INFORMATION, PHD

The PhD in Information at the UW–Madison Information School (iSchool) cultivates a cooperative, supportive intellectual environment through which highly qualified students pursue doctoral studies. With a breath of faculty expertise, and a flexible curriculum, the iSchool supports computational, social science, and humanities-oriented PhD studies.

PhD students develop close working relationships with faculty members, receive strong and consistent advising, and meet regularly together as a cohort throughout their coursework. The program and its faculty provide structure through which students conduct original research and prepare results for presentation and publication in scholarly conferences and journals. iSchool faculty members work closely with PhD students on joint projects as well as supporting students' independent projects.

As part of an internationally top-ranked research university, the iSchool offers students the opportunity to engage in the rich variety of educational experiences both within the school and in the broader University of Wisconsin–Madison campus.

Admitted students receive financial support including tuition remission, a stipend, and funds for research support including travel. The program encourages students to explore both academic and industry career opportunities.

For more information, including instructions on admissions, please see the iSchool PhD program webpage. (https://ischool.wisc.edu/programs/phd-program/)

To see the research interests and expertise of iSchool faculty members, please refer to the iSchool Faculty Research Page (https://ischool.wisc.edu/faculty-staff-directory/research/).

RESIDENCE AND COMMUNITY

The iSchool PhD program is a residential program. Students must be able to attend classes in person at UW–Madison for at least three years. Most students continue to live near Madison as they research and write their dissertations. Four to five years of full-time study is typical for students to complete the degree. The school strongly prefers full-time PhD students.

ADMISSIONS

ADMISSIONS

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	December 1
Spring Deadline	The program does not admit in the spring.
Summer Deadline	The program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Not 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)	n/a
Letters of Recommendation Required	3

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

PhD admissions at the Information School requires a GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) or better in the last 60 hours of academic credit earned; a detailed written statement of the area of research interest, fit with current faculty and the purpose for pursuing doctoral study; and an interview (usually a phone interview) with the school's PhD committee or other faculty members serving on the committee's behalf. International degree-seeking applicants must prove English proficiency using the Graduate School's requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/).

For more information, including detailed instructions for submitting an application, see this link (https://ischool.wisc.edu/programs/phd-program/).

Grade Point Average (GPA)

Applicants whose GPA falls below the required level must provide other evidence of academic ability. Advice on the type of evidence appropriate to the applicant should be requested from the administrator of the doctoral program.

Admissions Committee

Applicant qualifications for admission will be reviewed by the School's PhD committee, which will make an admissions recommendation to the director who, in turn, makes a recommendation to the Graduate School.

The criteria used in this review include academic promise, the probability that the School's doctoral program will meet the goals and research interests of the applicant, and that the applicant will be able to complete the program successfully. Under certain circumstances, admission may be approved on a probationary basis or with deficiencies. Students will not normally be permitted to continue longer than the first year on probation. For more information see the PhD program admissions page.

FUNDING

FUNDING
GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

The Bursar's Office provides information about tuition and fees associated with being a graduate student. Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information is available from the Graduate School.

Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Admitted students receive financial support including tuition remission, a stipend, and funds for research support, including travel.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum degree requirements (https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#requirementstext) and policies (https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiestext), 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 Credit Requirement	51 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	32 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	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 Graduate GPA Requirement	3.50 GPA required.

Other Grade Requirements	To remain in good academic standing within the iSchool PhD program, a student must maintain a 3.5 overall GPA, not carry any incomplete grades in courses (other than 999s) for more than 1 semester and pass all mastery demonstration paper deadlines by appointed deadlines.
Assessments and Examinations	Each student is required to fulfill at least two different research practica. Students will demonstrate mastery of subject areas and research skills through two mastery demonstration papers and a program portfolio. Presentation and successful defense of a program portfolio and statement of intent constitutes the preliminary examination. Successful defense of the program portfolio and statement of intent constitutes formal acceptance into candidacy for the PhD degree.
Language Requirements	No language requirements. Coursework in a foreign language may be required if necessary for completing research activities.
Graduate School Breadth Requirement	All doctoral students are required to complete a doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate. Refer to the Graduate School: Breadth Requirement in Doctoral Training policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200/).

REQUIRED COURSES

Courses numbered 300-600 should be taken sparingly and must be approved by the student's advisor. The minimum credits required include dissertator credits.

