GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK
# GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

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OVERVIEW
For a brief program overview, visit our graduate website at:
http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/graduate/index.html

FINANCIAL AID and AWARDS
The department primarily offers financial aid in the form of Teaching Assistantships and Graduate Part-Time Instructorships. These appointments come with a stipend, partial to full tuition remission and a subsidy for student health insurance. The department is also able to offer appointments for research assistants, and, for those who qualify through financial aid, graduate work-study appointments. In order to qualify, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA, http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/) annually.

Funding decisions for teaching appointments are based on a tiered ranking system. See the “Ranking System for Funding” section, below. Students in years 1-5 who have a cumulative GPA of 3.50 or higher are guaranteed full funding (50%) as long as they make normal progress through the program. This guarantee is contingent on successful fulfillment of teaching responsibilities and maintenance of appropriate standards of professional conduct.

To be considered for any appointment, students must apply. The department will provide application information and instructions via email semester by semester.

In addition to the funding sources noted above, the department has endowments from which they are able to draw to make annual awards. These awards are determined based on stipulations made by grantors of the funds but are mostly based on academic, teaching and research excellence. Awards are determined each Spring and announced at the department’s Spring commencement ceremony. Monetary awards are credited to awardees’ student accounts at the start of the subsequent Fall term.

The graduate school provides fellowship funding to the department each year. Most of these funds are given to incoming graduate students to assist them with relocation and other costs associated with moving to and settling in Boulder. Remaining funds, if any, are awarded to students in the program prior to the end of the Spring term.

The graduate school and the department offer funding to help with travel expenses for students presenting papers. To apply to the graduate school for these funds, visit this graduate school link: http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/funding/student.html. For department travel funds, contact Maria Oliveras, maria.oliveras@colorado.edu.
For other graduate school funding sources, visit:
http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/funding/student.html.

Information about additional sources of funding will be sent (via email) from the
Graduate School, the Graduate Program Coordinator, faculty and/or staff.

**RANKING SYSTEM FOR FUNDING**

Funding decisions for teaching appointments are based on a tiered ranking system using
cumulative grade point average, timely completion of program milestones and
cumulative teaching evaluation averages (FCQs), etc.

**Milestone Expectations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By end of year</th>
<th>Students are expected to have</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>taken and passed all required coursework and qualify for all preliminary exams in August.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>taken and passed all three preliminary exams and completed advanced theory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>completed all required coursework and passed the oral comprehensive exam by May 15.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>completed and passed the proposal defense by May 15.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>defended and graduated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Timing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Going Into</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1st year   | **Tier 1**: All admitted applicants. (International applicants must have a TOEFL speaking score of at least 24.)
|            | **Tier 2**: n/a |
|            | **Tier 3**: n/a |
|            | **Tier 4**: Admitted International applicants with speaking scores of <24. |
| 2nd year   | **Tier 1**: Students with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 who passed all required first year coursework, qualify to take all three preliminary exams in August, have an overall FCQ average of “4” or more at the level they qualify to teach (TA/GPTI) and (if international) have a “clear” rating for English.
|            | **Tier 2**: All other students not in Tier 1, except those without a “clear” rating for English.
|            | **Tier 3**: n/a |
|            | **Tier 4**: Students without a “clear” rating for English. |
| 3rd year   | **Tier 1**: Students with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0, who passed all three preliminary exams and advanced theory, have an overall FCQ... |
## Going Into

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>Students with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0, who passed their oral comprehensive exam by Spring term of their 3rd year, have an overall FCQ average of “4” or more, and (if international) have a “clear” rating for English intelligibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>All other students not in Tier 1, except those with an FCQ average of &lt;4 or without a “clear” rating for English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 4</td>
<td>Students with an FCQ average of &lt;4; students without a “clear” rating for English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4th year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>Students with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0, who passed their oral comprehensive exam by Spring term of their 3rd year, have an overall FCQ average of “4” or more, and (if international) have a “clear” rating for English intelligibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>All other students not in Tier 1, except those with an FCQ average of &lt;4 or without a “clear” rating for English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 4</td>
<td>Students with an FCQ average of &lt;4; students without a “clear” rating for English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5th year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>(Assumes GPA of at least 3.0.) Students who passed their proposal defense by May 15 of their 4th year, have an overall FCQ average of “4” or more, and (if international) have a “clear” rating for English intelligibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>All other students not in Tier 1, except those with an FCQ average of &lt;4 or without a “clear” rating for English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 4</td>
<td>Students with an FCQ average of &lt;4; students without a “clear” rating for English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6th year +

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>n/a*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>(Assumes GPA of at least 3.0.) Students who have passed their proposal defense, have an overall FCQ average of “4” or more and (if international) have a “clear” rating for English intelligibility.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Note: any student in year 6+ who does not fit into Tier 3 or higher won’t be considered for funding.]

*One exception: when a GPTI appointment opens up at the last minute before the start of a semester, a 6th+ year student with experience teaching the course (and at least average FCQs) may be appointed to step in if there are no other candidates in years 3-5 with reasonable qualifications to teach the course on such short notice.

All students in Tier 1 will receive funding before any students in Tier 2. All students in Tier 2 will receive funding before any students in Tier 3. Students in Tier 3 will be funded before those in Tier 4.
Ranking Within Tiers
Within tiers, students are first ranked based on GPA. Assignments to specific positions will, however, be at the discretion of the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies and the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies. They may take into consideration additional factors including, but not limited to: FCQ averages, overall teaching experience, and course-specific teaching experience.

Additional Notes
Students who do not complete a milestone by the Spring (May 15) deadline for Fall funding decisions, but complete their milestone by September 30, may qualify for Tier 1 for the purpose of funding decisions for the following Spring.

Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.50 or higher are not guaranteed full funding (or full funding at the highest level) if they have not met expected milestones.

Students who fall below an overall FCQ average of 4.0 as a GPTI, but who maintain an average above 4.0 as a TA, will not have their tier placement affected. Their performance as a GPTI will, however, be taken into account when determining whether they receive a GPTI or a TA appointment.

Students who miss a milestone deadline due to extenuating circumstances (generally limited to circumstances severely affecting the health and well-being of the student or their immediate family) must provide a written explanation of these circumstances to the director of graduate studies by May 15th. The director of graduate studies has the discretion to take this information into account when determining the student’s tier placement for the following year.

For the purpose of ranking, but having no effect on the official transcript, the department will omit a single failing grade (below a B-) from the GPA calculation if the student has retaken and passed the course. No more than one failing grade may be omitted from the calculation.

In addition to these stated ranking criteria, teaching appointments may be affected by displays of unprofessional behavior on the part of the student, whether in their role as graduate student, TA or GPTI. This includes, but is not limited to, violations of the university discrimination and harassment policy or honor code.

Because the department offers relatively fewer courses in Summer the associate chairs are careful to appoint accomplished instructors. Therefore, overall FCQ averages weigh more heavily.
Starting at the top – after ranking by tier and cumulative GPA – appointments are made based on the following criteria:

For a GPTI appointment:
1. Prior experience teaching the course with FCQ>=5.
2. Prior experience teaching the course with FCQ<5 or current experience teaching the course this Spring with FCQ>=5 in prior courses. It's a judgement call if there are competing candidates in each of these categories.
3. Prior experience teaching other courses with FCQ>=5.
4. Prior experience teaching other courses with FCQ<5.
5. No prior GPTI experience.

For a TA appointment:
1. Prior experience as a TA for the course with FCQ>=5.
2. Prior experience as a TA with FCQ<5 or current experience as a TA for the course this Spring with FCQ>=5 in prior courses. It’s a judgement call if there are competing candidates in each of these categories.
3. Prior experience as a TA for other courses with FCQ>=5.
4. Prior experience as a TA for other courses with FCQ<5.
5. No prior TA experience.

**MATH CAMP (ECON 7800)**
Math Camp is an intensive, fifteen-day math review offered in August, beginning the first weekday of August. All incoming students are required to take this course to ensure sufficient math skills for success in the program. Students must attain a grade of B- or better on the final exam. With permission, one re-take is allowed and must be passed within two weeks of the final exam.

Any student expecting to take a first-year graduate level course must attend and pass Math Camp. All students entering Math Camp must be prequalified to attend. Students admitted to the ECON PhD program are automatically prequalified and enrolled. No other action is necessary on their part. Any student that is not in the ECON PhD program must go through a prequalification process. These potential enrollees should contact the ECON Graduate Program Coordinator for assistance in completing the qualifying process.

**TEACHING ASSISTANT (TA)**
The predominant form of student funding in the program comes from teaching appointments, either as a teaching assistant (TA) or as a graduate part-time instructor
(GPTI). Until a student has attained a masters’ degree (or equivalent) in the program, teaching appointments are limited to teaching assistantships. A teaching assistant assists an instructor with an undergraduate economics course. Duties include conducting recitation sections, consulting with students, and assisting the course instructor with class preparation and grading.

Some first-year TA appointments are awarded for the Academic Year but most TA appointments are for one semester only. All students are eligible to apply for open teaching positions each semester if they don’t have an academic year appointment. TA positions are awarded based on achievement of expected milestones (TIER), cumulative grade point average (CGPA), and student instructor ratings (FCQs). For international students, English intelligibility may also weigh in on appointment decisions. Adequate intelligibility and comprehension are expected. International students may be required to undergo English speaking assessments and training until adequate speaking skills are achieved.

Most students who apply for appointments will be awarded positions in Fall and Spring terms as long as they are performing satisfactorily (3.0 or greater GPA and Tier 1 placement). Preference is given to students in years 1-5. Summer term appointments are more competitive and may rely more heavily on overall FCQ averages since fewer courses are offered.

Compensation for Teaching Assistantships depends upon the level of the appointment. The Department of Economics generally offers three levels of TA appointments: 25%, 33% and 50%. All levels carry a stipend plus all or partial tuition remission and a subsidy for student health insurance.

A 25% teaching assistant attends all lectures for the related course, usually teaches two recitations and works about 10 hours per week, including office hours. This position carries tuition remission of 5 credits. The stipend for this position is determined annually and published in Summer, prior to the start of the Academic Year.

A 33% teaching assistant attends all lectures for the related course, usually teaches three recitations and works about 13 hours per week, including office hours. This position carries tuition remission of 6 credits. The stipend for this position is determined annually and published in Summer, prior to the start of the Academic Year.

A 50% teaching assistant attends all lectures for the related course, usually teaches four recitations and works about 20 hours per week, including office hours. This position carries full tuition remission (9-18 credits). The stipend for this position is determined annually and published in Summer, prior to the start of the Academic Year.
Graduate students are not allowed to work more than 20 hours per week without permission from the dean of the Graduate School. Working more than 20 hours per week may negatively impact academic progress. Due to federal visa regulations, international students are not allowed to work more than 20 hours per week under any circumstances while enrolled in classes. Questions about this policy should be directed to International Student Scholar Services (ISSS).

