

DEVELOPMENT, PHD

Admissions to the Development, PhD have been suspended as of spring 2019 and will be discontinued as of fall 2025. If you have any questions, please contact the department (academicaffairs@cals.wisc.edu).

The mission of the PhD program in development studies is to prepare PhD graduates for careers in social science research, policy, and education related to international development issues. The target audience includes people who wish to prepare for careers in international development as well as midcareer international development professionals who will return to their original employer or employment sector after earning a PhD. Applicants are expected to have experience working in developing countries. The program emphasizes interdisciplinary social science research and analysis designed to address the problems of developing and emerging economies.

Students from the United States and 40 countries have enrolled since the program was established in 1970. Over 125 alumni work in a wide range of capacities with various government agencies, nongovernment agencies, and universities in the United States and other countries. Most alumni from other countries have returned there to take up senior-level posts in government and other national institutions and in academia.

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Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. **Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/>) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).** Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/>).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	January 15
Spring Deadline	This program does not admit in the spring.
Summer Deadline	This program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Required.

English Proficiency Test Every applicant whose native language is not English, or whose undergraduate instruction was not exclusively in English, must provide an English proficiency test score earned within two years of the anticipated term of enrollment. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Requirements for Admission policy: <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241> (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241/>).

Other Test (s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT) None.

Letters of Recommendation Required None.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants seeking admission to the program must already hold a master's degree in a social science, preferably with a thesis requiring original research. Previous experience living and/or working in a developing country in some capacity (Peace Corps, non-government organizations, individual initiatives, etc.) is an important aspect of a successful applicant's background. An applicant's application is judged on the basis of previous academic records, letters of recommendation, a personal statement, and a research proposal. This proposal will form the cornerstone of the applicant's program. It will provide the admissions committee with a clear explanation of the direction the student intends to take with the research. In their statement of purpose, applicants should clearly outline their reasons for choosing the PhD in Development.

The online application must contain the following:

- Personal statement
- Research proposal
- Unofficial transcripts for all post-secondary institutions attended
 - If an applicant is admitted, official transcripts will be requested by the Graduate School.
- Three letters of recommendation
- A curriculum vitae

International degree-seeking applicants must prove English proficiency using the Graduate School's requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/>).

Details on the requirements can be found on the program website (<http://devstudies.wisc.edu/admission.html>).

FACULTY ADVISOR

Applicants will not be admitted unless a member of the program faculty agrees to serve as advisor. If the Admissions Committee judges your application favorably, you will receive a provisional admission. You should identify one or more potential advisors from the list of faculty (http://devstudies.wisc.edu/people_faculty.html) and include that information in your Reason for Graduate Study. The Admissions Committee will contact potential advisors in order to obtain a match. Most admitted applicants remain with their initial advisor; others find a more compatible match during the first semester.

FUNDING

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GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (<https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/>) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

The Development Studies Program is unable to provide financial support to students, however many students are able to find funding through other means. Prospective students are encouraged to seek support through university departments, private scholarships, or government-sponsored funding. We will enter you in university-wide fellowship competitions for which you are eligible. Admitted students from developing countries may be eligible for one semester of MEO fellowship support. Most fellowship funds are awarded to students entering in the fall semester. We recommend that you:

1. Write to international organizations and investigate fellowships and grants available from private foundations.
2. Consider the possibility of obtaining support from your own university, your employer, or your government.
3. Contact university departments about the possibility of obtaining an assistantship.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (<http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirements>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW–Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirement Detail

Minimum 51 credits
Credit Requirement

Minimum 33 credits
Residence Credit Requirement

Minimum 26 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244> (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/>).

Overall 3.20 GPA required.
Graduate GPA Requirement

Other Grade No other grade requirements.
Requirements

Assessments Students must complete a written preliminary examination and after the student's program coursework has been completed. For more information, see the program's website (http://devstudies.wisc.edu/about_prelim.html).

Language Language requirements ranging from minimal competency Requirements to fluency in a non-native language will vary for each student depending on area of interest. Students are required to have or acquire language competency to complete their dissertation fieldwork

Graduate Development doctoral students are not required to School complete a doctoral minor or graduate/professional Breadth certificate.
Requirement

REQUIRED COURSES

Students work with their advisors to design an individualized program of study. All students must complete the Program of Study form by the end of their second semester.

