University of Colorado at Boulder
Department of Economics
Graduate Program

GRADUATE STUDENT

HANDBOOK

Cohorts 2025 to present

Link available online at: https://www.colorado.edu/economics/graduate-program
(Click on "Handbook")
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Graduate Student Handbook

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

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OVERVIEW

For a brief program overview, visit our graduate website at:
https://www.colorado.edu/economics/graduate-program

PROFESSIONALISM AND COLLEGIALITY

The way you project yourself reflects on the program, the work we do, and the successes and challenges we face. Remember, you represent the department, your colleagues and faculty. Untoward statements/conversations or harassing behavior of any kind, e.g., sexual harassment, overly competitive conduct or bullying will not be tolerated. Such behavior is against the University discrimination and harassment policy and reflects poorly on the culture of our program.

A Note on Professional Conduct

Adherence to the policy stated above is the expectation for all students in the program. The PhD program is a professional program, meaning you will be expected to place professional conduct at the core of your actions. Though you are a student, you are also an employee and must adhere to employee policies as well as student conduct policies. It is not encouraged to form amorous relationships with undergraduate students. If an amorous relationship does develop with an undergraduate student, you are required to report it to the Chair, particularly if it involves an uneven power dynamic. Keep in mind, just because an undergraduate may not be in your class when the relationship develops, they may be in the future. This causes undue complications for the student and the department. Please see the policy for amorous relationships here. How you comport yourself with your colleagues reflects on you now and in the future. Keep in mind how you want to be represented in the job market, at conferences and any other situation where you will be evaluated.

Each of you can be successful. Success includes the quality of the relationships you build with a solid foundation in professionalism. It is important to note, as stated in the “Other Exceptions” in the funding section below, that:

“Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.330 or higher are not guaranteed full funding if they have not met expected milestones or have not demonstrated appropriate standards of professional conduct (whether in teaching, academics, or otherwise).

Teaching appointment decisions 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, violation of university policies on discrimination and harassment, ethics, or honor code."

The program will incorporate opportunities to develop your professional skills. We encourage you to take advantage of the many resources and programs available to graduate students across campus to develop professional skills in academia. Please see the Resources section of this handbook for further information.

FINANCIAL AID, FELLOWSHIPS, 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 for work-study, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA, https://fafsa.ed.gov/) annually. Because work-study is a federally subsidized program, international students are not eligible.

Students in good standing are guaranteed funding (full tuition, stipend, and health insurance subsidy) during years 1-5. This guarantee is also contingent on successful fulfillment of teaching responsibilities and maintenance of appropriate standards of professional conduct. Teaching appointments for all students and funding awards for students in years beyond year 5 are based on a tiered ranking system. See the "Ranking System" section, below. Cumulative GPA is evaluated each year before the fall semester starts and used for both fall and spring ranking.

To be considered for any appointment, students must apply. The department will provide application information and instructions via email each semester. Guarantees for full funding are made in fall semester appointments for the academic year, based on ranking position in fall. Guarantees are not re-evaluated in spring, due to the timing of grade postings.

In addition to the funding sources noted above, the department has endowments for fellowships and awards. Awards are determined based on stipulations made by grantors of the funds but are mostly based on academic, teaching and research excellence. Most awards are announced at the department's Fall welcome reception and awards ceremony and paid in the Fall. Monetary awards are credited to awardees' student accounts. Additional awards may be granted in Spring and Summer.

The graduate school provides annual fellowship funding to the department. Most of these funds are awarded to incoming graduate students to assist 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 department offers financial support available to students for research-related activities. Specific areas include reimbursement of journal submission fees, conference travel and data acquisition costs. To apply for these funds, complete the appropriate form (Data Acquisition Support Form, Submission Fee Reimbursement Form, and Travel Support Form) that will be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator for approval by the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies. Once approved, department staff will assist in funding requests or reimbursement of expenses.

The graduate school offers additional financial assistance, including awards, and funding for conference travel. To learn more about graduate school funding opportunities, visit the graduate school funding page: https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/graduate-student-funding .