Stipends for Fall term are paid monthly, for 4 months, beginning at the end of September and ending at the end of December. Stipends for Spring term are paid monthly, for 5 months, beginning at the end of January and ending at the end of May. Overall, stipend pay for Fall and Spring terms of each academic year are the same but *monthly* pay varies between Fall and Spring terms of the same academic year since the total number of months of pay varies. (i.e. *monthly* pay for Fall term is greater than monthly pay for Spring term, though the overall amount of pay for each term is the same.)

To ensure that undergraduate students are receiving consistent information, all Teaching Assistants are expected to attend all lectures given by the instructor they are assisting. Permission from the Associate Chair of Undergraduate Studies must be obtained for any TA not attending lectures. Teaching Assistants must attend all of their scheduled recitations. If they cannot attend recitations, they must inform the course instructor, the Lead Graduate Part-Time Instructor, the Associate Chair of Graduate Studies and, if no replacement is available, students in the section – as far in advance of their absence as possible.

Students are eligible to become a graduate part-time instructor (GPTI) when they have attained a masters’ degree or equivalent (as described in the “Graduate Part-Time Instructor” section, below).

**GRADUATE TEACHER TRAINING**

The week before Fall classes begin, the Graduate Teacher Program (GTP, [http://gtp.colorado.edu/](http://gtp.colorado.edu/)) holds a series of graduate teacher training seminars in their Fall Intensive training program. The Lead Graduate Instructor, an ECON graduate student who will work with new graduate students to prepare them for teaching appointments, will provide a schedule of required sessions for all new TAs and GPTIs. All students are required to undergo teacher training because most will teach for the department at some point – if not all the way through the program. Students are encouraged to attend training sessions beyond what is required.
International students are highly encouraged to attend as many seminars in the series as possible, particularly those that are geared toward adjusting to teaching methods that might be different in the U.S. from those in their home country.

In addition to GTP training, the department’s Lead Graduate Instructor will provide training and assistance to new and continuing TAs and new graduate instructors (GPTIs) in the department and will coordinate ongoing seminars for graduate teacher certification training. Students may use the department teaching seminars as credit toward a graduate teaching certificate. Contact the GTP for more information about certificate requirements.

The department tracks attendance for the graduate teacher training seminars offered in the department. Attendance at these seminars is believed to help strengthen students’ teaching skills. As such, training hours are sometimes used as an additional tool in determining fund ranking.

Students may earn a certificate in college teaching from the GTP by earning 20 hours of training through GTP sessions and 20 hours of training through ECON sessions. For more information, go to: http://www.colorado.edu/gtp/certification-college-teaching/.

ENGLISH INTELLIGIBILITY
International students are expected to attain an acceptable level of English intelligibility and comprehension to help ensure success in academics and teaching. Acceptable English intelligibility is taken into account when decisions are made about admission to the program and about teaching appointments. As such, international applicants are required to submit TOEFL overall and speaking scores that must meet certain standards and, once admitted, incoming international students may be required to undergo an English assessment before they begin teaching. These assessments are arranged by the department. After completing the assessment, some students may be required to complete accent reduction training. The department is typically able to obtain scholarships to cover the cost of this training.

The department uses the speaking section of the TOEFL exam as an indicator of English intelligibility. TOEFL speaking scores of at least 23 are required for admission. A TOEFL speaking score of at least 24 is required for funding.

There are several resources in Boulder for assistance with improving English skills. UCB’s International English Center (IEC), http://iec.colorado.edu/about offers accent reduction, writing and speech classes. Clear Talk Mastery, http://www.cleartalkmastery.com offers assistance with pronunciation and accent reduction. The English as a Second Language (ESL)/Multilingual Program at UCB’s
Graduate Student Handbook

Student Academic Services Center (303.492.1405) offers pronunciation workshops. The Boulder Public Library (303.441.4941) has a free conversation group. The Graduate Program Coordinator will inform students of additional resources for English training as they arise.

English intelligibility is important when considering the quality of education provided to UCB’s undergraduate students but International students should also consider that continuing to improve their English skills will help them better understand and communicate with faculty and peers as well as to better prepare them for job market placement in an environment where advanced skill in English is expected.

AFTER HOURS ECON BUILDING ACCESS
For after-hours access to the ECON building (between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. weekdays and all day on weekends and holidays), students must have their BuffOne card activated by the ECON front office. Take your BuffOne card to Melissa Piper in ECON 212 or contact her for activation, questions or changes: melissa.piper@colorado.edu.

To use your BuffOne card to enter the building after hours, swipe it (slowly) in the card reader on the box located outside the southwest entrance to the building. (There is another card reader at the handicap entrance on the northeast side of the building.) Once the card has been read successfully, a green light will appear on the box, indicating the door is unlocked.

COMPUTER LAB (ECON 6) ACCESS
Graduate students in the Department of Economics have their own computer lab, located in the basement of the ECON building, in ECON 6. In order to enter the lab, students must have their BuffOne card activated by the ECON front office. Take your BuffOne card to Melissa Piper in ECON 212 or contact her for activation, questions or changes: melissa.piper@colorado.edu.

To use your BuffOne card to enter the lab, swipe it (slowly) in the card reader on the box located outside the door of ECON 6. Once the card has been read successfully, a green light will appear on the box and the door, indicating the door is unlocked.

GRADUATE CONFERENCE ROOM (218) CALENDAR
The graduate conference room (218) is used mainly for students in the graduate program (oral comprehensive exams, defense proposals, final defense, etc.) but may also be used, if available, for makeup exams, exams for special needs students, etc. To use the room for these purposes, graduate students must first have a room reservation, preferably as far
in advance as possible. To make a reservation, go to the graduate conference room online
calendar:
http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/graduate/econ218calendar.html?view=monthview&
calid=holcombp:GradConfRoom&tzid=America/Denver&security=1 to check for
availability of the date/time needed. This calendar may also be accessed through a link
(under “Additional Resources”) on the graduate webpage:
http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/graduate/index.html.

