

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

# Doctoral Student Handbook



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF ARIZONA  
**Eller MIS**

*Updated July 2025*

# DOCTORAL STUDENT HANDBOOK MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

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## INTRODUCTION

### ***Welcome to the University of Arizona MIS Doctoral Program!***

The University of Arizona's Department of Management Information Systems pioneered one of the first MIS programs in the world. The Department of Management Information Systems has ranked in the top seven since the rankings began in 1989 by US News and World Report. Since its inception in 1974, the Department has placed over 200 Ph.D. graduates in MIS, in both industry and academia. Academic placements include prestigious universities such as Carnegie Mellon University, Harvard University, Pennsylvania State University, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Michigan, the University of Virginia, Indiana University, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Pennsylvania. Ph.D. graduates placed in Fortune 500 companies such as Google, Hewlett Packard, IBM, and important Government agencies, including the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Air Force, and the U.S. Navy. Alumni of our Ph.D. program are visible at all major MIS conferences and on all major MIS publications' editorial boards. The Department has the largest faculty and Ph.D. program among top-ranked MIS programs. Our faculty consists of highly productive and leading scholars in various areas of MIS research. Working under faculty supervision, our Ph.D. graduates typically complete a significant number of publications in referred conferences and well-known journals prior to graduation.

### ***Overview of IS Research***

The Ph.D. degree in Management with a major in Management Information Systems (MIS) is designed to prepare students for teaching and research careers involving the design, analysis, implementation, and operation of computer-based information systems and other associated organizational and economic issues. MIS involves the use of computers in organizations and the integration of computer skills with the functional areas of management. There are three broad areas of MIS research: Technical, Behavioral, and Economic.

Technical or Design Science research involves designing and developing Information Technology (IT) artifacts to solve problems. IT artifacts are broadly defined as constructs (vocabulary and symbols), models (abstractions and representations), methods (algorithms and practices), and instantiations (implemented and prototype systems). This kind of research leverages formal and quantitative modeling, mathematical and computational techniques from computer science (e.g., machine learning and artificial intelligence) and operations research (e.g., optimization and graph theory), and cutting-edge technological advances (e.g., Internet of Things and mobile technologies), to design and implement IT artifacts. Examples of these include search and recommendation engines, models for tracking data provenance, techniques for resolving semantic interoperability among databases, web and data mining, business intelligence algorithms, and systems in areas such as team science, border security, law enforcement, and e-health.

Behavioral research in IS analyzes the interactions of people and technology (i.e., IT artifacts) by leveraging and extending theory from areas such as psychology, sociology, management, marketing, consumer behavior, and communication. In addition, behavioral research builds theory to explain and predict important phenomena. The people include individual technology users, decision makers, virtual and co-located teams, organizations, and society. Examples of research in this area include studying interactions in online environments to enhance processes and improve outcomes, examining user behavior with respect to security policies to increase awareness and compliance, or understanding motivations for behavior (e.g., trust, sharing, deception) in mediated environments. Methodologies

include laboratory and field experiments, surveys, and case studies. A wide variety of quantitative and qualitative methods are used to analyze the data including content analysis, event analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA), multivariate analysis, regression, structural equation modeling (SEM), and social network analysis.

Economic research in IS uses principles and methods from the economics discipline to analyze how people, organizations, and society adopt and use information systems. Examples of research in this area include analysis of the competitive environment introduced by technology, understanding of consumer behavior in new economic environments brought about by technology, analysis of how economic agents inside and outside a firm interact through technology solutions, pricing and commercialization of digital goods and services. Methodologies range from microeconomic analytical models to the use of advanced econometrics with empirical data.

### ***Departmental Organization and Contacts***

#### **Matt Hashim**

Interim Department Head, Eller MIS  
1130 E. Helen St., McClelland Hall  
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#### **Emily Savage**

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Tucson, AZ 85721

### ***Student Role in Departmental Governance***

Management Information Systems Graduate Association (MISGA) is a department sponsored student organization at the University of Arizona. One of the objectives of this organization is to represent MIS graduate students' needs regarding the MIS Department and Eller College. There is an election process each year, during which the incoming class votes for a President. With the help of the existing board, the new President elects 8 directors for various roles to support the student body. MISGA has a faculty advisor with whom they meet regularly. MISGA's officers also meet with the Department Head each semester, where they can report any problems or concerns they have heard from the student body.

