

**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND GRADUATE SCHOOL  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AFFECTING GRADUATE STUDENTS**

**Ph.D. Degree**

**September 2011  
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**University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602-2502**

**(This document is also available at the Geography Website: [geography.uga.edu](http://geography.uga.edu))**

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DOCTORAL STUDENTS

**A. Classification of Graduate Students**

At the discretion of individual schools or departments and with the approval of the dean of the Graduate School, applicants may be considered for admission to one of the following classifications:

1. **Prospective Candidate** for a degree. Applicants who meet all requirements for admission to a degree program may apply as prospective candidates for a graduate degree. Applicants who are missing an official document or test scores may be admitted provisionally to a degree program, if recommended by the department and approved by the graduate dean. The conditions of the provisional admission must be satisfied by the end of the first semester of enrollment.
2. **Nondegree (ND)**. Applicants who do not intend to pursue a degree but who wish to take courses for professional advancement, licensure, or certification purposes, and who hold a baccalaureate degree or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution, should apply for nondegree status. Nondegree students who are later admitted as prospective degree candidates may apply up to 9 hours of course work taken in nondegree status toward a graduate degree program, subject to the approval of the major professor, the departmental graduate coordinator, and the dean of the Graduate School.
3. **Graduate Transient (TRANS)**. Transient admission may be granted to students in good standing at regionally accredited graduate schools who wish to enroll for one semester at the University of Georgia. Students admitted in this classification who later wish to enroll as prospective candidates for a degree must make formal application to the Graduate School as described in item 1 above.

**B. Admission Procedure**

The GRE revised General Test is required of all degree candidates. Students who have already taken the exam but feel that they can significantly improve their score are encouraged to take the exam again, since the GRE score is an important factor in the competition for all university-wide assistantships and fellowships. Transcripts from all universities attended are required as well as three letters of reference. Appropriate forms and instructions are available from the Geography Department website ([geography.uga.edu](http://geography.uga.edu)). Additional information and instructions for international students is also available from the Geography Department website. Based on the above information the Graduate Studies Committee makes admission recommendations to the Graduate School. The final and official admission decision is made by the Graduate School.

The University of Georgia requires a minimum level of English language proficiency and will accept satisfactory scores on either the TOEFL or IELTS language proficiency examinations for admission of international applicants to graduate programs. Test scores must be submitted directly from the testing agency. The minimum TOEFL score requirement is an overall score of 80 with at least 20 on speaking and writing. The minimum IELTS score requirement is an overall band-width of 6.5, with no single band (score) below 6.0.

Applicants whose primary language is not English must submit official TOEFL or IELTS scores that are not more than two years old. Applicants who have received degrees from accredited institutions in the U.S. or from institutions in countries where English is the primary language (e.g., the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand) usually are not required to submit the TOEFL (or IELTS) scores. If such an applicant received the degree more than two years prior to application to the Graduate School and has been residing/working in a country where the primary language is not English, he or she must submit current scores. Students who are currently enrolled and have been enrolled at least one year at a regionally accredited U.S. institution, may have the English language proficiency requirement waived, if their work shows a strong quality of performance. Some departments may require the TOEFL (or IELTS) regardless of previous educational experience.

**C. Ph.D. Degree Requirements**

Acceptance to the Ph.D. program will normally presuppose that the student has met the minimum requirements of the departmental M.A./M.S. program, except for a thesis in the case of students with the M.A./M.S. from a school where

no thesis is required. In all cases, at least three full years of study beyond the bachelor's degree are required for admission to candidacy.

Each Ph.D. student will be guided in the development of a Preliminary Program of Study tailored to the research interests of the student by an Advisory Committee consisting of at least four professors. A majority of Advisory Committee members must be from Geography. The Chair (the student's major professor) must be a geography Graduate Faculty member, and at least two of the other members of the Committee must be members of the Graduate Faculty. This Committee will work with the student to formulate a satisfactory program that meets the requirements of both the Graduate School and the Department. In the event that a change in a student's Preliminary Program of Study is necessary, it must receive the signature approval of all members of the student's advisory committee.

