

Computer Science PhD Student Check List

Preliminary Examinations: to be completed by the end of the second regular term of study (regular terms are fall & spring)

- At least 2 courses at the 2100 - 2899 level with a grade of A- or higher
- At least 2 courses at the 2100 - 2899 level with a grade of B or higher

At least 1 of the 4 courses counted for the preliminary examination must also be a required foundation area course. Students are not permitted to repeat a class that they have passed (i.e., earned B or better) in order to improve the grade (i.e., to A or A-). Regular terms include the fall and spring and do not include the summer term.

Foundation Course Requirement: to be completed by the end of the fourth regular term

Four courses, one from each of the following foundation areas: Architecture and compilers (CS2410 or CS 2210), Operating Systems and Networks (CS2510 or CS2520), Artificial Intelligence and Database Systems (CS2710 or CS2550), and Theory and Algorithms (CS2110 or CS2150)

Must take CS 2001(first fall term) and CS 2002(first spring term) after taking 2001 and 2002 student must be enrolled in CS 2003 every regular term until receiving a satisfactory grade of S for 4 regular terms; this course is optional after that.

Permanent advisor: to be selected by the end of the fourth regular term to ensure continuing funding

Comprehensive Examination: within 4 calendar years of admission

- [] Form a committee of three Computer Science Faculty Members, one being your Major Advisor
- [] Submit a Comps Committee Member Approval Form for approval from CS Chair (4 weeks in advance)
- [] Prepare your presentation summarizing the state-of-the-art research in the three areas you chose
- [] Get an Exam Card from graduate office before the exam
- [] Exam Card must be signed by all committee members, then returned to graduate office

Dissertation Proposal: within 5 years after full status admission

- [] Form a committee of four faculty members, three from the Computer Science Graduate Faculty (one is your research advisor) and one outside member
- [] Submit a PhD Committee Member Approval Form for approval from the Computer Science Chair
- [] Return the above form to the Graduate Office at least 4 weeks before your Proposal Defense. NOTE: If your outside committee member is not a Pitt graduate faculty, attach their CV and a letter from your advisor stating the contributions of the outside committee member (e.g., they are working with you on research, they are one of the best in the field you are interested in). Ensure the outside member has worked with graduate students, as the Dean's office has to approve this also
- [] At most one committee member can be absent from your Proposal Defense, this must be approved by the Graduate Dean's Office at least two weeks prior to your defense. You will need a letter explaining why the committee member will not be attending, that s/he will be present via phone or other electronic means, and that s/he will be present during the Dissertation Defense. (NOTE: a committee member absent at the proposal **must** be present during the Dissertation Defense.)
- [] Prepare an announcement about the proposal (see example in <http://www.cs.pitt.edu/grad/announcement.pdf>. E-mail this to graduate secretary (gradsec@pitt.edu) at least three weeks before your Proposal Defense
- [] Ensure your committee members receive a copy of your proposal at least two weeks in advance
- [] Get an Application for Admission to Candidacy for Doctoral Degree Form online a few days prior to your Proposal Defense. Return the form signed by all committee members to the Graduate Office after your defense

Dissertation Defense: the time between the Dissertaion Proposal and the Defense has to be at least 8 months.

- [] Apply for graduation at the Graduate Dean's Office the first month in the term you plan to defend and graduate
- [] At most one Committee Member can be absent and must be approved by the Graduate Dean's Office at least two weeks in advance. Prepare a letter stating why the committee member cannot be present (member can't be absent twice)
- [] Any changes the in committee membership must be approved at least two weeks in advance.
- [] Prepare an announcement about the defense (see example in <http://www.cs.pitt.edu/grad/announcement.pdf>. E-mail this to graduate secretary (gradsec@pitt.edu) at least three weeks before your Dissertation Defense
- [] Ensure your committee members receive a copy of your dissertation at least two weeks in advance
- [] Get a card from the graduate office a few days before your Dissertation Defense. Return the card signed by all committee members to the Graduate Office after your defense
- [] Make sure to take your ETD papers with you to the defense for any signatures you need.