Students are also encouraged to contact the Department Head, the MIS Director of Doctoral Programs, or the Admissions Coordinator to discuss problems or concerns.

### ***Advising and Career Management***

Each student should meet with both their Academic Advisor and the Admissions Coordinator at least once per semester. In the event a student has not identified an academic advisor, they should instead meet with the PhD Program Director. However, it is recommended to meet more often. Building a strong relationship and open rapport is highly encouraged to enable the advising to guide you in your academic and career options.

For appointments:

Email their Academic Advisor or the Admissions Coordinator at least 24 hours in advance to set a time to meet.

### ***Appeals***

Students have the right to formally request exceptions to department policies and procedures. A MIS student should make their appeal in writing to the MIS Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). On a case-by-case basis, we will review exceptions to the policies for extenuating and compelling circumstances. Requests are reviewed by DGS or by the Department Chair. Every exception decision is made based on each situation and circumstance. Please note that a review of your request does not guarantee the request will be granted.

### ***Summary of Grievance Types and Responsible Parties***

For additional issues, please contact the Assistant Director, MIS Academic Operations.

We will also follow the outlined procedures for various petitions and grievances as stipulated on the [Graduate College website](#).

Related to an academic issue?		
Does it involve possible violation of an academic policy or procedure?	<a href="#">Graduate College Academic Policies</a> , <a href="#">The University of Arizona General Catalog</a> (link is external), and the Graduate Handbook for your program.	<a href="#">The Graduate College</a> Administration Bldg, Room 322 (520) 621-3471

Is it related to a course grade?	<a href="#">Grade Appeal Policy</a> (Link is external)	Course instructor, then the Academic College Dean's office.
Is it related to research ethics?	<a href="#">Research Policies and Procedures</a> (link is external)	<a href="#">Office of Research &amp; Partnerships</a> Administration Bldg, Room 601
<b>The result of inappropriate behavior of another person?</b>		
Does it involve another student?	<a href="#">Student Code of Conduct Policy</a> (link is external)	<a href="#">Dean of Students</a> (link is external)  Robert L Nugent Bldg. 1212 E. University Blvd. (520) 621-7057
Does it involve a faculty or staff member and directly impact your academic progress?	<a href="#">Graduate College Academic Policies</a> , <a href="#">The University of Arizona General Catalog</a> (link is external), and the Graduate Handbook for your program	First, the Director of Graduate Studies in your program. Follow up with the <a href="#">Graduate College</a> , if necessary.
Does it involve a faculty or staff member, and do you believe this person acted unethically?		Ethics and Compliance HotLine (866) 364-1908
Does it involve a faculty or staff member acting unprofessionally?	<a href="#">Human Resource Policies</a> (link is external) & <a href="#">General Administrative Procedures - Policy 6.02</a> (link is external)	<a href="#">University of Arizona Human Resources</a> (link is external) 888 N. Euclid Avenue, Room 114 (520) 621-3660
Does it involve a faculty or staff member, and you believe you were discriminated or harassed based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or genetic information?	<a href="#">Office of Institutional Equity</a> (link is external)	<a href="#">Office of Institutional Equity</a> (link is external) 888 N. Euclid Avenue, Room 203 (520) 621-9449

Did you witness an incident that you believe should be addressed?	<a href="#">Report an Incident</a> (link is external)	<a href="#">University of Arizona Human Resources</a> (link is external) 888 N. Euclid Avenue, Room 114 (520) 621-3662
<b>Involving a Graduate Assistant/Associate (GA) issue?</b>		
Related to your position as a Graduate Teaching or Research Assistant/Associate?	<a href="#">Graduate Assistant/Associate Manual</a>	Your departmental Director of Graduate Studies. Follow-up with the <a href="#">Graduate College</a> , if necessary.
<b>Involving a disability?</b>		
Related to the need for accommodation based on a disability?	<a href="#">Disability Resources Center</a> (link is external)	<a href="#">Disability Resource Center</a> (link is external) 1224 E. Lowell St. (520) 621-3268

### ***Child Care Subsidies and Family Friendly Information***

The Graduate College is dedicated to promoting and strengthening family relationships. Many resources have been designed to help graduate students balance and manage family, work, and school.