1. Program of Study. Because the Ph.D. is a research degree, Programs of Study are to be structured with the purpose of facilitating the student's ability to conceive and execute substantive, original research in the field of geography.
  - a. Graduate School policy dictates that:
    - (1) The Preliminary Program of Study must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator during the first year of graduate residence;
    - (2) Each student complete a minimum of two consecutive semesters of full time resident study beyond the Master's;
    - (3) A minimum of 30 credit hours (three hours of which must be 9300 dissertation writing) be included on the Program of Study; and
    - (4) The Program of Study should consist of 16 or more hours of 8000- and 9000-level courses in addition to research, dissertation writing, and independent or directed study.
  - b. Departmental policy is that all Programs of Study must include:
    - (1) 32 total credit hours of graduate-level coursework as detailed below;
    - (2) Proseminars GEOG 8900 and GEOG 8901. These courses shall be repeated for credit during the Doctoral program if previously taken as part of the M.A./M.S. program. These courses may appear only once each on the Program of Study;
    - (3) Seminar in Geographic Thought and Methods (GEOG 8910) unless waived because it was taken in our M.A./M.S. program or waived because of exemption by permission of the instructor if the student completed a similar course in a geography Master's program elsewhere. If waived from GEOG 8910, the student shall substitute an 8000-level graduate-only course in Geography or some other graduate-only course in another department. The student may not substitute GEOG 8900, GEOG 8901 or any Directed Problems course from any department;
    - (4) 3 hours of GEOG 9300 (No Ph.D. student may register for GEOG 9300 (Doctoral Dissertation) more than once prior to passing the oral and written doctoral comprehensive examinations, see number 3 below);
    - (5) A minimum of 8 additional graduate-level courses (24 hours), or 9 additional graduate-level courses (27 hours) if waived from GEOG 8910, subject to the following conditions:
      - (i) A minimum of 4 graduate-level courses (12 hours) of the 8 additional courses must be taken at the 8000 level (5 8000-level courses if the student has been waived from GEOG 8910); Note that these 4 courses plus GEOG 8900, 8901 and GEOG 8910 surpass the Graduate School's requirement of 16 hours. (See 1.a.4 above)
      - (ii) GEOG 9000 may not be counted among the 8 additional courses.
      - (iii) Students may list multiple instances of GEOG 9000 beyond the 32 required hours on their Final Program of Study if needed to satisfy the Graduate School's Residence requirement.
      - (iv) No more than 3 of the elective hours may be from Directed Problems courses, from Geography (GEOG 8290, 8390, 8590, 8690) or from any other departments.
      - (v) GEOG 6920 (Special Problem in Area Analysis) and GEOG 6921 (Directed Topics in Independent Research) cannot appear on the Program of Study.