Anyone may view the calendar but only the graduate program coordinator is able to make
changes. So, once the date and time of your event are determined, send an email to
patricia.holcomb@colorado.edu with the following information:
1) Day/Date
2) Total number of students (no more than 6)
3) The purpose of your event
4) Start/End time of your event

Patricia will insert your event in the calendar and send you a confirmation email. Your
reservation is not guaranteed until you receive this confirmation. Reservations are made
on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you need room for more than 6, contact Joy Oge,
joy.oge@colorado.edu.

GRADUATE PROGRAM CALENDAR
The graduate program calendar shows important dates, deadlines and events for ECON
graduate students, including Math Camp, preliminary exams, final defense deadlines,
commencement, etc.

To access the program calendar, go to the link provided on the department webpage or
use this link:
http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/graduate/gradprogramcalendar.html?view=monthvi
ew&calid=holcombp:GradProgram&tzid=America/Denver&security=1.

E-MAIL LISTSERVES
Students may use graduate email list distributions, in moderation, to communicate with
select groups:
- econ-ugse@colorado.edu (all ECON graduate students)
- Econ-GPTI_TA@colorado.edu (all current ECON GPTIs and TAs)
- Econ-women@colorado.edu (all female grad students and female faculty)
- Econ-placement@colorado.edu (all ECON grad students currently on the job
  market plus the current faculty chair of the placement committee)
Contact Patricia Holcomb if you would like to communicate by email with a select demographic within the ECON graduate student population.

**FIRST-YEAR COURSEWORK**
First-year coursework consists of three courses (9 credits) in the Fall (Micro 7010, Macro 7020 and Statistics 7818) and three courses (9 credits) in the Spring (Micro 7030, Macro 7040 and Econometrics 7828). Grades of B- or better must be attained in all of these courses. Any course with a grade of less than B- must be repeated in year two. Preliminary examinations held in August following year one will be based on material covered in first-year theory coursework. Students may not take preliminary exams relating to courses where grades earned were less than B- until those courses have been repeated with an outcome of B- or higher.

Students who transfer micro, macro or econometric theory credit into the program should work with the appropriate faculty member(s) to ensure adequate review for success with related preliminary exams.

**GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) REQUIREMENT**
University of Colorado Graduate School policy states that a student must have at least a 3.0 overall GPA to remain in the program or to receive a graduate degree. When a student’s cumulative GPA falls below 3.00, he/she will be placed on academic probation. The student has two semesters in which to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.00 or above.

If the student’s cumulative GPA is at or below 2.5 a dean’s administrative stop is placed on the student’s record and the student may be withdrawn from coursework for upcoming semesters. However, if there are extenuating circumstances, the department chair/program director may petition the Dean of the Graduate School showing compelling reasons for the student to be granted a chance to continue.

For more detailed information about expectations for students placed on academic probation, see Section 5 (p. 15) of the Graduate School Rules handbook: [http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/policies/_docs/GraduateSchoolRules.pdf](http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/policies/_docs/GraduateSchoolRules.pdf). The Department of Economics will not award a graduate degree unless a student has an overall GPA of at least 3.0 on coursework applied towards the degree.

**PRELIMINARY EXAMS**
Three written preliminary examinations – in microeconomics, macroeconomics and econometrics must be taken in August following the successful completion of related core courses in the first year. These exams are generally held two weeks prior to the first week of Fall term classes.
Past exams in each subject area are available for review online. Please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator for access. Since review of these exams can be quite time consuming, it is suggested you begin to prepare as far in advance of the exams as possible. If you have difficulty understanding any of the practice test questions, you are strongly urged to consult with the appropriate faculty member for assistance.

Students who have not performed satisfactorily (a grade of less than B-) in any of the core courses are ineligible to take the preliminary examination in that subject area until they have retaken the course and attained a grade of B- or better. Students retaking courses must do so in the year following their first attempt and must attempt the relevant preliminary examination in the first scheduled examination period after passing both relevant courses.

A preliminary examination attempted and failed must be retaken and passed in the next scheduled examination period. Exams are held annually in August and January. The January round is typically held one week prior to the first week of Spring term classes. Students are strongly urged to consult with the appropriate faculty member for assistance well in advance of their second attempt to help ensure success. A second failure will result in dismissal from the program, subject to appeal before the Graduate Curriculum Review Committee (GCRC), under extraordinary circumstances. In no case are attempts beyond the third granted.

A student may petition the Graduate Curriculum Committee, ex ante, to be excused from taking a preliminary examination due to extenuating circumstances. If the petition is granted, the student may instead take the examination the next time offered without harm.

The petition must contain a letter, written by the petitioning student, addressed to the Graduate Curriculum Committee that describes the extenuating circumstance(s). Documentation of such circumstance(s) is highly desirable and will influence the Committee's decision.

Extenuating circumstances are factors that are outside of a student’s control that may affect a student’s performance. These circumstances must be unforeseen or not manageable by short-term arrangements. Such circumstances could involve illness, a loss or an incident that could have adversely impacted a student's performance on the preliminary exam.

In the case of extenuating circumstances that occur very close to the time of the preliminary exam, which do not allow for the petition to be made and responded to before the administration of the preliminary exam, students are allowed to:
a) submit their petition as an *ex ante* petition, not subject to the restrictions for *ex post facto* petitions listed below  
b) take the prelim while awaiting the committee ruling, with no effect on the ruling of the committee, and  
c) retain a passing grade on the prelim taken (if earned) even if the committee later excuses the student from the exam.  
If the student does not take the exam and the committee does not excuse their absence, this counts as a failure of the exam. 

