

BOSTON COLLEGE

Department of Economics

PH.D. PROGRAM: ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

September 2022

I. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The learning outcomes for our Ph.D. program are essentially the same as all the better Economics Ph.D. programs in the United States.

- Students are expected to understand the analytical foundations of and do analytical work in micro and macro theory, using mathematical tools that are consistent with the state of the art in economics.
- Students are expected to gain extensive knowledge of two additional fields of economics and be able to analyze and understand the issues in their chosen fields at a level consistent with the state of the art in those fields.
- Students are expected to have a basic understand-

than the May of ending of their second year.
The required courses for each field comprehensive exam are listed below. Fields are available in:

- (any two of the following courses: ECON8802, ECON8811, ECON8819, ECON8879, ECON8884)
- (ECON8873 and any two of the following courses: ECON8860, ECON8861, ECON8862)
- (ECON7772 and then any two of the following courses: ECON8821, ECON8822, ECON8823, ECON8825)
- (ECON8853, ECON8854)
- (ECON8871, ECON8876)
- (ECON8872, ECON8873, ECON8874)
- (ECON8085, ECON8086)
- ((MFIN8890 PhD Seminar: Capital Markets and MFIN8891 Doctoral Seminar in Corporate Finance)

The econometrics comprehensive exams are offered in late May and late January. Other field comprehensives are offered at dates determined by the faculty in each field. Students have two tries to pass an individual field comprehensive and are required to attempt both field comprehensives by the end of their third year.

Once a set of comprehensive exams is taken, the student must pass both exams in order to receive a grade of 17.6 or higher. If a student fails a comprehensive exam, they must retake the exam within the same semester. If a student fails a comprehensive exam in a semester, they must wait one semester before retaking the exam. If a student fails a comprehensive exam in a semester, they must wait one semester before retaking the exam. If a student fails a comprehensive exam in a semester, they must wait one semester before retaking the exam.

later years will not receive GSAS funding in the form of Graduate, Research, or Teaching Assistantships or Teaching Fellowships and will have to cover their own health insurance fees. However, students may seek out teaching opportunities in the Department.

We want very much for all students in the program to complete the degree. However, financial support is subject to a budget constraint. Our first commitment is to students who meet the satisfactory progress criteria. Support for Ph.D. students who do not meet the criteria outlined above depends on the availability of additional funds and the assessment of promise toward the Ph.D. degree by the graduate faculty at its annual meeting. Students receiving financial aid from the department as a GA, TA or TF are prohibited from accepting a second job elsewhere that may slow their progress toward the Ph.D. degree. Students considering secondary employment must receive prior approval from the Department's Director of Graduate Studies.

IV. ADVISEMENT

Students are encouraged to seek advice on an informal basis from their course instructors, from faculty members for whom they are assistants, and from any other members of the faculty. Another source of advice is the Director of Graduate Studies who serves as the advisor of record to all graduate students.

V. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Graduate students in the Boston College Economics Department are expected to have the highest standards of integrity. Any student who cheats or plagiarizes on an examination, paper or dissertation is subject to dismissal or suspension from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. A student serving a suspension will be denied all faculty and departmental resources. Academic integrity cases are taken up by the entire faculty of the Department.

VI. M.A. DEGREE IN COURSE

The course requirements for the M.A. degree are the seven core courses of the Ph.D. program and two electives. In addition, students must demonstrate Master's level work on both the micro theory and macro theory comprehensive exams. A doctoral student who has completed these requirements may apply for the Master's degree. Application must be made in the academic year the M.A. degree is earned. The Department does not offer the terminal M.A. degree.

VII. THE GSAS WEBSITE

Students are encouraged to consult the website of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (<http://www.bc.edu/schools/gsas/>). The link "Policies and Procedures" contains additional information on the policies discussed in this document, such as grading, the handling of Incomplete grades, academic integrity and the like. Other issues of potential interest are discussed there as well, such as health insurance and leaves of absence.

VIII. DEVELOPING A DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

Dissertations typically take either of two standard forms. The traditional format is a multi-chapter investigation of a single topic or closely related economic issues. An increasingly popular alternative is a collection of essays, each a self-contained whole independent of the others. Except where noted, the following discussion applies to proposals for dissertations taking either form.

A dissertation proposal should specify clearly and concisely what you are trying to accomplish in the course of your dissertation research. It can also serve as a basis for your Dissertation Workshop presentations.

The development of a research proposal can be beneficial in a number of ways. First, the most difficult task for many students is the narrowing of their interests from a wide area of broad issues to a practical, worthwhile and manageable topic—or, in the case of an "essays" thesis, to a set of very focused questions. Attempting to specify clearly on paper what particular issues you are going to address will provide you with an understanding of just what you have managed to put together—and what yet remains fuzzy. Furthermore, this effort on your part will make it possible for a faculty member to discuss the feasibility and worth of your proposed dissertation with some precision.

Second, the proposal should help you move from a short outline of your area of research—such as that presented to the Dissertation Workshop in your third year—to an expanded program of work. Many researchers will try to revise and re-revise an outline of a contemplated project, each time putting more detail into a consistent framework. This will help you determine exactly what issues *must* be included in your research and what issues will probably not be touched upon.

Third, early development of a proposal will aid you in applying for external funding: dissertation fellowships and research grants. With the competition for these funds, it is imperative that you present a complete,

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