- [Graduate Assistant/Associate Parental Leave](#)
- [Temporary Alternative Duty Assignments \(TADA\) for Teaching Assistants/Associates](#)
- [Life & Work Connections](#) (link is external) - Child and Elder Care Resources

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

### ***Professional Conduct Expectations***

To foster a positive learning environment, students and instructors have a shared responsibility. We want a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment where all of us feel comfortable with each other and where we can challenge ourselves to succeed. To that end, our focus is on the tasks at hand and not on extraneous activities. Please refrain from any distracting behavior.

We will follow the University's policy regarding threatening behavior by students as well as policies against discrimination and harassment. These policies can be found at [Threatening Behavior by Students](#) and [Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#).

### ***Students are Responsible for Knowing Policies***

Graduate students are expected to follow the policies and procedures for both the Graduate College and the MIS Department, as they pertain to the completion of their program. Graduate College policies can be viewed online at the [Grad College: New and Current Students](#). University policies can be found at the [University catalog](#).

### ***Eller MIS Academic Integrity Policy***

At the Eller College of Management, we strive to prepare MIS professionals who can pursue careers in demanding and competitive environments with skill and integrity. To this end, we work to foster a climate of honesty, collaboration and respect. **The Eller MIS Department's Academic Integrity Policy follows the Dean of Student's Policy of The University of Arizona.** Our success in promoting a culture of honesty and respect will depend on the extent to which all members of the Eller community embrace these standards, holding themselves and those with whom they work accountable to them in their daily actions and words.

### ***What is Academic Integrity?***

Academic integrity is a character trait involving honesty and ethical behavior related to scholarly work. Scholarly work involves all the intellectual endeavors of a student or faculty member during their course of study/employment related to education. Pursuing a mindset of integrity is not only important during one's academic career, but also throughout one's life and dealings with society. Academic Dishonesty involves unethical behavior conducted by either students or faculty related to scholarship. It can involve a variety of activities from cheating to plagiarism.

#### Potential Consequences of Academic Dishonesty

- Failing grade on assignment
- Failing the course
- Removal from program of study
- Expulsion from university

#### Forms of Academic Dishonesty (this is not an exhaustive list)

- Providing forged documents, using fake information, or submitting plagiarized material during the admission process
- Using the same assignment for more than one class without the instructor's prior consent
- Using unauthorized materials (cheat sheets, notes, textbook, talking with other individuals, etc.) during examinations without the instructor's prior consent
- Gaining unauthorized access to examinations prior to the exam date and time
- Direct use of the words or ideas of another without giving proper credit, including material drawn from print, televised, or electronic sources.
- Submitting false research or laboratory information as actual results
- Using fake documents to gain an extension of time to submit work or take an examination



## ***Academic Writing***

Features of academic writing include:

- A well-crafted, thoroughly researched argument
- Written with the appropriate audience in mind
- Displays critical thinking, reading, and writing
- Free from common errors of spelling, punctuation, syntax, and grammar
- Avoids all forms of plagiarism
- Cites all sources

Citations: Carroll, L. A. (2002). *Rehearsing new roles: How college students develop as writers*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Levin, L. L. (2010). What is Academic Writing?. In C. Lowe and P. Zemliansky (Eds.), *Writing spaces: Readings on writing*, Vol. 1 (pp. 3–17). Retrieved from <https://wac.colostate.edu/books/writingspaces1/irvin--what-is-academic-writing.pdf>

## ***Plagiarism***

Anyone who has written or graded a paper knows that plagiarism is not always a black-and-white issue. The boundary between plagiarism and research is often unclear. Learning to recognize the various forms of plagiarism, especially the more ambiguous ones, is an important step in the fight to prevent it.

## ***List of Reading Resources***

The following is a list of selected online writing resources:

- [The Purdue Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) - Purdue OWL provides over 200 writing resources including information about various citation formats.
- [Dartmouth University Institute for Writing and Rhetoric](#) - The Institute for Writing and Rhetoric provides a variety of resources including information about logic and argument and writing a thesis.
- [George Washington University Writing Center](#) - The GWU Writing Center provides an assortment of writing guides for various subject areas as well as other useful writing resources.