Guidelines for petitioning the Graduate Curriculum Committee *ex post facto* for a third Preliminary Examination:  
a) A student must have passed two of the three required preliminary examinations  
b) A student must have passed all first year courses (without re-take) or have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 on all economics graduate courses at the time of the petition (department policy allows a single re-take grade to be substituted for one failing grade for the purpose of calculating this GPA).  
c) A student must provide a petition letter as described above. 

Students must pass all preliminary examinations within two-and-one-half (2½) years of beginning the PhD program. 

Students must pass all three preliminary exams if they plan to continue into the doctoral phase of the program. If they elect to withdraw from the program with a masters’ degree, they must have completed all required coursework (as described in the “Masters Degree” section, below), passed at least two of three preliminary exams and have a GPA of at least 3.0. 

**SECOND-YEAR COURSEWORK**  
Second-year coursework consists of Advanced Economic Theory (7050) in the Fall term and five economics field course electives (two in the Fall and three in the Spring), unless a first-year course or courses must be repeated. Credit toward degree requirements for any graduate field course outside of economics must be approved by the Associate Chair of Graduate Studies and reported to the Graduate Program Coordinator. 

**INDEPENDENT STUDY**  
Independent study is an opportunity for students to work under individual direction with a faculty member on a topic of mutual interest in economics. Independent study is reserved for advanced specialties or for intermediate study in areas in which the
Department does not normally offer course credit. At minimum, seventy-five hours of time is required for each course (25 hours per credit). Further:

1. **Graduate independent study in economics is only allowed in extraordinary circumstances.**
2. Faculty members are not obligated to sponsor students for independent study but may do so as their workload permits.
3. Graduate independent study in economics is generally reserved for situations in which a student must develop a skill set for dissertation research (e.g. calibration) that is not normally taught in the graduate curriculum and requires considerable time and faculty input beyond what is typically involved in dissertation research and advising.
4. Graduate independent study in economics should not be used for a student to read a literature related to their dissertation research. It is expected that all students will read a wide literature while conducting dissertation research in addition to their seven elective field courses. Reading the literature for one's dissertation research should not replace one of the seven elective field courses.
5. Graduate independent study should not be pursued, and will not be granted, simply because a student is not interested in the field course offerings in a particular semester.

To be eligible for independent study, ECON graduate students must have earned at least twelve (12) ECON graduate credit hours, must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0, and cannot have more than three (3) previous hours of graduate independent study credit.

The following rules govern the appropriateness of certain independent study experiences.

1. Internship-type experiences are prohibited.
2. Work in a University Department is prohibited.
3. Substitute for core coursework is prohibited.
4. Extra work performed in association with a regular class is prohibited.

The maximum number of credit graduate students may take in independent study is six (6) hours. No more (and no less) than three (3) credit hours are allowed in any one semester.

Students must follow this procedure to enroll in independent study coursework:

1. Obtain a Graduate Independent Study Contract (see "Contract" section, below).
2. The Contract should be reviewed and discussed between you and your faculty sponsor.
3. After reviewing the contract, you and your faculty sponsor must reach an agreement about a course plan.
4. Take the contract to the Graduate Program Coordinator, who will verify eligibility (see "Eligibility" section, above, and at bottom of page 1 of the contract).
5. Complete the Graduate Independent Study Contract, attaching a detailed course plan.
6. Both you and your faculty sponsor must agree to the course plan, sign the contract, and initial where indicated under section 1 on page 3.
7. After you and your faculty sponsor have signed the contract, you must obtain approval from the associate chair of graduate studies.
8. Once all signatures have been obtained, take the form to the Graduate Program Coordinator who will set up the course and get you enrolled.
9. At the end of the semester, your faculty sponsor will submit a grade based on expectations outlined in the course plan.

**Independent Study Contract**
A contract must be signed by you, your faculty sponsor and the associate chair for graduate studies. The contract must explain the topic, the nature of the project and the type of outcome expected (e.g. paper, presentation, etc.) See Item #1, page 1 in the contract. At minimum, seventy-five hours of time is required for each course (25 hours per credit).

A link to information and the independent study contract is located on the graduate webpage. Here is a direct link to the contract:
[http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/graduate/IndependentStudyContract.pdf](http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/graduate/IndependentStudyContract.pdf)

**MASTERS (M.A.) DEGREE**
After passing all first-year coursework, advanced theory and at least three field elective courses (a total of 30 credit hours), as well as passing at least two preliminary exams, students have earned masters’ degree equivalency. Students must apply online for their diploma by logging in at [https://portal.prod.cu.edu/MyCUInfoFedAuthLogin.html](https://portal.prod.cu.edu/MyCUInfoFedAuthLogin.html). On the “Student” tab, select the “Apply for Graduation” link under “Academic Resources. This application must be completed if a student wishes to formalize the degree and has no bearing on whether or not they plan to attend the department or university commencement ceremony.

Students must pass all three preliminary exams if they plan to continue into the doctoral phase of the program. If they elect to withdraw from the program with only a masters’ degree, they must have completed all required coursework, passed at least two of three preliminary exams and have a GPA of at least 3.0.

**CANDIDACY APPLICATION FOR ADVANCED (M.A.) DEGREE**
The Candidacy Application for Advanced Degree will be forwarded to students by the Graduate Program Coordinator. So that the department has time to review, obtain
necessary approvals and deliver the completed and signed form to the graduate school by their deadline, students must complete the Candidacy Application for Advanced Degree and return it to the Graduate Program Coordinator one week prior to the required graduate school deadline. The Graduate Program Coordinator will provide information and deadlines to students each semester, via email.