The minimum number of total required credits for the PhD program is 51. Up to 12 credits may transfer from the student's master's degree provided the committee determines that these credits meet program requirements. Ordinarily courses taken elsewhere may not be used to meet the development studies course requirement. Each program of study will differ, yet coursework should fit the following guidelines:

- **Interdisciplinary seminar:** minimum of 3 credits
- **Major discipline: minimum of 24 credits that include:**
 - a. 3 credits minimum of theory
 - b. 9 credits minimum of methods (must be taken from the department(s) of the major discipline or from course offerings in the Department of Statistics)
 - c. 12 credits minimum of other relevant courses in the major discipline (6 must be from development studies courses)

- **Secondary discipline:** minimum of 9 credits (3 must be from development studies courses)
- **Tertiary areas:** minimum of 9 credits
- **Dissertation research:** minimum of 6 credits

Both the major discipline and the secondary discipline are expected to be in the social sciences. In most instances, students will select from among sociology, economics, geography, anthropology, communication, political science, education, or urban and regional planning as their primary and secondary disciplines. Secondary disciplines may also include areas such as law, history, and public affairs.

At least one development studies course in the discipline of economics and one development studies course in the discipline of sociology must be completed by all students. Courses in the departments of Economics, Agricultural and Applied Economics, and Consumer Science, and economics courses in the School of Business fulfill the economics discipline, while courses in the departments of Sociology and Community and Environmental Sociology fulfill the sociology discipline. Development studies courses are social science graduate-level courses in which the majority of course content pertains specifically to international development. The Development Studies Instructional Committee will revise this list annually and make appropriate additions and deletions. All development studies courses must have been taken on an A-F basis at UW-Madison and be passed with a grade of B or higher.

"Topics" courses may be taken as development studies core courses by permission of the student's committee and the Instructional Committee. Some examples of such topics courses are included below. Also, note that this list is highly provisional. In particular, there are likely to be some courses numbered 400-699 with largely undergraduate clientele that would not be appropriate for development studies graduate students. There are also no doubt a number of courses unknown to us that should be added to the list. At this time we do not see a need to identify development studies core courses for the tertiary areas, or to require that one or more development studies courses be taken in the tertiary areas.

Courses in the tertiary areas may be in a social science discipline, a coherent set of area studies courses, or a coherent set of courses outside of the social sciences. Natural-science tertiary areas/disciplines (e.g., plant science, ecology, tropical agriculture) or interdisciplinary social science areas/disciplines (technology assessment, urban studies) are permitted and encouraged. Tertiary areas/disciplines that do not correspond to current Graduate School programs of study are permitted if they are coherent and well justified.

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

With program approval, students are allowed to transfer no more than 12 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions. Coursework earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

Undergraduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions or UW-Madison

No credits from other institutions or UW-Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the degree.

Credits Earned as a Professional Student at UW-Madison (Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary careers)

Refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>) policy.

Credits Earned as a University Special Student at UW-Madison

With program approval, students are allowed to transfer no more than 9 credits of coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW-Madison University Special student. Coursework earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

PROBATION

If students fall below the satisfactory progress requirements, including the 3.2 GPA, the program will launch an assessment exercise analyzing the student's fit in the program.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

All students must have an advisor. Admission into the development studies program is contingent on the Admissions Committee obtaining an advisor for the student. After the second semester the student will build a three-member faculty committee. At the time of defense, a five-member interdisciplinary committee must be established. At least 3 members of the dissertation committee must be readers.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

TIME LIMITS

A candidate for a doctoral degree who fails to take the final oral examination and deposit the dissertation within five years after passing the preliminary examination may be required to take another preliminary examination and to be admitted to candidacy a second time.

Refer to the Graduate School: Time Limits (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1221/>) policy.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)

- Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employeeabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office Student Assistance and Support (OSAS) (<https://osas.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences: Grievance Policy

In the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs), any student who feels unfairly treated by a member of the CALs faculty or staff has the right to complain about the treatment and to receive a prompt hearing. Some complaints may arise from misunderstandings or communication breakdowns and be easily resolved; others may require formal action. Complaints may concern any matter of perceived unfairness.

To ensure a prompt and fair hearing of any complaint, and to protect the rights of both the person complaining and the person at whom the complaint is directed, the following procedures are used in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. Any student, undergraduate or graduate, may use these procedures, except employees whose complaints are covered under other campus policies.