All members of the Eller MIS Program are expected to know the Academic Integrity Policy's content and implications. Lack of familiarity with the policy will not excuse integrity violations. Complete information about the Code of Academic Integrity can be reviewed at: <https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policies/code-academic-integrity>.

Note: It is every student's responsibility to seek clarification from faculty on class rules before an assignment is turned in. It is unacceptable to submit an assignment and then claim lack of knowledge of the rules by which it was governed.

### ***Integrity Violations in Personal Conduct:***

- Taking or attempting to take the property of another without permission.
- Misrepresenting the truth or furnishing false information, with the intent of gaining unfair personal advantage, or causing harm to another.
- Verbal or physical harassment of any kind, aimed at any individual or group.
- Inappropriate use of another student's personal information.
- Inappropriate use of D2L or other University of Arizona information systems.

Faculty members are responsible for describing rules specific to their classes beyond the general policy and will determine the penalties for violations. **Penalty for violations listed could include:**

- Failing grade for an assignment or course in which the violation occurred.
- Inability to obtain recommendation letters for graduate school or employment.
- Removal from the Eller MIS Major or Eller College.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR A PH.D. IN MIS**

Technically, the Ph.D. in MIS is a Ph.D. in Management with a concentration in MIS. However, we usually refer to it as the MIS Ph.D. program or an MIS Ph.D. The MIS Ph.D. program starts with a solid foundation in research methodology. Building on this, it offers a unique synthesis of state-of-the-art technologies and approaches from Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence, Economics, Operations Management, Psychology, and Sociology, to name a few. There is a mix of hands-on and theoretical work: students learn how to implement, deploy and evaluate business information systems that are of interest to academia and industry alike. The MIS Ph.D. degree requires a major in MIS plus a minor in a related discipline from another department.

### ***Major Requirements***

The major course work consists of a set of foundation courses (18 units), quantitative methods (9 units), specialization (6 units), and participation in the MIS research seminar (6 units). Please note that the graduate college requires a minimum of 36 credits in the major; MIS requires a minimum of 42 credits in the major. Table 1 lists the major requirements including the required courses.

**Table 1: Major Requirements**

Requirements	Courses
<b>FOUNDATION (18 units required)</b>	MIS 531: Enterprise Database Management MIS 611A: Design Science Research Methodologies MIS 611B: Behavioral Research Methodologies MIS 611C: Economics of Information Systems MIS 611D: Topics in Data and Web Mining MIS 615: Network Science: Theory and Applications

<b>QUANTITATIVE METHODS (9 units required)</b>	The student should consult his/her major advisor to select quantitative methods courses.
<b>SPECIALIZATION (9 units required)</b>	The student should consult his/her major advisor to select two courses that contain the basic knowledge in a chosen area of specialization such as Information Technology, Information Economics, Management and Organization, Quantitative Methods and Operations Management.
<b>RESEARCH WORKSHOP (6 units required)</b>	MIS699: Research Workshop (1 unit per semester)

### ***Minor Requirements***

Students are required to take courses in one or more minor areas. The minor requirements are determined by the department that offers the minor. Students should consult the major advisor and the minor department for guidance. Some possibilities include cognitive science, communications, computer science, decision science, economics, industrial engineering, linguistics, management and organization, psychology, sociology, and statistics. Students must have at least one supporting minor of nine or more units for the PhD. If a doctoral student chooses two supporting minor subjects, each minor must have at least six units of coursework.

### ***Registration Requirements and Procedures***

PhD students should let the program coordinator (Emily Savage; [emilyk2@arizona.edu](mailto:emilyk2@arizona.edu)) know which MIS courses you want to register for each semester. The program coordinator can register you for those courses. Other courses on campus might require special approval. It is up to you to investigate the requirements to register for graduate level courses in other departments.

## **INCOMPLETE POLICY**

Students who have completed all but a minor portion of the requirements in a course may request an Incomplete from the instructor. The grade of I is not to be awarded in place of a failing grade or when the student is expected to repeat the course. Incomplete grade requests must be made in a timely manner (i.e., before the class ends) and are submitted at the instructor's discretion.