When completing page 1 of this form, note that the Department of Economics uses a “Plan II” degree plan (non-thesis with final exam). Your preliminary exams constitute your final exam. On page 2, list all courses you have taken in the graduate program at UCB (except failed courses), even those you are currently enrolled in but have not yet completed. View a copy of your UCB transcript via your student account to assist you with accurate completion. For courses currently in progress, leave the “Grade” section blank and write in the “Notes” section, “in progress”. Any approved transfer coursework from another institution should be indicated in the top section of page 3. (NOTE: Any transfer credit used to obtain a master’s degree at another institution may not be used as credit toward your master’s degree at UCB.) At the bottom right of page 3, please sign, date and print your name where indicated. Retain a copy of this form for your records and return the original to the Graduate Program Coordinator by the deadline provided.

APPLICATION FOR DIPLOMA – MASTERS DEGREE
The Application for Diploma is available online at https://portal.prod.cu.edu/MyCUInfoFedAuthLogin.html. On the “Student” tab, select the “Apply for Graduation” link under “Academic Resources”.

Students should apply for a diploma even if they are not sure they will graduate in the current term. Completion of the form will ensure that your degree is official and that you receive the necessary information about the department and university commencement ceremonies. An official diploma will be mailed to you after graduation.

If you complete an application for diploma for one term but are not able to graduate that term, simply complete another application in the following term.

GRADUATE PART-TIME INSTRUCTOR (GPTI)
After attaining a masters’ degree (or equivalent) in the program, students qualify to be a graduate part-time instructor (GPTI). Duties of a GPTI include teaching an undergraduate level economics course.

GPTI appointments are awarded for one semester at a time. All students qualified to be a GPTI are eligible to apply each semester. GPTI positions are awarded based on
qualification for the position. See the “Ranking System for Funding” section, above. Some students who qualify to be a GPTI may be awarded a TA position if there aren’t enough GPTI appointments for all those who apply.

Compensation for Graduate Part-Time Instructors is always at the 50% level. A 50% GPTI usually teaches one class, has office hours and works about 20 hours per week. This position carries full tuition remission (9-18 credits). The stipend for this position is determined annually and published in Summer, prior to the start of each Academic Year.

Graduate students are not allowed to work more than 20 hours a week without permission from the Graduate School as this may negatively impact their academic progress. Due to federal visa regulations, international students are not allowed to work more than 20 hours per week under any circumstances while enrolled for classes. Questions about this policy should be directed to International Student Scholar Services (ISSS).

Stipends for Fall term are paid monthly, for 4 months, beginning at the end of September and ending at the end of December. Stipends for Spring term are paid monthly, for 5 months, beginning at the end of January and ending at the end of May. Overall, stipend pay for Fall and Spring terms of each academic year remain the same but monthly pay varies between Fall and Spring terms of the same academic year since the total number of months of pay varies. (i.e. monthly pay for Fall term is greater than monthly pay for Spring term, though the overall amount of pay for each term is the same.)

The lead GPTI will work with new GPTIs, providing information about training offered through the Graduate Teacher Program (GTP).

THIRD-YEAR COURSEWORK
Third-year coursework consists of research colloquium (8209, 8219) in Fall and Spring, completion of any remaining economics field elective coursework (a total of 7 electives are required), and the beginning of dissertation research coursework (8999).

Students may register online for dissertation research hours, making sure the faculty member selected as advisor for these hours is aware of and approves. The Graduate Program Coordinator creates a report each semester that lists all students taking dissertation hours and their faculty advisors. This report is sent to faculty for review.

Dissertation hours are not given a grade until successful completion of the Final Defense, so ECON 8999 is considered a graded course, not “pass/fail”. Transcripts will show the grade for ECON 8999 as “IP”, until a grade is entered after a student’s final defense.
RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM (8209, 8219)
Research Colloquium is a year-long series offered in Fall and Spring of the third year. Completion of this course should result in completion of a graduate student’s first paper, possibly the first of three required for the final dissertation. Ideally, this paper will be presented before a faculty committee, qualifying as a student’s oral comprehensive exam.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM
Students are expected to take and pass an oral comprehensive exam by the end of their third year. Students must take and pass this examination before admission to PhD candidacy, at which time tuition and fees may be reduced. This examination may occur either at the time of the student’s research presentation in ECON 8219 (expected) or at a later date. Students must be admitted to PhD candidacy before they may obtain a doctoral degree. Students should work with their faculty advisor to determine when they are ready for this exam. Students should then follow these steps:

1. **Consult the graduate conference room calendar:**
   [http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/graduate/econ218calendar.html?view=month&calid=holcombp:GradConfRoom&tzid=America/Denver&security=1](http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/graduate/econ218calendar.html?view=month&calid=holcombp:GradConfRoom&tzid=America/Denver&security=1) to determine open dates and times possible for your comprehensive exam.

2. **Confirm availability of faculty committee members for the date and time selected.** The committee should consist of five faculty members. If you have only three members, you may add Professor Martin Boileau and Professor Nicholas Flores as your fourth and fifth members. If either of these two (or both) are part of your initial committee, consult your main faculty advisor or Professor Boileau ([martin.boileau@colorado.edu](mailto:martin.boileau@colorado.edu)) about alternates for your fourth and/or fifth members.

3. **Send an email to the Graduate Program Coordinator,**
   (patricia.holcomb@colorado.edu) with the date and time of your exam. Patricia will add ½ hour to the start of your reservation to allow time for set up. Patricia will send a confirming email back to you once your exam date and time have been confirmed. (First-come, first-serve.)

