses

Students will need to complete a minimum of 30 credits of approved coursework at the 700-level or higher.

Standard Graduate School minimum and maximum credit loads (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/academic-policies-procedures) apply. Full-time students are discouraged from taking more than 9 credits per semester.

Students, along with their major professor, should develop a plan for coursework that will prepare the student to carry out research in their areas of interest. Although an identified dissertation topic is not required upon entry to the program, students should begin to formulate ideas for potential topics as soon as possible thereafter.

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INFOST 901</td>
<td>Current Issues in Information Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFOST 910</td>
<td>Doctoral Seminar in the Organization of Information</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFOST 960</td>
<td>Doctoral Seminar in Information Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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the dissertation. SOIS doctoral seminars will be streamed live online for
distance students to participate synchronously with local students and
faculty, and students will be responsible for meeting all other program
requirements via online courses or other approved means. Students
begin the Information Studies doctoral program in the fall. Application
materials for distance option students is June 30. An applicant whose file
is incomplete will be asked to contact the Graduate School. Application
requirements are the same for traditional and distance students.
Distance students must also meet the UWM Graduate School residency
requirements; physical residency in Milwaukee is not necessary.

Preliminary Examinations / Preparatory Essays

Students will be required to complete the doctoral preparatory essays
toward the end of their coursework. The purpose of the essays will be to
demonstrate the student’s mastery of coursework and relevant subject
matter and the student’s qualifications to proceed with dissertation
research. The essays will consist of two areas: one in the major area,
and one to be determined by the major professor and the student, e.g.,
methodology. The essays will represent non-credit research papers
based on topics assigned by the student’s doctoral committee, which
will consist of at least three members. The timeline for completion
of the essays will be at the committee’s discretion. Based on the
committee’s assessment of the essays, students will be recommended
for advancement toward the PhD or academic dismissal from the
program. If the essay results are found to be unsatisfactory, the student
will have one opportunity to repeat the essay in a future semester after
conferral with the major professor on how to prepare for the next attempt.

The preparatory essays must be successfully completed within four years
of initial enrollment.

Dissertation Proposal

A doctoral committee of five faculty members will be in place by the time
the student undertakes her/his dissertation proposal. The committee
will consist of three members from the School of Information Studies,
a faculty member in an allied area from outside the School, and a fifth
member who may come from SOIS or another discipline. All doctoral
committees shall be chaired by a major professor from the SOIS
graduate faculty. Approval of the dissertation proposal, which ordinarily
should occur within two semesters after successfully passing the
preparatory essays, allows a student to proceed toward completion of the
dissertation.

Dissertation

The candidate must write a dissertation which demonstrates her/his
ability to formulate a research topic and pursue independent and original
investigation that contributes to the knowledge base of the field.

Dissertation Defense

After submission of a reading copy of the dissertation to the student’s
doctoral committee, the candidate and the major professor will schedule
a committee meeting for the purpose of undertaking an oral defense
of the dissertation work by the candidate. At the conclusion of the
candidate’s oral remarks, the dissertation committee will vote on passing
the candidate’s dissertation work. A majority of the committee must vote
to approve the dissertation and recommend granting of the Doctor of
Philosophy degree.

Approval of the dissertation by the student’s doctoral committee satisfies
a final requirement for the PhD degree in Information Studies from the
UWM-SOIS.

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INFOST 970</td>
<td>Doctoral Seminar in Information Retrieval</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Methods and Design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFOST 903</td>
<td>Qualitative Research Methods ¹</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFOST 904</td>
<td>Quantitative Research Methods ¹</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select a minimum of 3 additional credits in approved research methods coursework ²</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialized Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select a minimum of 9 credits related to the specialized area(s) of the dissertation topics from the following: ³</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Approved existing graduate courses within SOIS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced special topics classes offered within SOIS at the 700-level or higher</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>INFOST 999</td>
<td>Independent Research</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Courses offered outside of SOIS</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Select 3 credits either within or outside of SOIS with approval of the major professor</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
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¹ In exceptional cases, and with the approval of the major professor, a student may satisfy these research methods requirements through
courses offered in other campus units.
² The particular focus of these 3 credits will be guided by the student’s
planned research areas and may include coursework in research
design, qualitative, quantitative, or other research methods.
Additional coursework may be required at the discretion of the major
professor.
³ Specific courses must be approved by the major professor.

Program Requirements

Major Professor as Advisor

Unless a student specifically requests a particular faculty member, all
doctoral students initially are assigned an “interim” advisor. After the
completion of 12 credits, a student is required to designate a faculty
member from an approved list of major professors with specialized
interests compatible with those of the student to act as the major
professor. The major professor is expected to assist the student in
planning the remainder of the program of studies, chair the student’s
preliminary examination committee, supervise the completion of the PhD
dissertation, and conduct the dissertation defense meeting. All students
should consult the program handbook for additional details on school
policies and procedures.

Residence

The student must meet minimum Graduate School residence
requirements of one continuous academic year of full-time graduate
studies at UWM; physical residency in Milwaukee is not necessary. This
can be satisfied by completing at least 8 graduate credits in each of two
consecutive semesters, or 6 or more graduate credits in each of three
consecutive semesters, exclusive of summer sessions. Residence credit
cannot be earned at the master’s level.

Distance Students

Distance students (not located near Milwaukee, Wisconsin) are
encouraged to apply. Such students will be required to attend a week-
long orientation on campus at the beginning of the program, and be
physically present for all major program milestones, including preliminary
exam defense, dissertation proposal defense, and formal defense of
**Time Limit**
All components of the PhD program must be completed within seven years of matriculation.

**Additional Information for Doctoral Students**
For additional information on policies and procedures for doctoral students, please see the Graduate School Doctoral Requirements (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/doctoral-requirements) page.