- (vi) Students who have been enrolled in a Geography doctoral program at another university within three years prior to admission into the PhD program may use up to 11 hours total of GEOG 9000 on the program of study. An equivalent number of graduate hours must have been completed with a grade of B or better in the other university's program. This substitution is subject to approval by the graduate coordinator.
2. A dissertation proposal must be presented at an open meeting organized by the student's Advisory Committee within five semesters (exclusive of summer) after inception of residence in the program. At the end of five semesters in residence, a written version of the dissertation proposal (which incorporates changes recommended at the oral presentation) must be approved in writing by the student's Advisory Committee. Where individual circumstances warrant, deadline extensions may be considered by petition to the Graduate Studies Committee.
  3. Written and oral doctoral comprehensive exams demonstrating the attainment of a competent level of geographical knowledge and the formal acceptance of a written dissertation proposal by the Advisory Committee shall be completed within five semesters of entry to the program. With the recommendation of the Graduate Coordinator and the Advisory Committee, the deadline for completing the requirements may be extended. The proposal may precede the preliminary exams or visa versa.
  4. Departmental Research Skills Requirement: The student's Doctoral Advisory Committee will ensure that the student is adequately prepared to conduct the proposed doctoral research. This requirement is typically met by at least six hours of graduate-level 'skills' classes. These courses may have been taken in a student's Masters program, and/or at a different University. The student will indicate the courses to be used to satisfy the skills requirement in the "Research Skills Requirement" box of the Preliminary Doctoral Program of Study form, which is for Departmental use only. The Doctoral Advisory Committee will indicate its approval of the plan to satisfy the skills requirement by signing the Preliminary Doctoral Program of Study form. In order to comply with Graduate School rules, courses used to satisfy the skills requirement will not be listed on the Final Doctoral Program of Study form.
  5. A graduate student whose first language is not English and who was required to submit TOEFL or IELTS scores for admission consideration (see section B above) is required to attend and satisfactorily complete (with a grade of "S") LLED 7769 (which may require LLED as a prerequisite, depending on the student's score on the speaking portion of the TOEFL or IELTS) and GRSC 7770, offered by the Graduate School to GTAs, GLAs. Individuals who are not graduate teaching assistants may petition the Graduate Studies Committee for exemption from this requirement. Students whose first language is not English must adhere to policy set by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), available at [www.ctl.uga.edu/pages/ta-policy](http://www.ctl.uga.edu/pages/ta-policy) (summarized below at section K.1.g) before engaging in instructional role with students, according to policies of the University of Georgia.
  6. Following completion of the written and oral doctoral comprehensive examinations, no more than two (2) voting members of the dissertation committee can be changed without the consent of the rest of the Committee.
  7. Ph.D. preliminary and defense exams shall not be conducted during summer break (May 15th - August 15th) except by prior consent of committee members.
  8. A student who wishes to change major professor any time following completion of the written and oral preliminary examinations should first consult with the Head of Department or Graduate Coordinator, before taking any action.
  9. All requirements of the Ph.D., except the dissertation and final oral examination, must be completed within a period of six years dating from the student's first course registration for the Ph.D. degree.
  10. A dissertation must be written in the area of the student's concentration that is of publishable quality and demonstrates originality in research, independent thinking, scholarly ability, and technical mastery in the field. The dissertation and a final oral exam, which is a defense of the dissertation, must be completed within five years after being admitted to candidacy.

#### **D. Course Exemptions**

Graduate level courses may be exempted, provided that the instructor of the course being exempted certifies as to the student's proficiency. Certificate forms are available from the Geography Degree Program Assistant. Only certain courses can be exempted.

#### **E. Grades**

The minimum grade for credit is "C". Although not specifically stated in the graduate catalog, the Department also considers "C" as the minimum level for non-graduate credit courses. If a student repeats a course, the last grade earned is used in calculating the graduate average.

A grade of "I" is given for course work not completed within the semester in which the student registered for the course. This grade indicates that, although the student was doing satisfactory work, the student was unable to complete the course for some reason beyond his/her control. The Department recognizes that at the graduate level a student occasionally may not be able to complete the course work within a given semester, but considers repeated grades of "I" as inadequate progress. According to the Graduate School requirements, a student must remove an "I" grade within 3 semesters (including summer semester) of enrollment following assignment of the "I" grade or it automatically becomes an "F".

Grades of "S" (Satisfactory) and "U" (Unsatisfactory) are given to some graduate level courses. These grades must be given to all GEOG 9000 (Doctoral Research) and 9300 (Doctoral Dissertation) registrants.

Failure to maintain an overall "B" (3.00) average can result in dismissal from the degree program. Graduate School policy is that a student with a cumulative graduate grade point average below 3.00 for two consecutive semesters is placed on academic probation. The student then must make a 3.00 or better semester graduate average each succeeding semester that the student's overall cumulative average is below 3.00. Probation ends when the cumulative average is 3.00 or above. A student is dismissed if a 3.00 semester average is not maintained while on probation. Departmental policy is that if the student's grade average for any semester falls below a "B", the student is placed on probation for the succeeding semester. During the probationary period, students who do not maintain "B" level work are assigned to the end of the list of students holding assistantships and are subject to loss of previously offered financial support.