The student and instructor must complete a Report of Incomplete Grade form and provide it to the Admissions Coordinator for inclusion in their academic record. The form can be found here <https://registrar.arizona.edu/faculty-staff-resources/grading/grading-policies/incomplete>. Incomplete courses must be completed timely, in accordance with the agreement in the form.

## **NORMAL PROGRESS FOR PH.D STUDENTS IN MIS**

### ***First Year***

You should receive grades of B or better in all your courses. In addition, you should receive a grade of P for the research workshop in both semesters.

Each spring, students submit an annual report that covers the previous 12 months. In the report, students discuss their teaching, research, and service from the previous year. Students are also asked to

reflect on their experiences and set goals for the new year. The PhD committee reviews the reports and offers guidance for students regarding their progress. In the first year, the report represents only one semester in the program. Adequate progress in the annual report is demonstrated by grades in the core classes, and quantitative/specialization classes as their schedule permits. The goals for research in this report should focus on summer work and might include preparing a paper for conference or journal submission. Continued funding is contingent on the annual report evaluation.

To continue in the program, you must pass the core exam, typically held in the third week of May of the first year. This exam covers the material in the foundation courses that are taught during the first year (three or four of the following: MIS 531, MIS 611A, MIS 611B, MIS 611C, MIS 611D, MIS 615).

### ***Second Year***

You should perform well in your second-year coursework (grades of B or better), including minor courses. You should also register for and receive a grade of P for the research seminar in both semesters. You should be working on a research project that will lead to your prelim paper (to be presented by October of your third year).

It is important to begin working on research papers for submission to journals as early as possible in your doctoral program. It can take one to two years (or more) from the time you submit a paper to the time it is accepted, depending on the journal. Submitting papers in your second year should lead to publications by the time you begin looking for a job.

The annual report in the second year should discuss your progress on research papers and submissions, with a focus on preparing the prelim paper that will be presented in fall of your third year. Continued funding is contingent on the annual report evaluation.

To continue in the program, you must pass the core exam, typically held in the third week of May of the second year. This exam covers the material in the foundation courses that are taught during the second year (Three or four of the following: MIS 531, MIS 611A, MIS 611B, MIS 611C, MIS 611D, MIS 615).

### ***Third Year***

You should complete your coursework in the third year. Again, you should aim to achieve grades of B or better.

Your written prelim should be completed or scheduled by October 15<sup>th</sup>. Once all your coursework is completed (for the major **and** the minor), you can schedule your oral comprehensive examination. You should continue working on research with the goal of submitting to journals. If you did not produce journal-ready papers in year two, it is critical that you focus on doing that in year three.

For the annual report in your third year, you should have completed the written prelim. If the prelim is not completed or scheduled, you should provide an explanation as to why. You should be planning to meet your teaching requirements in the summer of your third year. Continued funding is contingent on the annual report evaluation.

### ***Years 4 and 5***

Many students take five years to complete the degree, though some complete it in four. Ideally, students in their fourth year will have a journal publication, as well as a pipeline of future projects. The

minor requirements should be fulfilled, and the oral exam should have been successfully completed. If a student is not on track, he or she should explain the delay in their annual report. At this stage, students should focus on their dissertation topics and work toward completing the dissertation. If students have not met the teaching requirement, they should be planning to do so the summer of their fourth year. As before, continued funding is contingent on the annual report evaluation.

For the annual report in your fourth and fifth years, you should have completed the written and oral prelim exams, and you should have taught at least one class. If any of these activities have not been completed or scheduled, you should provide an explanation as to why. If you are on the market, you should provide the committee with information regarding your plans for final defense and the status of your job search. If you are not on the market, continued funding is contingent on the annual report evaluation. ALL students who are in the program when the annual report is due must complete one.

### ***Preparation to enter the job market***

As you prepare to enter the job market, it is important to develop a job packet that includes a cv, teaching and research statements, and sample publications. Looking for a job is a full-time job, so be sure to allocate sufficient time to preparing the packet, sending out applications, following up on applications, and participating in interviews. Typically, schools require candidates to do a presentation (or job talk) about their research. You should consider presenting your job talk at the department's research workshop. It is a good opportunity to receive feedback from a friendly audience.