Code	Title	Credits
Core Required Courses		
Students must complete the following courses.		
L I S 910	Smr-Research Design & Methodology for Library & Information Studies	3
L I S 925	Professional Writing and Reading (PWR) Seminar [1]	6
Seminars		
Students must take a minimum of 6 credits from the list below:		6
L I S 931	Seminar in Information Policy, Management and Institutions	
L I S 940	Seminar in Information Use and Users in Context	
L I S 950	Seminar in LIS Foundations: Histories, Philosophies and Debates	
L I S 975	Seminar in Information Organization and Access	
Breadth Requirements		
Students must complete 12 credits of breadth requirements, with a minimum of 3 credits in each of 4 breadth areas.		
Breadth Area 1: Introductory Research Design, Thinking, Methods		3
COM ARTS 762	Communication Research Methods	
JOURN 658	Communication Research Methods	
Breadth Area 2: Statistics/Numerical Literacy		3
L I S/ COM ARTS 705	Introductory Analytics for Decision Making	

STAT 371	Introductory Applied Statistics for the Life Sciences	
SOC/ C&E SOC 360	Statistics for Sociologists I	
SOC 362	Statistics for Sociologists III	
ED PSYCH 760	Statistical Methods Applied to Education I	
ED PSYCH 761	Statistical Methods Applied to Education II	
Breadth Area 3: Working with Digital Data		*3*
COMP SCI 319	Data Science Programming I for Research	
SOC/ C&E SOC 365	Data Management for Social Science Research	
L I S 768	Digital Humanities Analytics	
ELPA 823	Data Management for Education Policy Analysis	
ED PSYCH 551	Quantitative Ethnography	
STAT 303	R for Statistics I	
STAT 304	R for Statistics II	
STAT 305	R for Statistics III	
Breadth Area 4: Pedagogy and Teaching		*3*
L I S 639	Pedagogical Theory and Practice for Information Professionals	
CURRIC 818	Teaching Controversial Issues	
CURRIC 844	Culturally Relevant Pedagogy	
Specialization		**12**

Students must complete a minimum of 12 credits in their area of specialization. Courses must be relevant to the student's program of study but may be internal or external to the Information School. Courses should be chosen in consultation with their advisor or the PhD program chair and must meet all Graduate School requirements.

Graduate School Breadth		**12**

The minor or certificate requires that students take a minimum of 12 credits outside of the Information School. Courses must meet Graduate School breadth requirements. The Option A minor requires a minimum of 9 credits; the Option B, 12 credits. Students interested in an Option A minor should initiate contact and seek approval from the minor department. Students electing the Option A minor must complete an additional 3 credits of course work outside of the department in order to satisfy the minor requirement.

Total Credits		**51**

[1] Students must take this 1 credit seminar six times before becoming a dissertator. The seminar provides foundational knowledge for becoming a researcher.

Students who have previously completed the Library and Information Studies MA or Information MS

Students should work with the PhD program advisor to determine which courses taken as a master's student fulfill requirements for the Information School PhD or would be appropriate electives for the PhD. Not all coursework will be approved. Information School master's degree graduates who are accepted into the Information School

PhD program may apply to count up to 10 qualified credits from their Information School master's degree toward their PhD. Qualified courses include Information School PhD seminars (numbered 900), other courses that fulfill PhD program requirements, or approved electives.

Students who have previously completed another UW–Madison graduate program

Students should work with the PhD program advisor to determine which courses taken as a master's student fulfill requirements for the Information School PhD or would be appropriate electives for the PhD. Not all coursework will be approved.

Concurrent pursuit of an Information School PhD and an Information School master's degree

Students admitted to the PhD program who wish to obtain both an Information School master's degree and an Information School PhD should be assigned both a master's advisor as well as consulting with the PhD program chair. Depending on the student's individual program of study and careful planning, it is expected that students will use some approved credits to fulfill both degree requirements. Students should expect to complete more than the minimum 51 credits in order to fulfill the requirements of both degrees.

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/) serve as the official document of record for Graduate School academic and administrative policies and procedures and are updated continuously. Note some policies redirect to entries in the official UW-Madison Policy Library (https://policy.wisc.edu/). Programs may set more stringent policies than the Graduate School. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR–SPECIFIC POLICIES
PRIOR COURSEWORK
Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

Students may transfer up to 9 credits of approved 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

A student may request that the Information School PhD program consider up to seven credits numbered 300 or above of undergraduate work completed at UW–Madison towards fulfillment of minimum degree and minor credit requirements. Credits earned at other institutions are not permitted.