#### **F. Course Loads**

A full-time course load is considered to be nine to fifteen credit hours per semester during the academic year and six to 12 credit hours during the summer semester. To exceed 18 hours per semester, a student must have the approval of the Department and the Graduate Dean. Students on one-third time assistantship support cannot carry more than eighteen credit hours per semester without approval by the Department and the Graduate Dean. Approval forms for exceeding eighteen hours are available from the Geography Degree Program Assistant, and must be signed by the Graduate Coordinator or Major Professor.

Any doctoral student who is using university facilities or staff time is required to register for at least three credit hours of course work, and a student shall enroll in GEOG 9000 or 9300 during every semester he/she is in residence and not taking other courses. Students holding an assistantship must register for a minimum of twelve credit hours each semester the appointment is held.

#### **G. Advisement**

All graduate students are initially assigned to the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Studies Committee for advising and can remain with the Committee for no more than two semesters. As soon as the student has determined what aspect of Geography he/she wishes to investigate for his/her dissertation, he/she is directed to the professor(s) whose interests are most closely related to that branch of geography. Provided the professor is willing to accept the student, he/she becomes the student's major professor. For Ph.D. degree prospects, the Major Professor must be a member of the Graduate Faculty; if it is desirable to have co-major professors, both must be members of the Graduate Faculty.

For the prospective Ph.D. Candidate, an Advisory Committee is appointed, consisting of the Major Professor as Chair, and at least three additional faculty members. The major professor and at least two of the other members must be appointed members of the Graduate Faculty. At least three members of the committee must be from the

Department of Geography. An external member outside of the University of Georgia can be appointed to the advisory committee at the recommendation of the major professor with the approval of the Graduate Coordinator. This external member will at least read and vote on the adequacy of the dissertation. The Advisory Committee is appointed by the Graduate School Dean upon the recommendation of the Graduate Coordinator. Recommendation forms are available from the Geography Degree Program Assistant.

The Advisory Committee (Ph.D.), in consultation with the student, develops a Program of Study in conformance with the interests of the student and the requirements of the degree. Normally, the Preliminary Program of Study is developed during the student's first semester after selection of the Major Professor and advisory committee and must be filed by the end of the student's second semester in the Ph.D. program. The Program, and any change subsequent to initial approval, must meet with signature approval of all advisory committee members. The Program of Study must constitute a logical whole and be approved by the Advisory Committee, Graduate Coordinator, and the Graduate School Dean. Only graduate level courses (6000 and above) can be listed in the Program of Study. No course with a grade below "C" can be used in the Program of Study. Forms for approval are available from the Geography Degree Program Assistant.

#### **H. Evaluation of In-Residence Graduate Students**

Each semester the faculty reviews the progress of all graduate students. This review considers the student's academic performance and work as an assistant, if applicable. Considerations normally examined include present and past levels of performance, promise of future intellectual growth, and factors relating to the student's potential, such as perceptiveness; imagination; ingenuity in conceptualization; design; and accomplishment of research; and power to reason logically.

Each Major Professor is charged with communicating with the student the salient aspects of the faculty review of the student following each review.

#### **I. Admission to Candidacy**

Prospective candidates for the Ph.D. degree are admitted to candidacy when:

1. All prerequisites set as a condition to admission have been satisfactorily completed;
2. Research skills requirements, if applicable, have been met;
3. The final program of study has been approved by the advisory committee, the graduate coordinator, and the dean of the Graduate School;
4. An average of 3.0 (B) has been maintained on all graduate courses taken and on all completed courses on the program of study (no course with a grade below C may be placed on the final program of study);
5. Written and oral comprehensive examinations have been passed and reported to the Graduate School;
6. The advisory committee, including any necessary changes in the membership, is confirmed and all its members have been notified of their appointment;
7. A dissertation prospectus (proposal) has been approved;
8. The residence requirement has been met.