### ***PhD Achievement Fund***

Each student in the MIS PhD program will have a travel and research expense account that accumulates as the student successfully completes major milestones of the program. This account, referred to as the PhD Achievement Fund (PAF), will be managed by the student, but can only be used for expenses that are allowed by the University and that directly support their research or travel. The PAF will be funded as follows:

- When a student begins the program, \$500 will be added to their PAF.
- When a student passes the core exams, \$1000 will be added to their PAF.
- When a student completes the prelim, \$1000 will be added to their PAF.
- When a student passes the oral exam, \$1000 will be added to their PAF.
- When a student is in their final year (i.e., on the market), \$1500 will be added to their PAF.

This totals to \$5000. Any unused funds after the student graduates are returned to the department.

There are additional opportunities to gain funding for student research-related travel:

Annual competitions for the Alan Dennis award (\$1,000 total), as well as the Sy Goodman award (\$500) are provided. Occasionally, other funds are available. Students will be notified when there are additional opportunities for funding. If awarded, these funds will be deposited in the student's bursar account. The department's ICIS Doctoral Consortium designee (as nominated by the department and selected by ICIS) will receive funding to attend and participate in ICIS (participation in any additional ancillary conferences will come from the student's account).

Students also have access to GPSC travel funding, currently up to \$1,500 per year (\$1,000 for domestic travel and \$1,500 for international travel; <https://gpsc.arizona.edu/travel-grants>). The department

encourages students to apply for these funds to aid their participation in various conferences and research activities.

## **Additional Details on Program Milestones**

To be safe and to make sure you have the most up-to-date version of the policies, please be sure to check the graduate college website: <https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/degree-requirements>.

**Teaching Requirement** – All doctoral students must teach at least two courses for the MIS department during the program. To be eligible to teach you must complete the Teaching Assistants Training Online (TATO). You cannot be a GA or a TA for a course unless you have completed TATO and FERPA modules.

Classroom instruction is an important aspect of doctoral student training. All doctoral students will be required to teach a *minimum* of two courses for the MIS Department during their doctoral studies. Students will teach two courses (total) during years two through four of their program. For each year students are in residence beyond year four, they will be required to teach one additional course. The department will schedule students in the courses, although students will be given some flexibility in scheduling their teaching to best meet the travel, academic, and research activities of their program. Under special circumstances and with the support of their advisor, students may petition the PhD Committee for a one-course waiver. Students will coordinate with a faculty member who teaches the course to align syllabi and learning outcomes. Students whose teaching evaluations in their first course are below desired departmental standards will be required to complete an improvement program that may include enrolling in a teaching workshop, class observation, and/or review of course materials with a faculty member prior to teaching their next course.

**Written Comprehensive Exam – The Core** – The core is taken following the first and second year of study in the PhD program. It covers all the required foundation courses taken in MIS during the first and second year in the PhD program. It is typically administered around the third week of May (normally, the Thursday and Friday before Memorial Day) of the first and second year. Students must pass the core exams to move forward in the PhD program. Students who fail the core exams may be asked to transfer to the MS MIS program or, in rare cases, be given other options. Students who receive a marginal pass may be required to undergo remedial work to address deficiencies.

**Plan of Study** – Students are responsible for mapping out a set of courses that comprise their plan of study. The plan of study should be filed by the end of the student's third semester in residence. It should include courses the student has transferred, courses the student has taken, and courses the student intends to take to fulfill the requirements of the major and minor.

**Written Prelim** – This is done during the fall of the third year. The purpose of the written prelim is to write and present a research paper that demonstrates a student's ability to conceive of and execute a research project. The written prelim paper should be of journal quality. Students are expected to complete or schedule their written prelim by October 15 of their third year.

**Written minor exam** – Students who take minors in which a written exam is required must take and pass the minor exam prior to taking the oral exam in MIS. Please discuss minor requirements with your minor advisor.

**Oral Comprehensive Exam**– The oral comprehensive exam is a graduate college requirement, taken after you have completed all coursework.