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

Students are allowed to count up to 9 approved credits of coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW–Madison University Special

student. Coursework earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

PROBATION

Students who fail to meet any of the assessment criteria as described in the Doctoral Program Student Handbook will receive a letter of warning from the PhD program director placing them on probationary status. They will have one additional semester (not including summer) to change their status. If they do not successfully change their status, they will be asked to leave the program. If students do not expect to successfully change their status within the probationary semester, they can request that the PhD committee grant a probation extension; however, an extension will be granted only if the student can prove likelihood of success in the upcoming semester. The student should send a letter asking for an extension and providing evidence of likelihood of success to the PhD program director.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

The Information School PhD Committee serves as the Progress Evaluation Committee for doctoral students. Upon admission, the PhD committee chair serves as the default advisor for all students. At any point, the student may switch to a major professor/advisor based on similarities in research interests.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

8 to 12 credits in a regular semester is considered full time at the graduate level. Course load maximums are 12 credits in a regular semester, 8 credits in the summer term and 3 credits in the intersession.

TIME LIMITS

Completion of the degree should be within a three- to four-year period beyond earning the master's degree.

A candidate for a doctoral degree who fails to take the final oral examination and deposit the dissertation within five years after passing their program portfolio and statement of intent may be required to take additional coursework, redefend their program portfolio and statement of intent, 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://employeedisabilities.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)

L&S POLICY FOR GRADUATE STUDENT ACADEMIC APPEALS

Graduate students have the right to appeal an academic decision related to an L&S graduate program if the student believes that the decision is inconsistent with published policy.

Academic decisions that may be appealed include:

- Dismissal from the graduate program
- Failure to pass a qualifying or preliminary examination
- Failure to achieve satisfactory academic progress
- Academic disciplinary action related to failure to meet professional conduct standards

Issues such as the following cannot be appealed using this process:

- A faculty member declining to serve as a graduate student's advisor.
- Decisions regarding the student's disciplinary knowledge, evaluation of the quality of work, or similar judgements. These are the domain of the department faculty.
- Course grades. These can be appealed instead using the L&S Policy for Grade Appeal (https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/22258/).
- Incidents of bias or hate, hostile and intimidating behavior (https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/), or discrimination (Title IX (https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/), Office of Compliance (https://compliance.wisc.edu/eo-complaint/formal-investigations/)). Direct these to the linked campus offices appropriate for the incident(s).

Appeal Process for Graduate Students

A graduate student wishing to appeal an academic decision must follow the process in the order listed below. Note time limits within each step.

1. The student should first seek informal resolution, if possible, by discussing the concern with their academic advisor, the department's Director of Graduate Studies, and/or the department chair.
2. If the program has an appeal policy listed in their graduate program handbook, the student should follow the policy as written, including adhering to any indicated deadlines. In the absence of a specific departmental process, the chair or designee will be the reviewer and decision maker, and the student should submit a written appeal to the chair within 15 business days of the academic decision. The chair or designee will notify the student in writing of their decision.
3. If the departmental process upholds the original decision, the graduate student may next initiate an appeal to L&S. To do so, the

student must submit a written appeal to the L&S Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Academic Affairs within 15 business days of notification of the department's decision.

    a. To the fullest extent possible, the written appeal should include, in a single document: a clear and concise statement of the academic decision being appealed, any relevant background on what led to the decision, the specific policies involved, the relief sought, any relevant documentation related to the departmental appeal, and the names and titles of any individuals contributing to or involved in the decision.

    b. The Assistant Dean will work with the Academic Associate Dean of the appropriate division to consider the appeal. They may seek additional information and/or meetings related to the case.

    c. The Assistant Dean and Academic Associate Dean will provide a written decision within 20 business days.

4. If L&S upholds the original decision, the graduate student may appeal to the Graduate School. More information can be found on their website: Grievances and Appeals (https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/) (see: Graduate School Appeal Process).

OTHER

A complete set of Information School PhD program policies can be found in the PhD program planning guide on the iSchool PhD program website. (https://ischool.wisc.edu/programs/phd-program/)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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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. Add to existing bodies of theory, scholarship, or scientific knowledge through critique, testing or extension in scholarly output.
2. Demonstrate mastery of statistical, computational, and digital data collection and analysis methodologies.
3. Employ scholarly methodologies and tools appropriate to areas of study to inform research.
4. Demonstrate scholarly communication skills both orally and in writing.
5. Engage in service contributions as appropriate to profession and field of study.
6. Demonstrate teaching skills and experience including cultural competency training.