

# ULE PhD Program Requirements

## Course Work

1. Research Methodology (COMM 693).
2. A two course sequence in microeconomics offered by UBC's Vancouver School of Economics, the VSE, (ECON 600 and ECON 601).
3. A course in macroeconomics offered by the VSE (ECON 502 or ECON 602).
4. Two courses in econometrics or statistics, typically offered by the VSE. Adequately prepared students would take ECON 626 and ECON 627. Less well-prepared students may take ECON 527 and ECON 626. With permission of the PhD Advisor, it is also possible to take ECON 626 and another suitable course in econometrics or statistics.
5. Theory of Finance (COMM671)
6. Advanced Topics in Urban Land Economics I and II (COMM 604 and 605).
7. Students are also required to study a secondary field. A field consists of two courses. This is typically one of finance, labour economics, public finance, or industrial organization, but considerable flexibility is allowed in this choice. The specific courses in each field are determined in consultation between the student and the PhD Advisor.
8. A course in teaching methods (preferably COMM 590B, but EPSE 606 if necessary).
9. The above requirements imply a minimum of 36 credits (12 courses at 3 credits each). Normally students would be required to take one or more additional courses above this minimum, determined in consultation with the PhD Advisor. There is no specific overall credit requirement but a typical full course load is 4 courses per term worth 3 credits each for the first two years (four terms), comprising 48 credits over the two years.
10. All required courses should be completed in the student's first two years in the PhD program if possible. If a required course is not offered in a feasible time slot in the student's first two years, the course can be deferred until third year. Also, the teaching methods course may be deferred until after the second year even if it is offered at a feasible time in the first two years. However, the primary field courses must be completed in the first two years.

## Grade Requirements

All PhD students at UBC are required to obtain a grade of at least 68% in each course to obtain credit for the course. Also, students must obtain an average of 72% or more over the four course grouping consisting of ECON 600, ECON 601, ECON 502 or ECON 602, and ECON 626. Finally, students are also required to obtain an average of at least 72% separately in their designated secondary field and the Advanced Topics in Urban Land Economics two course sequence.

## Summer Paper

In the first summer each student is required to write a summer paper. The paper must be supervised by at least one Sauder Faculty member who is considered to be an urban economics or real estate appointee in the Strategy and Business Economics (SBE) Division. A draft of the paper must be submitted before the beginning of second year classes in September and must be presented in the SBE Divisional forum no later than October 31. The Sauder Faculty members in urban economics or real estate decide whether to pass the summer paper.

## Comprehensive Exam

By the end of the summer of the second year, students are required to write a comprehensive exam in Urban Land Economics. The exam is based on course work, primarily COMM 604 & COMM 605, and on a reading list developed by a comprehensive exam committee. The PhD Advisor constitutes the Comprehensive Exam Committee (normally two or three faculty members) by the end of January during the student's second year. The comprehensive exam is a written exam and must be completed by June 30 of the student's second year. The Comprehensive Exam Committee will meet with the student to discuss the content, format, and invigilation of the exam, provide the reading list, and respond to questions. The members of the Comprehensive Exam Committee decide whether to pass the comprehensive exam by majority vote; in case of a split vote the Committee Chair casts the deciding vote.

## Post-Comprehensive Research Requirement

Following successful completion of the comprehensive exam, students must develop a research presentation to be presented to the considered to be Urban Land Economics appointees no later than October 31 of the student's third year. This presentation is intended to lay the foundation for the student's third year dissertation research and, ideally, would evolve into a part of the PhD dissertation. It may take the form of a formal research proposal or the early stages of a research project.

## Dissertation Proposal and Supervisory Committee

By August 31 of the third year, students are required to form the supervisory committee and defend their PhD dissertation proposal before the Strategy and Business Economics (SBE) Division. Extensions may be granted only under exceptional circumstances.<sup>1</sup> The committee consists of at least three faculty members. Two or more must be from the Sauder School and be considered to be an urban economics or real estate appointee, typically members of the SBE Division. For the proposal, students can focus primarily on the first main chapter of their dissertation. A draft of this chapter should (i) show substantial progress towards completion, (ii) include one or more clearly stated research questions, (iii) establish the original contribution to the literature, and (iv) demonstrate the student's ability to carry out research at an appropriate level using suitable methods. The proposal should also state clearly the research questions for all additional chapters in the dissertation. Each chapter proposal should include a discussion of the importance and feasibility of the proposed research. The format of the proposal defence is a 45 min presentation to the SBE Division, uninterrupted except clarifying questions. To

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/managing-your-program/advancement-candidacy>

schedule the proposal defence, the candidate has to contact the Sauder PhD office to obtain the relevant form.

## PhD Candidacy

Students are admitted to doctoral candidacy once they finish all required coursework, pass the comprehensive exam, and successfully defend their thesis proposal. Students admitted to doctoral candidacy are required to make at least one research presentation to the SBE Division each year throughout their candidacy.

## Teaching Requirement

All PhD students are required to teach at least one 3 credit course (or the equivalent) before graduating. Students must complete the teaching methods course before teaching a course. Students are eligible to teach only after they are admitted to doctoral candidacy.

## Failure to Meet Program Requirements

A student who fails to meet grade requirements will normally be allowed to retake courses falling below the required average once and must reach that average in each course re-taken. Alternatively, the student may request taking a suitable alternative course or courses, although there is no presumption that such a request would necessarily be granted. If students are approved to re-take a failed course or to take a replacement course, the minimum passing grade of the re-taken course or replacement course will be 74%. If students fail to reach the required standard when re-taking a course or taking an alternative course they would be required to leave the program.

A student who fails to meet other requirements (such a timely completion of the summer paper or the post-comprehensive research requirement may be required to leave the program or may be granted additional time or some other concession depending on circumstances.

## Sample Program Sequence

Year - 1 Fall term: COMM 693 (research methodology), ECON 600 (micro theory), ECON 527 (econometrics), and ECON 502 or ECON602

Year - 1 Winter term: ECON 601(micro theory), statistics course, secondary field or other course

Year - 1 Summer research paper

Year - 2 Fall term: COMM 604 (Advanced Topics in Urban Land Economics), COMM 671 (Theory of Finance), statistics course, secondary field or other courses

Year - 2 Winter COMM 605 (Advanced Topics in Urban Land Economics), COMM590B or EPSE 506 (Teaching), statistics course, secondary field or other courses

Year - 2 Summer comprehensive exams

Year - 3 Preparation and presentation of both research proposal and thesis proposal

Year - 4 Preparation and defense of thesis (often extends into Year 5)