*According to the graduate college:*

“Before admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree, the student must pass a written and an oral Doctoral Comprehensive Examination. This examination is intended to test the student's comprehensive knowledge of the major and minor subjects of study, both in breadth across the general field of study and in depth within the area of specialization. The examination, therefore, should not take place until the student has completed all, or almost all, of their coursework. The student must be in good academic standing to sit for the comprehensive exam. The Comprehensive Examination is considered a single examination, although it consists of written and oral parts. While the Graduate College sets general policies and guidelines for exams, it is expected that each program will have different ways of assessing a student's knowledge of the field and their preparation to begin the dissertation. Each program determines the format and administration of the written portion. The minor department controls the minor portion of the written examination and may waive it at their discretion. A student will pass the written portion before sitting for the oral portion. Programs will have written policies regarding whether students may retake failed written exams as well as specific policies regarding second attempts of the oral. The time between the written and oral portion is determined by individual programs, but the oral portion should come early enough to allow the student to advance to candidacy in a timely fashion. Normally, the written and oral portions of the comprehensive examination should take place at least three months prior to the Final Oral Examination (defense of dissertation). The exact time and place of the oral comprehensive examination must be scheduled with the department and announced in GradPath using the Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Exam form before the exam can take place.”

“Upon successful completion of the written portion of the examination, the [Oral Comprehensive Examination](#) is conducted before the examining committee of the faculty. The oral portion of the examination must cover both the major and the minor. The Oral Comprehensive Examination should last for at least an hour but must not last more than 3 hours. Remote participation by one or more committee members by video or phone conference is permitted on the condition that the student and all committee members can effectively communicate. All members must participate in the entire examination. The oral examination is the occasion when faculty committee members have both the opportunity and obligation to require the student to display a broad knowledge of the chosen field of study and sufficient depth of understanding in areas of specialization. Discussion of proposed dissertation research may be included. The examining committee must attest that the student has demonstrated the professional level of knowledge expected of a junior academic colleague. The Graduate College allows no more than one re-take of the oral exam.”

### **Oral Comprehensive Examination Committee**

The student is responsible for forming a comprehensive examination committee of faculty representing both the major and the minor programs. The examining committee must consist of a minimum of four members. The Major Advisor and two additional members must be members of the [Graduate Faculty](#). The fourth member may be a member of the Graduate Faculty or an approved Special Member. Any members of the fourth can also be members of the Graduate Faculty, or approved Special Members.



### ***Committee Appointment Form***

Every student in a doctoral program needs to have an approved dissertation prospectus or proposal on file within their department. As soon as the student has an approved prospectus/proposal on file within the department, the department's Graduate Coordinator will submit the prospectus/proposal confirmation form in GradPath on behalf of the student.

When the student has an approved doctoral Plan of Study on file, has satisfied all course work, language, and residence requirements, and passed the written and oral portions of the Comprehensive Examination, he or she must file a Committee Appointment form. Any changes to the committee should be reported to the Graduate Student Academic Services office. Under normal circumstances, submission is expected at least six months before the Final Oral Examination (i.e., Defense). Deadlines for the submission of paperwork pertaining to doctoral programs are available online at [Deadlines for Completion of Degree Requirements](#).

The Committee Appointment form reports on the student's planned dissertation committee, dissertation title (subject to change) and the expected graduation term. It requires approval from the dissertation director and the major and minor departments. The approval signature from the minor department on this form indicates both approval of the reported dissertation committee and confirmation that the student has satisfied all requirements for the minor.

***Final Dissertation Defense*** – Having filed your Committee Appointment Form and upon the completion of the dissertation, the candidate must submit to a Final Oral Defense Examination. A student must be in good academic standing to schedule the defense. The examination focuses on the dissertation itself but can include general questioning related to the field(s) of study within the scope of the dissertation ([Final Oral Defense Instructions](#) and [Final Oral Defense Instructions for doctor of Audiology](#)).

The date, time, and location of the final examination must be scheduled with the Graduate College in advance using the Announcement of Final Oral Defense form in GradPath. Candidates should indicate in the comments section of this form if the Final Oral Examination will be held remotely or in a hybrid format. This form should be submitted far enough in advance of the examination so that all approvers can grant their approval in time for the form to reach the Graduate College one week prior to the exam. The Graduate College will place an announcement on the UA master calendar to invite the public to attend the candidate's presentation of his or her work. Final Oral Examinations should be scheduled during days when the university is in session and during normal business hours. Permission to hold examinations during University holiday closures or outside of normal university business hours may be granted by Graduate College.