Information about these and additional or outside sources of funding are sent to our graduate students (via email) as opportunities arise.

RANKING SYSTEM

Ranking for teaching appointments is based on a tiered system using (1st) timely completion of program milestones, (2nd) cumulative grade point average (GPA), and (3rd) cumulative teaching evaluation averages (FCQs). The numbers used to calculate cumulative FCQ averages are taken from the "Instructor Overall" portion of FCQ reports.

Milestone Expectations

Year	Students are expected to have
One	taken and passed all required coursework and qualify for all preliminary exams in June and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of at least 4.0.
Two	taken and passed all three preliminary exams by the end of Summer of 1st year. Passed the "introduction to Research" add on course, and ECON 8209 in spring and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of at least 4.0.
Three	completed all required coursework and passed the oral comprehensive exam by May 15th and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of at least 4.0.
Four	Must have developed dissertation proposal and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of at least 4.0 and have passed the Proposal Defense by May 15th.
Five	Graduating Ph.D. students will successfully complete their dissertation defense. Students pursing a sixth year will complete a presentation of their job market paper.
Six	passed the final defense exam, submitted the dissertation, and graduated.

Tier Placement

Year	Students will be placed as follows
One	**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**: n/a *Under extraordinary circumstances, admitted international applicants with speaking scores of <24 may be considered for funding if they undergo evaluation and special immersion training.
Two	**Tier 1**: Students with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.330 who passed all required first year coursework, have taken and passed all three preliminary exams in June/August, have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of "4" or more and (if international) have a "clear" rating for English.

Year	Students will be placed as follows
Two (cont'd)	**Tier 2**: Students with less than a 3.0 GPA and/or less than a 4.0 FCQ average (instructor overall) and/or students who have not met academic expectations noted in Tier 1, above. **Tier 3**: n/a **Tier 4**: Students who have not demonstrated maintenance of appropriate standards of professional conduct (whether in teaching, academics or otherwise). Students without a "clear" rating for English.
Three	**Tier 1**: Students with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.330, who passed all required courses and passed oral comprehensive exam (by Spring), have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of "4" or more and (if international) have a "clear" rating for English. **Tier 2**: Students with less than a 3.0 GPA and/or less than a 4.0 FCQ average (instructor overall) and/or students who have not met academic expectations noted in Tier 1, above. **Tier 3**: n/a **Tier 4**: Students who have not demonstrated maintenance of appropriate standards of professional conduct (whether in teaching, academics or otherwise). Students without a "clear" rating for English.
Four	**Tier 1**: (Assumes GPA of at least 3.330) Students who passed their oral comprehensive exam by May 15 of their 3rd year, and have an overall FCQ average of "4" or more. If international, have a "clear" rating for English. **Tier 2**: Students with less than a "4" FCQ average (instructor overall) and/or students who have not met academic expectations noted in Tier 1, above. **Tier 3**: n/a **Tier 4**: Students who have not demonstrated maintenance of appropriate standards of professional conduct (whether in teaching, academics or otherwise). Students without a "clear" rating for English.

Year	Students will be placed as follows
Five	**Tier 1**: (Assumes GPA of at least 3.330) Students who passed their proposal defense by May 15th of 4th year (for fall ranking) or by October 15th of 5th year (for Spring ranking) and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of "4" or more. If international, have a "clear" rating for English. **Tier 2**: Students with less than a "4" FCQ average (instructor overall) and/or students who have not met academic expectations noted in Tier 1, above. **Tier 3**: n/a **Tier 4**: Students who have not demonstrated maintenance of appropriate standards of professional conduct (whether in teaching, academics or otherwise). Students without a "clear" rating for English.
Six	**Tier 1a**: (assumes CGPA of 3.330 or greater) Students in year 6 who passed their proposal defense by October 15th of their 5th year (for Fall ranking) and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of "4" or more. If international, have a "clear" rating for English. **Tier 2**: Students in year 6 who have not completed their proposal defense by May 15th of the 5th year (for Fall ranking), and by October 15th of their 6th year (for Spring ranking), and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of "4" or more. **Tier 3**: n/a **Tier 4**: n/a
Seven +	**Tier 1**: n/a **Tier 2**: Students in year 7+ that have completed their proposal defense by May 15th of their 5th year and have an FCQ average of "4" or more. **Tier 3**: Within this tier, students are ranked as follows:

Year	Students will be placed as follows
Seven + (cont'd)	a. Students in year 7+ who have not completed their proposal defense but have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of "4" or more. b. Students in years 7+ with an FCQ average (instructor overall) of at least "4". **Tier 4**: Students in years 7+ with an FCQ average (instructor overall) of less than "4", or who have not demonstrated maintenance of appropriate standards of professional conduct (whether in teaching, academics or otherwise). Students without a "clear" rating for English.

*Exceptions: 1) 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 and, 2) when, in earlier years, a student forgoes department funding for one or more semesters, one or more semesters will be added to their eligibility.

Ranking Within Tiers

Within tiers, students are first ranked based on cumulative GPA then cumulative FCQ averages, using the number for "Instructor Overall". Assignments to specific positions are at the discretion of the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies and the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies. They take into consideration additional factors including but not limited to: availability based on course-specific teaching experience, overall teaching experience, and course schedules/availability.

Additional Notes

Students who do not complete a milestone by the Spring (May 15) deadline for Fall fund ranking but complete that milestone in the Fall (by October 15), may qualify for Tier 1 for purposes of fund ranking for Spring (and by March 15 for Summer fund ranking).

Students in Tier 1a shall be prioritized ahead of students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 in receiving fully funded appointments.

It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the department and graduate school calendars and to comply with all administrative deadlines.

Exceptions Due to Extenuating Circumstances
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 deadlines given in the paragraph above. The director of graduate studies can consider this information when determining the student's tier placement for appointment decisions.

Parental Leave
Any student who qualifies for a Pregnancy & Parenting-Related Academic Adjustment (PPRAA) shall automatically receive a *6-month* extension of the deadlines for all subsequent dissertation milestones.

Such extensions are granted without penalty in ranking for funding.
Students requesting Paid Parental Leave shall inform the Associate Chair of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Program Coordinator at least *1 month before the start of the semeste*r. Please use the Graduate Funding Administration General Form to make the request.

CU's Private FMLI
The graduate paid parental leave policy and FAMLI leave will now work together to support graduate student parents. Additional information regarding FAMLI leave can be found on the employee services site and leave can be applied for through the employee portal. Questions regarding FAMLI leave may be directed to leave@cu.edu.

Other Exceptions
For ranking, but having no effect on the official transcript, the department will omit any grades that do not apply toward the ECON master's or doctoral degree.

Since the University now allows course forgiveness, there is no longer a need for the Department to remove a failing grade (below a B) from the GPA calculation if the student has retaken and passed the course. *Effective Spring 2022: Grade replacement is applied* ***automatically*** *at the end of each term for eligible courses and students.* Under grade replacement, the grade you earned in the

most recent prior attempt of a course will still appear on your transcript, but it will be replaced in your cumulative GPA and credit totals with the grade you earn in your current attempt as long as that grade is the same or better. If a lower grade is earned in the latest attempt, grade replacement is *not* applied and the grades from both attempts will be used in computing cumulative and major grade point averages, total credits and academic standing.

Students with an overall GPTI FCQ average that falls below 4.0 but who maintain an overall FCQ average above 4.0, will not have their tier placement affected, but their performance as a GPTI may be considered when determining whether they receive an offer of GPTI or TA.

Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.330 or higher are not guaranteed full funding if they have not met expected milestones or have not demonstrated appropriate standards of professional conduct (whether in teaching, academics, or otherwise).

Teaching appointment decisions 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, violation of university policies on discrimination and harassment, ethics, or honor code.

Ranking for Summer Funding

Because the department offers fewer courses in summer, the associate chairs are careful to appoint accomplished instructors. Therefore, overall FCQ averages weigh more heavily in ranking for summer funding.