#### **J. Dissertation Copy for Reading Committee**

The custom of the Department is not to require the dissertation to be put in final, "clean" form for Reading Committee evaluation. Rather, a draft submitted must be complete (including a table of contents and a list of figures and tables), in the proper format, and easily readable. All maps, charts, and tables should be in final form. Once approved, the final copy is word processed and submitted to the Graduate School.

#### **K. Financial Assistance**

Financial assistance in the form of assistantships or scholarships is available from a number of sources. Most graduate students in the Department who receive financial assistance through the University of Georgia are on a Departmental assistantship or a Graduate School assistantship. Students on an assistantship must take a minimum of 12 hours per semester.

Application for an assistantship can be made at [www.ggy.uga.edu/assistantship/index.html](http://www.ggy.uga.edu/assistantship/index.html)

1. Departmental Assistantships: Each year approximately thirty Departmental assistantships are awarded for the academic year. A small number of assistantships are available during the summer session.
  - a. The assistantship is typically for one-third time work commitment (thirteen hours per week) or four-ninths time work (seventeen hours).
  - b. In addition to the actual monies received by the assistant, the assistantship carries a tuition remission. The student pays a \$25.00 reduced tuition fee each semester in lieu of full tuition, plus all applicable student fees.
  - c. A student holding an academic year assistantship may register in the following Summer Semester and pay only the \$25.00 reduced tuition fee, plus applicable student fees.
  - d. Duties of a Departmental assistant normally include one or more of the following:
    - (1) Lab/discussion instructor for GEOG 1101, 1103, 1112, 1113, 1125, 2010, 2110, 2130, 2250, 3510, 4330/6330 or 4370/6370 courses; usually these instructors are those who hold the Bachelor degree or are new students with the Master degree;
    - (2) Teacher of an independent section of 1101, 1111, 1112, 1113 or 1125. To teach an independent class, the instructor must have the Master degree.
    - (3) Assignment to one or more members of the faculty as a teaching or a research assistant.
  - e. An assistantship can be cancelled at the close of any semester if the assistant's service or academic performance becomes unsatisfactory (see Section E & H).
  - f. All new graduate students holding an assistantship that carries any kind of instructional responsibility (GA, GTA & GLA) must attend TA Orientation and successfully complete GRSC 7770 at the earliest opportunity to prepare for his/her departmental assistantship duties. Failure to do so may result in the cancellation of the departmental assistantship.
  - g. International graduate students who were required to submit TOEFL iBT scores or IELTS scores have additional requirements. The full policy is available at [www.ctl.uga.edu/pages/ta-policy](http://www.ctl.uga.edu/pages/ta-policy).
    - (1) Students with a speaking score of 26 or higher on the TOEFL iBT or 7.5 or higher on the IELTS can be considered for any teaching assignment, including instructor of record.
    - (2) Students with a speaking score of 24 or 25 on the TOEFL iBT or a 7.0 IELTS score must successfully complete a 3-credit-hour language and cultural orientation course (LLED 7769). With a LLED recommendation, these students may be considered for any teaching assignment. LLED 7769 and GRSC 7770 may be taken concurrently with assignments where the student is not instructor of record.
    - (3) Students with a speaking score of 23 on the TOEFL iBT or a 6.5 IELTS score may teach in limited and closely monitored assignments (e.g. laboratory teaching, graders, language teaching in native language) upon completion of LLED 7769, with instructor recommendation. GRSC 7770 may be taken concurrently with these limited assignments.
    - (4) Students with a speaking score of 20-22 TOEFL iBT or below 6.5 IELTS score test must successfully complete a 3-credit-hour language skills course (LLED 7768) before enrolling in LLED 7769 and GRSC 7770. Such students will need to retake tests and achieve requisite scores to be in compliance with policy.
    - (5) Appeals to waive the speaking score of 26 for full teaching assignments will be considered by the Center for Teaching & Learning if the student has (A) successfully completed LLED 7769, (B) has a recommendation from the LLED 7769 instructor, (C) has twice scored either the a 23 TOEFL iBT speaking or a 6.5 IELTS score, and (D) has a departmental recommendation and a request for an appeal.
2. Graduate School Assistantships are selected in University-wide competition. The department determines which of its new students it will nominate for this award. A student may not directly apply for this award. An important

element in the selection process is the GRE score (see Section B), previous grade point averages, letters of recommendation, and other supporting documentation. The number of assistantships won by Departmental graduate students varies yearly.