The Graduate College requires a minimum of three [Graduate Faculty](#) members on a dissertation committee. Fourth and subsequent members may be Graduate Faculty or Special Members. If a committee has only three members, all must approve the dissertation. In departments that require four or more members, there may be one dissenting vote. All dissertation committee members are expected to attend the entire final defense.

The dissertation director presides over the examination. The initial seminar portion during which the student presents the dissertation and entertains questions is open to the public. This is followed by a



closed session with just the committee and the candidate. The committee's deliberation is closed to the public.

There is no minimum time limit for the Final Oral Examination, but the entire proceedings may not exceed three hours. Members of the committee must be present for the entire examination. Should special circumstances require a member to attend remotely, prior permission from the Graduate College is necessary.

If the committee requires revisions, those must be done in a timely manner, not to exceed one year. If the revisions are not completed by the dissertation submission deadline for the term when the student defends, the student will be required to register for the next semester and will graduate in the semester when the revisions are complete and approved. If revisions are not done by the end of the time to degree period, the student will have to re-take comprehensive examinations to demonstrate currency of knowledge.

Preparation of the dissertation follows the Graduate College format and style rules. Refer to [Dissertation and Thesis Formatting Guides](#) and [Archiving your Dissertation](#) on the Graduate College Website.

## PROGRAM CHECKLIST

<i>First Year</i>	<i>When</i>
Teaching Assistants Training Online (TATO)	August
Submit Annual Report	February
Pass Core Examination Part 1	May
<i>Second Year</i>	
Submit Ph.D. Plan of Study (in Grad Path)	December
Submit Annual Report	February
Pass Core Examination Part 2	May
<i>Third Year</i>	
Written Prelim Proposal*	July
Written Prelim *	October
Submit Annual Report	February
Teach one class for the MIS Department.	Summer or academic year
<i>Fourth Year</i>	
Oral Comprehensive Exam (submit Comp Exam Committee Appointment form and Announcement in GradPath)	Spring semester
Submit Approved Dissertation Proposal	Within 3 months after oral exam
Submit the Doctoral Dissertation Committee Appointment Form	After passing oral exam and <i>ideally</i> 6 months prior to defense
Teach one class for the MIS Department	Summer or academic year
Submit Annual Report	February
<i>Fifth Year</i>	
Prepare Job Placement Packet	August of the Job Market Yr.
Present practice Job Talk	Fall of the Job Market Yr.
Submit Announcement of Final Oral Examination to Grad. Degree Certification	Seven working days prior to the exam
Final Oral Defense of the completed dissertation	When Ready

\* Note: The Program Coordinator retains copies of all official departmental documentation. University paperwork is held in GradPath. Departmental paperwork (associated with the written prelim) should be submitted to the Program Coordinator.

## IMPORTANT LINKS

- Department of MIS
  - <https://eller.arizona.edu/departments-research/schools-departments/mis>
- UAccess
  - <https://uaccess.arizona.edu/>
- D2L
  - <https://d2l.arizona.edu/d2l/loginh/>
- UA Information Technology
  - <https://it.arizona.edu/>
- Graduate College (policies, contacts, resources, deadlines, and other useful information)
  - <https://grad.arizona.edu/>
- Resources for New and Currently Students (resources for parents, professional development, health & wellness, funding, etc.)
  - <https://grad.arizona.edu/new-and-current-students>
- Grad Center
  - <https://gradcenter.arizona.edu/>
- General Course Catalog
  - <https://catalog.arizona.edu/>
- University of Arizona's Code of Academic Integrity
  - <https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/student-rights-responsibilities/academic-integrity>
- Policies on Conducting Research
  - <http://www.orcr.arizona.edu/>
- Office of Diversity and Inclusion
  - <https://grad.arizona.edu/diversityprograms/>
- Campus Health
  - <https://health.arizona.edu/>
- Disability Resource Center
  - <https://drc.arizona.edu/>
- Counseling & Psych Services
  - <https://health.arizona.edu/counseling-psych-services>
- SOS – Support Outreach and Success (Any Question – Just Ask)
  - <https://sos.arizona.edu/>
- Scholarship Universe
  - <https://financialaid.arizona.edu/scholarshipuniverse>
- Dates and Deadlines
  - <https://registrar.arizona.edu/dates-and-deadlines>