Starting at the top – after ranking by tier and cumulative GPA – appointments are made based on the following criteria:

For GPTI appointments:

1. Prior experience teaching the course with FCQ ≥ 5.
2. Prior experience teaching the course with FCQ < 5 or current experience teaching the course in Spring with FCQ ≥ 5 in other courses. It's a judgment 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 TA appointments:

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 in Spring with FCQ ≥ 5 in prior courses. It's a judgment 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 Late July, beginning July 28th. When July 28th falls on a weekend, Math Camp will begin the following Monday. All incoming students are required to take this course to help ensure math skills are sufficient for success in the first year of the program. Any student who fails the final examination must participate in a consultation with the Associate Chair of Graduate Studies.

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 has not been admitted to the ECON PhD program must go through a prequalification process. These potential enrollees should contact the ECON PhD Program Coordinator for assistance in completing the qualifying process.

COMPUTER SOFTWARE/HELP

The University's Office of Information Technology (OIT) offers a broad range of software for download by graduate students employed by the University. A direct link to software programs and how to install and activate them can be found here:
https://oit.colorado.edu/software-hardware/software-downloads-and-licensing

Additionally, OIT offers help with computer hardware and software troubleshooting and maintenance. For assistance, email oithelp@colorado.edu or call 303.735.4357 (5-HELP from any on-campus land-line phone).

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 may include conducting recitation sections, consulting with students, and assisting the course instructor with class preparation, grading and/or other duties as assigned.

Some or all first-year TA appointments are for Fall and Spring of the first academic year but TA appointments for years two and up are offered semester-by-semester. All students are eligible to apply for open teaching positions each semester. TA positions are awarded based on achievement of expected milestones, cumulative grade point average, and student instructor ratings (FCQs). For international students, adequate English intelligibility and comprehension are expected. International students may be required to undergo interviews, assessments and/or training until adequate speaking skills are achieved. See "Ranking System for Funding" section, above, for more information about how funding decisions are made.

Compensation for Teaching Assistantships depends on the level of appointment. The Department of Economics generally offers three levels of TA appointments: 50%, 33% and 25%. Most are at the 50% level.

To ensure that our undergraduate students are receiving consistent information, TAs are required to attend all lectures given by the instructor they are assisting. Permission from the course instructor and 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 a recitation, 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).

A 50% teaching assistant attends all lectures for the related course, usually teaches three or four recitations and works no more than 20 hours per week,

including office hours. Some of these appointments may carry other duties as assigned. Compensation includes full tuition remission (9-18 credits).

A 33% teaching assistant attends all lectures for the related course, usually teaches two or three recitations and works no more than 13 hours per week, including office hours. Some of these appointments may carry other duties as assigned. Compensation for this appointment includes tuition remission of 6 credits.

A 25% teaching assistant attends all lectures for the related course, usually teaches one or two recitations and works no more than 10 hours per week, including office hours. Some of these appointments may carry other duties as assigned. This position carries tuition remission of 5 credits.

Both the stipend and health and dental insurance subsidy for all TA positions are determined annually and published in summer, prior to the start of the academic year.

Working more than 20 hours per week outside academic studies may negatively impact academic progress. Therefore, graduate students are required to seek written permission to exceed this limit. Domestic students can work up to 25 hours per week with an approved Overload Petition. Please see the PhD Program Coordinator for assistance obtaining permission and applying for an Overload Petition. Due to federal visa regulations, international students are not allowed to work more than 20 hours per week under any circumstance during the Fall and Spring semesters. International students can work up to 40 hours per week in the summer in positions paid through the university. Questions about this policy should be directed to the PhD Program Coordinator and/or International Student Scholar Services (ISSS).

Stipends for Fall terms are divided and paid at the end of each month during the term of work. For Fall, payments are made at the end of August through the end of December. The payment made at the end of August is ½ that of payments made at the end of September through December. For Spring, payments are made at the end of January through the end of May. The payment made at the end of May is ½ that of payments made at the end of January through April.

