

# PREPARATION FOR DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

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The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D., PhD, or D.Phil.) degree is a postgraduate doctoral degree awarded primarily by universities and medical schools in fields other than medicine, law, and theology. Doctoral students take advanced coursework, engage in original scholarly research, and complete a final dissertation that demonstrates their intellectual contribution to their field. Someone who completes all requirements for the Ph.D. gains the right to be called “Doctor.”

Undergraduates interested in a Ph.D. should investigate the entry and application requirements for doctoral programs of interest and plan ahead. Some fields require a Master’s degree but others do not. Some Ph.D. programs may desire undergraduate courses that are not required for your UTSA degree but can be integrated into your degree plan. Undergraduate research experience is highly desirable and may be required by prestigious Ph.D. programs. Most programs require a standardized test such as the general GRE® (Graduate Record Exam), which should be taken early enough that results are available before application deadlines, which are typically in late fall or early spring.

Students interested in doctoral training should consult with their discipline-specific academic advisor and UTSA research faculty in their field for further guidance. For additional general information about preparing for doctoral training or becoming involved in research as an undergraduate, please consult the websites of the UTSA Graduate School (<http://graduateschool.utsa.edu>) or Office of Undergraduate Research (<http://research.utsa.edu/academic-research/undergraduate/>).