4. **Once the committee is confirmed, complete a PhD Comprehensive Exam Form:**
   [http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/academics/_docs/docexam.pdf](http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/academics/_docs/docexam.pdf). Enter information at the top of the form. Then, in the left-hand column of the table on the exam form, list your committee chair first, followed by your other committee members. Make sure you leave space for signatures that will be entered in the column to the right. Return the exam form to Patricia Holcomb (via email: patricia.holcomb@colorado.edu) three (3) weeks prior to your exam. Ideally, you will return this form with your Candidacy Application (#5, below.) Patricia will obtain the necessary (pre-exam) departmental approval for your committee and arrange for delivery of your exam form to the graduate school by
their deadline two (2) weeks prior to your exam so that they can approve your committee and get the approved form back to the department by exam day.

5. **As soon as possible, but no later than 3 weeks in advance of your exam, complete a Candidacy Application for Advanced (PhD) Degree.** The application can be found at the graduate school website: [http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/academics/_docs/candap.pdf](http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/academics/_docs/candap.pdf). Fill in all the (degree qualifying) coursework you have taken to date, including your current classes (even if you do not yet have the grade). Dissertation hours are recorded on page 3 of the form. Sign and date the form on page 3 then take the form to your main faculty advisor for signature. Once your advisor’s signature has been obtained, return the completed application to Patricia (3) weeks prior to your exam, preferably along with your PhD Comprehensive Exam form (#4, above). Patricia will review and approve the form and arrange for delivery to the graduate school when due.

6. **The day before your exam:** send a reminder to all your committee members.

7. **There is a dedicated LCD projector in ECON 218.** This will be set up ½ hour prior to exam start time. Arrive ½ hour before exam time to allow ample time before your committee arrives to set up your presentation.

On the day of your comprehensive exam, Patricia will have the fully approved exam form ready for the committee chair, along with instructions for completion of the exam form once the exam has been taken.

Patricia will send the final, signed exam form to the graduate school. If the exam was passed without conditions, the graduate school will process a change in the student’s status to “PhD” and will forward a letter to the student informing them of the change. If you don’t receive this letter within 30 days after your exam, contact Patricia, patricia.holcomb@colorado.edu.

Students who pass the exam “with conditions” must meet those conditions before entering PhD candidacy. Students who do not pass their comprehensive exam on the first attempt will be given a second chance the following semester.

**PHD CANDIDACY**

Students are formally admitted to Candidacy for the PhD degree after completing all qualifying coursework, passing all preliminary examinations and the oral comprehensive examination, as well as earning four semesters of residency (see the University of Colorado Catalog for details).
After admission to Candidacy, students must register each Fall and Spring term for dissertation credit (ECON 8999) until attaining the degree. The accumulated credit for ECON 8999 must total at least 30 semester hours and at least 20 of these must be earned after entering PhD candidacy. You may register for up to 10 credits in 8999 per term.

Ideally, the application for PhD candidacy is completed in conjunction with a student’s oral comprehensive exam. See “Comprehensive Exam” section, above.

FOURTH-YEAR COURSEWORK
By the fourth year of study, it is expected that required coursework has been completed and students are taking dissertation research hours (ECON 8999) only. Students may register online for dissertation research hours, making sure the faculty member selected as advisor for these hours is aware and approves. The Graduate Program Coordinator creates a report each semester that lists all students taking dissertation hours and their faculty advisors. This report is sent to faculty for review.

Dissertation hours are not given a grade until successful completion of the Final Defense, so ECON 8999 is considered a graded course, not “pass/fail”. Transcripts will show the grade for ECON 8999 as “IP”, until a grade is entered after a student’s final defense.

PROPOSAL DEFENSE
Students are expected to complete their Proposal Defense by the end of the fourth year. The proposal defense is administered internally in the department so there are no graduate school forms or approval required prior to taking this exam. Students planning to complete a PhD oral comprehensive exam at the same time as the defense proposal (rare but possible), will need to follow these instructions and the instructions for the Comprehensive Exam, above.

1. Work with your advisor to determine your committee. The proposal requires 4 committee members (departmental faculty) but if you have 5 (5th being an outside member – as you’ll need for your final defense), that’s fine.

2. Once you’ve determined your committee, determine a date and time. Look at the grad conference room (218) calendar first to get some open dates/times: http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/graduate/econ218calendar.html?view=month&calid=holcomb:GradConfRoom&tzid=America/Denver&security=1.

3. Confirm the date and time with your committee chair. If they approve, send an email to Patricia Holcomb, patricia.holcomb@colorado.edu with the date/time. She will enter your reservation (first-come, first-serve) on the graduate conference room calendar tentatively and send an email confirmation to you.
4. Once you have confirmed all your committee members and can confirm the exam date and time, send an email to Patricia Holcomb to finalize the reservation. Patricia will send a confirmation email in return.

5. If the date and/or time changes, inform Patricia so that she can make the appropriate change to the calendar.

6. One day prior to your exam, send a reminder to all your committee members.

7. ½ hour before exam time, Patricia (or substitute) will set up the projector in ECON 218 ½ hour before exam start time.

8. **There is a dedicated LCD projector in ECON 218.** This will be set up ½ hour prior to exam start time. Arrive ½ hour before exam time to allow ample time before your committee arrives to set up your presentation.

9. Patricia will provide the Proposal Defense signature page for your committee.

**FIFTH-YEAR COURSEWORK**

By the fifth year of study, most students’ coursework consists of dissertation research (8999), with a total of 30 credit hours required to graduate (having previously completed at least 48 hours coursework). Students may register for dissertation hours online at https://portal.prod.cu.edu/MyCUInfoFedAuthLogin.html.

