The mission of the Ph.D. program in development studies is to prepare Ph.D. 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 Ph.D. 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.

FUNDING

Prospective students should see the program website for funding information.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

To make progress toward a graduate degree, students must meet the Graduate School Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext) in addition to the requirements of the program.

DOCTORAL DEGREES

Ph.D.

MINIMUM GRADUATE DEGREE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

51 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE RESIDENCE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

33 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE COURSEWORK (50%) REQUIREMENT

Half of the degree coursework (26 of 51 total credits) must be completed in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle).

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: GRADUATE WORK FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS

With program approval, students are allowed to count 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.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNDERGRADUATE

No credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the degree.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNIVERSITY SPECIAL

With program approval, students are allowed to count 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.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC COURSES REQUIRED

Students work with their advisors to design an individualized program of study.

DOCTORAL MINOR/BREADTH REQUIREMENTS

Students are not required to complete a doctoral minor.

OVERALL GRADUATE GPA REQUIREMENT

3.2 GPA required.

OTHER GRADE REQUIREMENTS

No other grade requirements.

PROBATION POLICY

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. 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.

ASSESSMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS

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

TIME CONSTRAINTS

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.

Doctoral degree students who have been absent for ten or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence. Individual programs may count the coursework students completed prior to their absence for meeting program requirements; that coursework may not count toward Graduate School credit requirements.
LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS
Language requirements vary by program of study.

ADMISSIONS

Students 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. A student’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 student’s program. It will provide the admissions committee with a clear explanation of the direction the student intends to take with the research. General Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores for all applicants and TOEFL or IELTS scores for international applicants are required.

In addition to the online application and reasons for graduate study, applicants must submit a letter clearly outlining reasons for choosing the Ph.D. in development; dissertation research proposal; official transcripts for all post-secondary institutions attended; three letters of recommendation; curriculum vitae.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

• Articulates research questions reflecting an interdisciplinary perspective on development research, theory and practice.
• Formulates ideas and/or techniques beyond the current boundaries of knowledge within development studies.
• Creates scholarship that makes a substantive contribution to development studies.
• Demonstrates interdisciplinary breadth within their learning experiences.
• Communicates complex ideas in a clear and understandable manner, both orally and in written form.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

• Fosters ethical and professional conduct in their research, teaching, and policy work.

PEOPLE

Faculty: Professors Alatout, Apple, Barham, Bowie, Chavas, Collins, Coxhead, Elder, Ewig, Fair, Foltz (chair), Green, Hendley, Jacobs, Keller, Kendall, Klug, Lim, Liu, Naughton, Seidman, Sethi, Shah, Stern, Stoecker, Tigges, Tripp, Turner, Ventura, Winichakul, Young, Zepeda