
General Requirements for Doctoral Degrees

Doctoral programs at San Diego State University are offered jointly with other doctoral-granting institutions in California. In developing each program, there has been a consistent effort to provide students with a unique educational experience that is not duplicated on either campus alone. The University currently offers the degree Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in ten disciplinary areas and the degree Doctor of Education (Ed.D.).

The Ph.D. is offered jointly by San Diego State University and cooperating universities in biology, chemistry, clinical psychology, engineering sciences/applied mechanics, language and communicative disorders, mathematics and science education, and public health with the University of California, San Diego; in ecology with the University of California, Davis; in education with Claremont Graduate University; and in geography with the University of California, Santa Barbara. The general requirements in these programs are identical; however, each program has some specific requirements that will be found in Part Three of this bulletin under Biology, Chemistry, Communicative Disorders, Ecology, Education, Engineering, Geography, Mathematics and Science Education, Psychology, and Public Health.

The Ed.D. is offered jointly with the University of San Diego. The program currently includes formal concentrations in educational administration and policy, educational technology, and teaching and learning. The specific requirements for this program will be found in Part Three of this bulletin under Education.

The College of Education is in the process of securing final approval to cooperatively offer a professional program leading to the degree of Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) with the University of San Diego. For information regarding the beginning date for the program, contact the Director of the SDSU/USD Doctoral Program in the College of Education.

Admission to Graduate Study

An applicant for admission to a doctoral program must be admitted to regular graduate standing in the appropriate campus of the University of California, the Claremont Graduate University or the University of San Diego and to San Diego State University. Fees and regulations governing the doctoral programs are found in the Bulletin of the Graduate Division of San Diego State University and in the Graduate Studies Bulletins of each of the cooperating campuses. Formal admission to the two universities with appropriate graduate standing occurs when the student is formally accepted by each of the two universities. Applicants are advised to consult the appropriate program director at San Diego State University for specific details on application procedures.

Residence Requirements

After formal admission to a doctoral program, the student must spend at least one year in full-time residence on each of the two campuses. The definition of residence must be in accord with the regulations of the university cooperating with SDSU. At San Diego State University, the minimum of one year of full-time residence consists of registration in and completion of at least six semester units each semester of the required year's residence. Except for the Ph.D. program in education, students must be enrolled at one campus or the other each semester or quarter in order to maintain good standing.

Financial Support

Doctoral students are eligible to apply for financial aid through the Financial Aid Office at San Diego State University. The SDSU Foundation provides some scholarship funds to cover all or part of the fees and tuition required by each institution for students in many of the doctoral programs. These funds are partially derived from the Richard G. Ahrens Memorial Scholarship and Reuben C. Marks Endowment Funds. In addition, most programs offer doctoral students financial support by providing them with appointments as research assistants, graduate assistants, or graduate teaching associates.

Procedures

Doctoral students are expected to make steady progress toward completion of requirements for the degree. The time required depends less on units of credit or semesters of attendance than it does on the mastery of the subject matter field and completion of a satisfactory dissertation. Doctoral students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average in all coursework attempted to remain in good standing. Some programs may have additional GPA requirements.

Information on records, transcripts, fees, details of registration, petitions, and rules and regulations governing graduate students enrolled in the doctoral program is available from each of the two cooperating institutions for each degree program.

Qualifying Examinations, Advancement to Candidacy, and the Dissertation

Although the procedural details of each doctoral program vary somewhat within the different programs, the general requirements are:

1. The student is examined by a committee representing the faculty of the cooperating institutions for knowledge of the field of study. This examination, called a Qualifying Examination, ordinarily consists of both written and oral parts. The purpose of this examination is to satisfy the faculty of the cooperating departments that the student is adequately prepared in the discipline to warrant continuation in the program.

2. After passing the Qualifying Examination the student in a Ph.D. program applies to the graduate dean at the cooperating campus with which the student is associated for advancement to candidacy. After approval by both graduate deans, the student will be notified of advancement to candidacy by the graduate dean, University of California campus or Claremont Graduate University.
3. A dissertation on a subject chosen by the candidate and approved by a committee appointed by the graduate deans of the cooperating institutions is required of every candidate. Approval of the dissertation by this committee affirms that the candidate has conducted an organized, independent investigation that has added significantly to the body of knowledge in the particular field and that has been reported in a satisfactory manner. Upon completion of the dissertation, the candidate must pass an oral examination conducted by a joint committee in which the student is required to show the relationship of the dissertation to the general field in which the subject lies and to answer specific questions concerning the investigations. In addition to meeting the requirements of the cooperating campus for filing the dissertation, doctoral students are required to provide one bound copy of the dissertation for deposit in the San Diego State University library. Binding must meet the ALA library standard.

Students conducting dissertation research involving human subjects must submit a protocol to the departmental Human Subjects Committee (where applicable) and then to the University's Committee on Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS). Students should allow four to six weeks for CPHS review. Certain categories of research with human subjects may qualify for exemption from full committee review. Guidelines and forms for protocols or claims of exemptions can be obtained from the CPHS Office or from the Graduate Division

Upon written CPHS approval or certification of exemption from CPHS review, students can register for dissertation and initiate the activity with human subjects.

Students planning to conduct research involving live animals housed on campus must receive approval of the research from the Animal Welfare Coordinator. Upon written approval of the coordinator, students may begin their research and register for dissertation.

Award of Degree

The degree Doctor of Philosophy in Biology, Chemistry, Clinical Psychology, Ecology, Education, Engineering Sciences/ Applied Mechanics, Geography, Language and Communicative Disorders, Mathematics and Science Education, or Public Health will be awarded jointly by the Regents or Trustees of the cooperating institution and the Trustees of The California State University in the names of San Diego State University and the appropriate cooperating university campus. The degree of Doctor of Education will be awarded jointly by the Trustees of The California State University and the Trustees of the University of San Diego. Students are encouraged to participate in the commencement ceremonies of both institutions providing they have completed all degree requirements, including the submission of copies of the approved dissertation by the deadlines of the respective institutions. The deadline dates of the cooperating institutions will vary. Students who intend to participate in the commencement ceremonies at San Diego State University should consult the academic calendar for the last date to submit an approved copy of the dissertation to the Graduate Division. San Diego State University also requires that students apply for graduation in any term they intend to graduate. Consult the academic calendar for the deadline date.