- a. The assistantship is normally for a 40% time work commitment (sixteen hours a week) and is usually awarded for 21 months.
  - b. In addition to actual monies received by the assistant, one pays a reduced tuition of just \$25 per semester and the required student fees.
  - c. A student holding an academic year assistantship may register in the following Summer Semester and pay only the reduced tuition of \$25.00, plus all applicable student fees.
  - d. Duties of Graduate School assistants normally include:
    - (1) Graduate Research Assistantship: assignment to a member of the faculty as a research assistant;
    - (2) Graduate Non-Teaching Assistantship: assignment as research assistant as well as assistant in laboratories, grading papers, and other similar work.
  - e. Holders of Graduate School Assistantships have a work commitment, and the holder should not consider the assistantship as a financial scholarship in which he/she pursues only dissertation research.
3. Other possible sources of financial support include research assistantships funded by faculty research contracts, and others noted in the Graduate School catalog or announced annually by means of circulars to the Department. For further information see the Graduate Coordinator.
  4. Merit supplements are available on a competitive basis for the most outstanding holders of departmental or Graduate School assistantships.

#### **L. Selection and Continuation of Assistantships**

Students who apply for financial assistance at the time of their first admission to the Department's graduate program are evaluated by the Graduate Studies Committee for admission and assistantships. Students whom the Committee considers suitable for appointment as assistants are recommended to the Head. A student who is in residence and applies for an assistantship for subsequent years is evaluated by the Graduate Studies Committee, whose recommendation is presented to the faculty for acceptance or rejection. With good academic and assistantship duty performance, aid is normally available for subsequent years of study according to the following guidelines.

The Department normally expects students on one-third or four-ninths time assistantship appointments to complete their Ph.D. degree requirements in four years. Therefore, students are eligible for up to four years (8 semesters excluding summers) of assistantship support during their first four years of residence. Continuation of assistantships is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress toward degree objectives as discussed in Section N below. Note that continuation of funding for the 4<sup>th</sup> year (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> semester) normally will be restricted to those students who have successfully been Admitted to Candidacy by the end of their 5<sup>th</sup> semester in the doctoral program. Exceptions to these guidelines may be considered on an individual basis.

The Graduate Studies Committee selects those students it considers most qualified for Graduate School Awards and, in consultation with those students, prepares and submits their applications to enter the competition.

#### **M. Grievances**

1. The purpose of a grievance program is to provide a prompt and fair resolution of complaint when the normal student-teacher or other professional relationship fails.
2. Graduate students who are unable to resolve their complaint should first consult with the Departmental Graduate Coordinator. The Coordinator will attempt to mediate the problem on an informal basis.
3. If the Graduate Coordinator is unsuccessful, the student may appeal to the Department Head. The Head may also attempt to resolve the problem on an informal basis.



4. Failing resolution, the Department Head will refer the grievance to the elected Departmental Advisory Committee for a formal hearing. Should any member of the committee be a party to the grievance in question the Head shall then replace that committee member with another member of the faculty.

The Advisory Committee shall request that the student provide the committee a written statement detailing the nature of and circumstances surrounding the grievance. If the grievance pertains to the actions of a single faculty member (grades, assignment, etc.) the committee will inform the faculty member that a grievance has been filed and of the nature of the grievance. Should the grievance be directed against a faculty committee the chair of said committee shall then be asked to represent in similar fashion that committee. The faculty member or committee chair may then submit a written response or position statement to the committee. After reviewing the written statements of each party the Advisory Committee may request a meeting with each. Nevertheless, should either party declare a desire to meet with the committee, both parties shall be asked to do so.