GRADUATE TEACHER TRAINING

The week before Fall classes begin, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) (https://www.colorado.edu/center/teaching-learning/) holds a series of graduate teacher training seminars in their Fall Intensive training program. The Lead Graduate Instructor (Lead GPTI), an ECON graduate student who works with new graduate students to prepare them for teaching, will provide a schedule of required sessions for all new TAs. All incoming students are required to undergo teacher training in the Fall Intensive because most will teach for the department at some point – if not all the way through the program. New GPTIs and continuing students that are teaching are highly encouraged to attend trainings offered by the CTL. The Lead GPTI will forward training offerings throughout the semester, or you can subscribe to the newsletter here. It is highly encouraged for all teaching students to complete the Pursuing Excellence in College Teaching Credential. For teaching students that will enter the job market it is recommended that you also pursue the Certificate in College Teaching. This certificate program can help you prepare a portfolio that includes your diversity statement and your philosophy of teaching and learning.

International students are highly encouraged to attend as many seminars in the offered by the CTL as possible, particularly those geared toward adjusting to teaching methods that are different in the U.S. from those in their home country.

In addition to CTL training, the department's Lead Graduate Instructor (Lead GPTI) will provide training and assistance to new and continuing TAs and GPTIs in the department and will coordinate seminars. Contact the Lead GPTI and/or CTL for more information about certificate requirements.

Please notify the PhD Program Coordinator in the department if you are pursuing the Credential or Certificate.

The Department requires the Graduate Instructor Mentor (GIM) reach out to all students with FCQ averages of 4.0 or less and visit their course, recommend a course to observe taught by a high FCQ rated GPTI in the department and discuss their observations. This is to help student teachers to improve teaching strategies and connect them to resources for improvement.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS/ENGLISH

International students are expected to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of English intelligibility and comprehension to help ensure success in academics

and teaching. Acceptable English intelligibility is considered when decisions are made about admission to the program and teaching appointments. As such, international applicants are required to submit TOEFL overall and speaking scores that must meet certain standards and once admitted, may be required to undergo an English assessment and immersion training before they begin teaching. After completing assessments, some students may be required to complete a course in accent reduction. The department offers an in-house training program taught by a highly qualified current PhD student in Economics.

The department uses the speaking section of required language exams as an indicator of English intelligibility for applicants. Minimum speaking scores are required for admission. Speaking scores required for funding are listed below:

	Minimum Required	Admitted (Round 1)	Full Funding (Round 1)
TOEFL	75 Overall 23 Speaking	109 Overall 25 Speaking	109 Overall 25 Speaking
Duolingo English Test	120	140	140
IELTS	6 Overall 7 Speaking	7.5 Overall 7.5 Speaking	7.5 Overall 7.5 Speaking

UCB's International English Center (IEC,) offers accent reduction, writing and speech classes for international students in addition to the in house training course the department offers.
English intelligibility is important to the quality of education provided to UCB's undergraduate students. 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 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. weekdays and all day on weekends and holidays), students must have their Buff OneCard activated by the Graduate Program Coordinator or the department's CCURE authorization liaison.

Use your Buff OneCard to enter the building after hours by accessing the card reader outside the northwest entrance or the basement entrance at the back of the building.

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 (ECON 6). In order to enter the lab, students must have their Buff OneCard activated by the PhD Program Coordinator

To use your Buff OneCard 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, 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 comp, defense proposal, 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: https://www.colorado.edu/economics/calendars to check for availability of the date/time needed. There is also a link to this calendar on the graduate overview page.

Anyone may view the calendar, but only certain staff members can make changes.

To make reservations for any undergraduate purpose, contact the undergraduate administrative assistant (TBD) with the following information to set up a reservation:

1) Day/Date
2) Total number of students/attendees (no more than 6)
3) The purpose of your event

4) Start/End time of your event

To make reservations for any graduate purpose, contact the Graduate Program Coordinator (karen.a.kelly@colorado.edu) with the same information listed above.

Once your reservation has been made you will get an email confirmation. 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 attendees, contact the ECON course scheduler, (TBD) Copy Karen on this request if the event is for graduate purposes.

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, use the link provided on the graduate overview webpage or use this link: https://www.colorado.edu/economics/calendars . Scroll down to view.

