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 major urban research institute, the School of Information Studies strives to contribute to the international knowledge base of library and information science through research and publication. 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
If at any time you are unsure about a published date or deadline (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines), call the Registrar’s Office at (414) 229-3800 or submit a contact form (http://uwm.edu/Registrar/contact-us) online.

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 Ph.D. program.

Applicants 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>
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<tr>
<td>INFOST 910</td>
<td>Doctoral Seminar in the Organization of Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>INFOST 960</td>
<td>Doctoral Seminar in Information Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>INFOST 970</td>
<td>Doctoral Seminar in Information Retrieval</td>
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Research Methods and Design
INFOST 903 Qualitative Research Methods 1 3
INFOST 904 Quantitative Research Methods 1 3
Select a minimum of 3 additional credits in approved research methods coursework 2 3

Specialized Area
Select a minimum of 9 credits related to the specialized area(s) of the dissertation topics from the following: 3
- Approved existing graduate courses within SOIS
- Advanced special topics classes offered within SOIS at the 700-level or higher
- INFOST 999 Independent Research
- Courses offered outside of SOIS

Electives
Select 3 credits either within or outside of SOIS with approval of the major professor

Total Credits 33

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 Ph.D. 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 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 are due by 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 towards 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 three areas: research methods, the major area, and the minor area. 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, including one representing the student's minor. 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 Ph.D. 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 confer 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 towards 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 Ph.D. degree in Information Studies from the UWM-SOIS.

Time Limit
All components of the Ph.D. 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.