After hearing all pertinent input from each party the Advisory Committee will deliberate and report its findings and recommendation to both parties in writing.

5. All grievances must be acted upon as expeditiously as possible.

#### **N. Summary of Procedural Steps Toward the Ph.D. Degree.**

See the Graduate School website [www.grad.uga.edu](http://www.grad.uga.edu) for a listing of all deadlines that apply to the following steps. All required forms are available from the Geography Degree Program Assistant or the Graduate School website.

1. Secure admission to status as prospective degree candidate for the Ph.D. degree (see Sections A and B);
2. Obtain advisement from the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Studies Committee until a Major Professor is selected.
3. Select a Major Professor (form required) by the end of the first semester of residence in the doctoral program and formally establish an Advisory Committee (form required) by the end of the second semester of residence in the doctoral program;
4. Formulate a Preliminary Program of Study (form required) with the Major Professor and Advisory Committee (see Section G) by the end of the second semester of residence in the doctoral program. The Advisory Committee normally will meet with the student to consider preliminary dissertation research plans and to approve the Preliminary Program of Study by the end of the second semester of residence in the doctoral program;
5. Complete all required course work (see Section C);
6. Present the dissertation proposal at an open meeting presided over by the Advisory Committee (approval form required). Unless individual circumstances warrant, this should be completed by the end of the fifth semester of residence in the program. The presentation and defense of the dissertation proposal may take place before or after the written and oral doctoral comprehensive exams, but may not take the place of the oral doctoral comprehensive exam;
7. Submit the Final Program of Study form approved by the Major Professor, Advisory Committee and Graduate Coordinator to the Geography Degree Program Assistant for subsequent submission to the Graduate School at least three weeks prior to the oral doctoral comprehensive examination;
8. Take written and oral doctoral comprehensive examinations. The comprehensive exams are arranged and administered by the Advisory Committee and should be completed by the end of the fifth semester of residence in the program;

The doctoral comprehensive examinations consist of two parts: a written section and an oral section. The student must pass the written section before he/she is eligible to take the oral exam. The appropriate form shall be submitted to the Geography Degree Program Assistant only after the completion of both parts of the doctoral comprehensive examinations. The general Departmental policy is that:

- a. The Ph.D. written examination will test over (1) a major area, (2) a minor area, and (3) normally a cognate (outside the Department). If there is no cognate, a second minor area will be included.  
  
Examples:
    - A. (1) plant geography (major), (2) climatology (minor), (3) botany (cognate)
    - B. (1) transportation (major), (2) industrial location (minor), (3) marketing (cognate)
    - C. (1) remote sensing (major), (2) geomorphology (minor), (3) cartography (minor)
  - b. The structure and length of the written comprehensive exam will be determined by the student's Advisory Committee. The major professor will solicit questions from all members of the Advisory Committee to be included on the written exam to ensure adequate coverage and focus for the exam. All members of the Advisory Committee will see and approve the exam before it is given. The major professor will administer the written exam. The written exam will be graded by the appropriate member of the Advisory Committee. All members of the Advisory Committee shall have an opportunity to review the entire written exam and to judge the student's overall performance.
  - c. The oral comprehensive examination can proceed only after the Advisory Committee communicates to the Major Professor that the student has passed the written section of the examination. The oral examination is open to all members of the University of Georgia faculty and the date and time will be announced by the Graduate School. The Graduate Coordinator must notify the Graduate School of the time and place of this examination at least two weeks before the date of the examination. In order to verify that the student's file is complete and to provide time to process the required paperwork, the information needed to notify the Graduate School of the oral comprehensive exam will be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator's office three weeks prior to the date of the oral exam;
  - d. The oral examination will normally start with a fifteen minute discourse by the student on a subject from his major field which has been assigned by his Major Professor after successful completion of the written examinations;
  - e. The oral examinations should last approximately two to two and one-half hours;
9. File Admission to Candidacy forms (see Section I) as soon after completion of the comprehensive exams and the defense of the dissertation proposal as possible. Ph.D. candidates must register for two semesters of full-time work, normally in GEOG 9300, beyond Admission to Candidacy before they are eligible for graduation.
  10. Complete dissertation under supervision of the Major Professor and the Advisory Committee. (See Instructions for Preparing the Thesis and Dissertation available from the Graduate School of the Geography Degree Program Assistant.)
  11. The student's Advisory Committee shall determine the appropriate style manual for the written dissertation. In addition, it has become common for at least three manuscripts suitable for submission to refereed professional journals to constitute the body of the dissertation. Graduate students encountering problems associated with the timely return of their dissertation materials (2 to 8 weeks depending on circumstances) from either the major professor or Advisory Committee (#12 below) should report their concern to the Graduate Coordinator, who, in consultation with the Head, will inquire into the nature of the delay.
  12. The dissertation, approved by the Major Professor, is submitted to the Advisory Committee which acts as a reading committee and represents the Graduate Faculty in determining the acceptability of the dissertation. A majority of the Reading Committee members and the Chairperson of the Reading Committee must be on the Graduate Faculty (see Section J). The responsibilities of the Reading Committee Chairperson are:
    - (1) to coordinate the reading and evaluation of the thesis or dissertation after it has been submitted to the Reading Committee by the Major Professor;