1. The student should first talk with the person at whom the complaint is directed. Most issues can be settled at this level. Others may be resolved by established departmental procedures.
2. If the student is unsatisfied, and the complaint involves any unit outside CALs, the student should seek the advice of the dean or director of that unit to determine how to proceed.
 - a. If the complaint involves an academic department in CALs the student should proceed in accordance with item 3 below.
 - b. If the grievance involves a unit in CALs that is not an academic department, the student should proceed in accordance with item 4 below.
3. The student should contact the department's grievance advisor within 120 calendar days of the alleged unfair treatment. The departmental administrator can provide this person's name. The grievance advisor will attempt to resolve the problem informally within 10 working days of receiving the complaint, in discussions with the student and the person at whom the complaint is directed.
 - a. If informal mediation fails, the student can submit the grievance in writing to the grievance advisor within 10 working days of the date the student is informed of the failure of the mediation attempt by the grievance advisor. The grievance advisor will provide a copy to the person at whom the grievance is directed.
 - b. The grievance advisor will refer the complaint to a department committee that will obtain a written response from the person at whom the complaint is directed, providing a copy to the student. Either party may request a hearing before the committee. The grievance advisor will provide both parties a written decision within 20 working days from the date of receipt of the written complaint.
 - c. If the grievance involves the department chairperson, the grievance advisor or a member of the grievance committee, these persons may not participate in the review.
 - d. If not satisfied with departmental action, either party has 10 working days from the date of notification of the departmental committee action to file a written appeal to the CALs Equity and Diversity Committee. A subcommittee of this committee will make a preliminary judgement as to whether the case merits further investigation and review. If the subcommittee unanimously determines that the case does not merit further investigation and review, its decision is final. If one or more members of the subcommittee determine that the case does merit further investigation and review, the subcommittee will investigate and seek to resolve the dispute through mediation. If this mediation attempt fails, the subcommittee will bring the case to the full committee. The committee may seek additional information from the parties or hold a hearing. The committee will present a written recommendation to the dean who will provide a final decision within 20 working days of receipt of the committee recommendation.
4. If the alleged unfair treatment occurs in a CALs unit that is not an academic department, the student should, within 120 calendar days of the alleged incident, take his/her grievance directly to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. The dean will attempt to resolve the problem informally within 10 working days of receiving the complaint. If this mediation attempt does not succeed the student may file a written complaint with the dean who will refer it to the CALs Equity and Diversity Committee. The committee will seek a written response from the person at whom the complaint is directed, subsequently following other steps delineated in item 3d above.

OTHER

If you need financial support, indicate this on the application form. Prospective students are encouraged to seek support through university departments, private scholarships, or government-sponsored funding. We will enter you in university-wide fellowship competitions for which you are eligible. We will advise you about funding opportunities, when possible.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. Articulates research questions reflecting an interdisciplinary perspective on development research, theory and practice.
2. Formulates ideas and/or techniques beyond the current boundaries of knowledge within development studies.
3. Creates scholarship that makes a substantive contribution to development studies.
4. Demonstrates interdisciplinary breadth within their learning experiences.
5. Communicates complex ideas in a clear and understandable manner, both orally and in written form.
6. Fosters ethical and professional conduct in their research, teaching, and policy work.

PEOPLE

PEOPLE

FACULTY

Samer Alatout, Associate Professor, Community and Environmental Sociology

Bradford Barham, Professor, Agricultural and Applied Economics

Katherine Bowie, Professor, Anthropology

Jean-Paul Chavas, Professor, Agricultural and Applied Economics

Jane Collins, Professor, Community and Environmental Sociology

Ian Coxhead, Professor, Agricultural and Applied Economics

Jo Ellen Fair, Professor, African Cultural Studies

Jeremy Foltz, Professor, Agricultural and Applied Economics

Theodore Gerber, Professor, Sociology

Gary Green, Professor, Community and Environmental Sociology

Kathryn Hendley, Professor, Law

Harvey Jacobs, Professor, Planning and Landscape Architecture

Richard Keller, Professor, Medical History and Bioethics

Nancy Kendall, Professor, Education Policy Studies (**chair**)

Heinz Klug, Professor, Law

Chaeyoon Lim, Associate Professor, Sociology

Lisa Naughton, Professor, Geography

Thomas Oliver, Professor, Population Health Sciences

Gay Seidman, Professor, Sociology

Ajay Sethi, Associate Professor, Population Health Sciences

Hemant Shah, Professor, Journalism and Mass Communication

Randy Stoecker, Professor, Community and Environmental Sociology

Leann Tigges, Professor, Community and Environmental Sociology

Aili Tripp, Professor, Political Science/Gender and Women's Studies

Matthew Turner, Professor, Geography

Stephen Ventura, Professor, Soil Science

Stephen Young, Assistant Professor, Geography

STAFF

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