Dissertation hours are not given a grade until successful completion of the Final Defense, so ECON 8999 is considered a graded course, not “pass/fail”. Transcripts will show the grade for ECON 8999 as “IP”, until a grade is entered after a student’s final defense.

If not completed prior to the fifth year, students should undergo their Proposal Defense during the fifth year, preferably the first semester. Completion of a Proposal Defense is required by November 15th for students planning to enter the job market.

**JOB MARKET PLACEMENT**

Students generally enter the job market in the Fall term of their fifth year. Students should work with their faculty advisor to determine whether or not they are ready. Students are only ready if:

1. They are scheduled to defend their dissertation proposal no later than November 15th of the year they go on the job market. (This is a by-law of the Graduate Program in Economics.)

2. They have at least one major paper/chapter finished by the end of October, AND

3. Their faculty advisor expects them to defend their dissertation no later than August of the following year.

Once a student determines they are ready to go on the job market, they should:
1. Request a placement packet from Patricia Holcomb, patricia.holcomb@colorado.edu. The packet includes a detailed job market program calendar, forms and instructions for the entire job search process.
2. Ask 3 faculty members to write letters of recommendation for them. The letters should be emailed to Patricia Holcomb, no later than the third week in October.
4. Arrange to attend the ASSA annual meeting in January. Make hotel reservations early. Plan to stay in a hotel room near where most of the job interviews will occur.

If you are an international student, be honest (not strategic) with your advisor about the conditions under which you would want to stay in the U.S. and the conditions under which you would want to return to your home country.

**FINAL DEFENSE/DISSERTATION/GRADUATION**

Students work with their faculty advisor to determine when they are ready for their final defense but generally defend in the Spring term of their fifth year. The final defense is a presentation of the student’s completed dissertation and one of the final steps in preparation and fulfillment of requirements for the doctorate degree.

Students should follow these steps to defend to finalize requirements for the PhD degree:

1. Register full-time during the term you defend. If you are defending between terms, you need to be registered full-time during the term preceding your defense, although you will officially graduate in the term immediately following your defense.
2. Students must apply online for their diploma by logging into their myCUinfo account: https://portal.prod.cu.edu/MvCUInfoFedAuthLogin.html. Click on the “Student” tab, select the “Apply for Graduation” link under “Academic Resources. This application must be completed whether or not you plan to attend the department or university commencement ceremony.
3. Submit your dissertation title, along with a completed dissertation leaflet form http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/academics/#academicforms, via email to the Graduate Program Coordinator, patricia.holcomb@colorado.edu. The department will provide a graduation checklist in advance, with due dates based on the term you intend to defend and graduate.
4. **Consult the graduate conference room calendar:** http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/graduate/econ218calendar.html?view=montview&calid=holcombp:GradConfRoom&tzid=America/Denver&security=1 to determine open dates and times possible for your comprehensive exam.
5. **Confirm availability of faculty committee members for the date and time selected.** The committee should consist of five faculty members, 4 economics and 1 outside economics.

6. **Send an email to the Graduate Program Coordinator,** (patricia.holcomb@colorado.edu) with the date and time of your exam. Patricia will add ½ hour to the start of your reservation to allow time for set up. Patricia will send a confirming email back to you once your exam date and time have been confirmed. (First-come, first-serve.)

7. **Once the committee is confirmed, complete a PhD Final Exam Form:** [http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/academics/#academicforms](http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/academics/#academicforms). Enter information at the top of the form. Then, in the left-hand column of the table on the exam form, list your committee chair first, followed by your other committee members. Make sure you leave space for signatures that will be entered in the column to the right. Return the exam form to Patricia Holcomb (via email: patricia.holcomb@colorado.edu) three (3) weeks prior to your exam. Ideally, you will return this form with your Leaflet and Dissertation Signature page (#3, above and #10, below). Patricia will obtain the necessary (pre-exam) departmental approval for your committee and arrange for delivery of your exam form to the graduate school by their deadline two (2) weeks prior to your exam so that they can approve your committee and get the approved form back to the department by exam day.

8. **The day before your exam:** send a reminder to all your committee members.

9. **There is a dedicated LCD projector in ECON 218.** This will be set up ½ hour prior to exam start time. Arrive ½ hour before exam time to allow ample time before your committee arrives to set up your presentation.

10. Along with a graduation checklist, Patricia will forward to you a dissertation signature page. Complete this form as instructed on the checklist and return it to Patricia (unsigned) no later than 2 weeks prior to your defense date.

On your defense date, Patricia will have the following forms ready for your chair and committee: a) your final, approved exam form (ready for committee-member signatures), b) your final grade card (ready for your grade and your chair’s signature) and c) your dissertation signature page (ready for signatures). Once you complete your exam satisfactorily, Patricia will return the signed exam form and final grade card to the graduate school. Once you complete your dissertation satisfactorily, Patricia will send the signed dissertation signature page to the graduate school.

Once you complete your final defense and your dissertation, you will need to submit your dissertation to the graduate school. Final dissertations are emailed to this address: [http://dissertations.umi.com/colorado/](http://dissertations.umi.com/colorado/).
You may review information and a virtual graduation packet located at this site: http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/academics/doctoral_graduation_packet.html.

Once you have completed your final defense and submitted your final dissertation (see the graduation checklist provided to you by the graduate program coordinator), you will be asked to provide a hard-copy of the dissertation for the ECON department library. You will also be asked to return any office or mailroom keys, provide placement information (when known) and a forwarding address.

Please send forwarding address information to the graduate program coordinator, patricia.holcomb@colorado.edu.