- (2) to communicate the salient points of the Reading Committee's evaluation of the thesis or dissertation to the Major Professor, and
  - (3) to verify that the recommendations of the Reading Committee made during the review process and the final oral exam are incorporated into the final copy of the thesis or dissertation by signing the cover page of the final copy immediately below the signature of the Major Professor.
13. The Final Oral Examination, which is a defense of the dissertation, is given after the dissertation is approved by the Advisory Committee. The Major Professor will arrange the time and the place of the examination. It is administered by the Advisory Committee. The Major Professor should notify the Graduate School through the Department Degree Program Assistant at least three weeks before the Final Oral Examination date so that the Graduate School can announce to the university public about the examination. The Major Professor serves as Chair. This examination is normally confined to the dissertation topic and related matters. After passing the Final Oral Examination for the Ph.D., students must complete all remaining degree requirements (outlined in Steps 14-17) by the end of the semester following the semester in which the exam was administered. Failure to do so will result in the need to retake the Final Oral Examination.

A candidate for the doctoral degree who fails to take the final oral examination within five years after passing the written and oral doctoral comprehensive examinations and being admitted to candidacy will be required to take another set of written and oral doctoral comprehensive examinations and be admitted to candidacy a second time.

14. Once the dissertation has been approved by the advisory committee and the final oral examination has been passed, the dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School for final approval no later than two weeks prior to graduation of the following semester. Dissertations which are not submitted by this deadline must be defended again and approved by the Advisory Committee before they will be considered by the Graduate School for final approval.
15. One complete formatted copy of the dissertation must be electronically submitted to the Graduate School for a format check no later than four weeks prior to graduation. For details and guidelines on how to submit, consult the Graduate School Website at:  
[grad.uga.edu/index.php/current-students/policies-procedures/theses-dissertations-guidelines/format-check/](http://grad.uga.edu/index.php/current-students/policies-procedures/theses-dissertations-guidelines/format-check/)
16. The Graduate School must receive the Final Defense Approval forms and an electronic submission of the corrected dissertation no later than two weeks prior to graduation.
17. An application for graduation must be filed with the Graduate School no later than Friday of the second full week (first full week in summer) of classes in the graduation semester. The application will be made online at [athena.uga.edu](http://athena.uga.edu). Because of the short length of time between this date and graduation day, no exceptions will be made by the Graduate School. Formal graduation exercises are held in May, August, and December. Students must be registered at the University of Georgia for a minimum of three credit hours the semester in which they complete all degree requirements and a minimum of 10 hours over at least two semesters after admission to candidacy.