

Frequently Asked Questions

Registration and Coursework

When do I register for classes?

Answer: Students are expected to register by the first week of classes, in order to avoid paying late registration fees. You can find the most current registration deadlines here: <http://enrollmentbulletin.indiana.edu/pages/regdate.php?Term=2>.

What is the minimum enrollment for students with a Student Academic Appointment (SAA)?

Answer: You are required to enroll in at least six credit hours. However, if you are not yet a PhD candidacy, you should consult with your advisor and/or Director of Graduate Studies to ensure that you are taking enough units for timely completion of required milestones and/or the general 90 credit hours graduation requirement.

Which courses count for “graduate credit”?

Answer: In general, you need to enroll in courses at the 500 level or above. One exception to this rule involves foreign language and/or research-skill requirements, which can be satisfied in limited instances with selected undergraduate courses listed in the graduate course bulletin with approval for graduate credit. Please check the graduate bulletin for exact conditions.

I am done with substantive coursework Should I enroll in Y890 or G901?

Answer: If you have not yet been advanced to candidacy, you should enroll in Y890 (PhD Thesis Credit). G901 is generally reserved for advanced dissertation writing, after you have completed 90 credit hours. One advantage of G901 is that you pay a flat fee (\$150 in AY 2016-17). However, there is a limit of six terms of G901 registration. If you enroll in G901 too early, and exhaust all six terms before finishing your dissertation, then you will be required to enroll in Y890.

Milestones

What constitutes normal progress?

Answer: See *Professional and Academic Expectations* in this Guide for a more detailed answer to this question, but three key measures of normal progress to keep in mind to avoid compromising financial aid are:

- approval of a second-year paper by the end of the second year of study,
- passing the lone primary subfield examination by the fifth semester of study, and
- Defending a dissertation prospectus by the end of the fourth year.

How do I certify completion of my second-year paper requirement?

Answer: You need to complete a form that you can get from the POLS graduate office. This form requires signatures by all members of your progress review committee that they have approved your second-year research project. Please note that failure to secure approval during scheduled progress review meetings triggers a revise-and-resubmit process (see Ph.D. requirements for more details).



How much time do I have to complete my degree?

Answer: All students are required to complete at least 30 credit hours on the Bloomington campus, or complete roughly two years of residence. Beyond this minimal requirement, time to completion varies across students, depending on their substantive coursework and specialized research needs. However, two critical time limits to keep in mind are:

1. Taking primary subfield examination within the first three years of study (including all relevant coursework); and, afterwards,
2. Defending and filing a complete dissertation within seven years after a (passed) qualifying examination.

Please note that the latter seven-year rule is independent of candidacy status or its approval date. Failure to complete all requirements within seven years (after qualifying examinations) will require course revalidations and/or a reinstatement petition to the University Graduate School, neither of which is automatically granted; thus, an uncertain outcome.

What deadlines are there for formal approval of milestones?

Answer: Formal approval of major milestones requires careful preparation for timely submission of required paperwork. Three important deadlines for candidacy and completion of PhD degrees are: (1) approved candidacy at least six months before dissertation defense; (2) nomination of research committee at least six months before dissertation defense; and (3) receipt by the University Graduate School of a defense announcement at least 30 days before your dissertation defense.

Financial

What mandatory fees do students pay?

Answer: Besides tuition, students are required to pay a variety of fees for technology, student health, and various other miscellaneous purposes. The actual amount varies by semester. For spring 2016, for example, graduate students who registered for eight or more credits were required to pay \$650.38 in mandatory fees. Please use the Office of the Bursar's fee calculator to estimate your own fees.

Please note that international students are further responsible for paying for a health insurance plan unless they can provide proof of comparable coverage. Please visit this page for more information and current premiums for international students.

How often do I get paid?

Answer: If you work as an Associate Instructor for our department, then you will get paid monthly. For more information, please see the [terms of student academic appointments](#).

Is my stipend taxable?

Answer: Yes. You can find more information at [UGS Tax Information](#) page, which also explains different rules applicable to international students. Additional rules apply to international students who should familiarize themselves with the [OIS tax site](#).

Does the Department offer summer funding?

Answer: No, departmental financial aid is enabled by student academic appointments tied to instructional needs that are concentrated in fall and spring terms. There are, however, limited opportunities that require applications and independent efforts by students. For instance, some students receive research grants from campus centers such as the Ostrom Workshop. Other students might be hired as graduate or research assistants in other campus centers. Given limited departmental resources and

uncertainty about summer employment, we recommend that students actively seek other funding opportunities if their plans entail staying in Bloomington during the summer months (see next question).

Can I get financial aid after my fifth year?

Answer: Typically not; only students in years 1-5 who make normal progress are eligible for financial aid (given our standard five-year offer, but some students have either fewer years of eligibility or were otherwise admitted with their own funding sources). However, there are limited opportunities for otherwise ineligible students with unique skills sets for special teaching or research opportunities. These opportunities typically arise when a faculty member goes on a leave, and we need to cover a particular course. Alternatively, some faculty might have their own funding sources that they can allocate to more advanced students (see next question).

Where can I find information on alternative funding sources?

Answer: You can conduct your own searches using a dedicated database offered by the IU GradGrants Center ([GGC](#)). GGC also offers individual consultations and workshops. If you anticipate running out of departmental support before completing your graduate studies, you are strongly encouraged to schedule an individual consultation with GGC to explore all available options. Indiana University's Career Development Center (CDC) offers guidance to search for part-time and summer jobs. You can also create an account with their *My Jobs* service to search job listings (<http://cdc.indiana.edu/jobs/index.html>).

I am eligible for departmental financial aid this year. Can I defer and save that internal funding for future years if I have alternative funding?

Answer: No. Our primary source of financial aid are AI positions, which are earmarked for instructional purposes in a *particular* year. Unused AI lines do not carry over, so we can't save these for students from one year to another.

Also, please note that admissions letter also reflect campus rather than departmental support. If you are given a fellowship or assistantship by another IU campus unit, that support just the same as a "POLS" position. The reason is that the Department does not really offer support on its own; we act as an agent for the University, which makes resources available to us from various sources.

How long do I have to use pledged years of financial support in my admissions letter?

Answer: You have as many (contiguous) years as the number of years listed on your admissions letter. For example, if you get a five-year offer, we expect you to exhaust that financial support within five years after you enter our program.