E-MAIL LISTSERVS

Students may use graduate email list distributions, in moderation, to communicate with select groups. Please see the Graduate Program Coordinator or the Web Manager for these lists and addresses.

For an email list of any other special demographic within the graduate program, students should contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

FIRST-YEAR COURSEWORK

First-year coursework consists of three courses (9 credits) in the fall (Micro 7010, Macro 7020, Statistics 7818) and three courses (9 credits) in the spring (Micro 7030, Macro 7040, Econometrics 7828). Students must earn grades of B or better to pass these courses. If not, the course must be repeated for a passing grade.

Preliminary examinations held in June and second attempt in August following year one is based on material covered in first-year coursework. Students are not allowed to sit for an exam if they have not passed related coursework.

Students who transfer first-year credit into the program should work with the appropriate faculty member(s) to ensure adequate preparation for preliminary exams.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) REQUIREMENT

University of Colorado Graduate School policy states that a student must have at least a 3.00 overall GPA to remain in the program or to receive a graduate degree. When a student's cumulate GPA falls below 3.00, they will be placed on academic warning. The student has two semesters in which to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.00 or above.

If a 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 student may petition the associate chair of graduate studies showing compelling reasons for the student to be granted a chance to continue. Once approved, permission must also be obtained from the dean of the graduate school.

For more detailed information about expectations for students placed on academic probation, see p. 14-15 of the Graduate School Rules handbook: https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/faculty-staff/policies-procedures/rules
Since the University now allows grade replacement (including GPA recalculation), there is no longer a need for the Department to remove a failing grade (below a B) from the GPA calculation if the student has retaken and passed the course. For more detail about policy/deadlines: https://www.colorado.edu/registrar/students/degree-planning/grade-replacement

Cumulative GPA must be at least 3.0 in order to earn a degree from the program.

PRELIMINARY EXAMS

Students are required to complete three written preliminary examinations in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and econometrics. These examinations are administered in June following the successful completion of the related core coursework in the first year, with a second attempt available in August prior to the start of the fall semester. Students should refer to the program calendar for specific dates, times, and locations.

Past exams in each subject area are available for review online. The previous exams can be found here https://www.colorado.edu/economics/past-graduate-preliminary-examinations
Review of these exams can be quite time consuming; it is suggested you begin to prepare as far in advance as possible – and work with others in your cohort. 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 a core course 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.

Preliminary examinations are graded as follows: “PhD Pass,” “Masters Pass” and “Fail.” A preliminary examination attempted and failed (“Fail” or “Masters Pass”) must be retaken and passed in the next scheduled examination period. Exams are held annually in June with a second attempt in August. A second failure will result in dismissal from the program. In no cases are attempts beyond the Second are granted.

A student may petition the Graduate Director, *ex ante*, to reduce the number of preliminary exams attempted in a particular round if compelling extenuating circumstances significantly limit the amount of time and effort that can be devoted to study relative to the typical student. For cases in which the extenuating circumstances are known well in advance, the expectation is that the student will apply for the reduced exam load sufficiently far in advance so that the student may make more efficient use of his/her reduced study time.

A student may also petition *ex ante* to be excused from a round of preliminary exams if extenuating circumstances significantly affect the student’s physical, mental or emotional state at the time the exam is to be administered. If a petition

is granted, the student may instead take the examination the next time offered without harm.

Students must achieve a "PhD 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 master's degree, they must have completed all required coursework (as described in the "Masters Degree" section, below), achieved "Masters Pass" on at least two of three preliminary exams and have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

SECOND-YEAR COURSEWORK

Second-year coursework typically consists of three elective courses in the fall semester and three elective courses in the spring semester. Students are also required to complete the non-credit *Introduction to Research* course in fall semester and enroll in ECON 8209 during the spring semester.

To provide flexibility in completing specialization fields, electives that are numbered sequentially, Environmental Economics I and Environmental Economics II, for example, need not be completed sequentially. For instance, Environmental Economics II may be completed before Environmental Economics I. One course from each field is offered per academic year. For instance, if Environmental I is offered this year, then Environmental II shall be offered during the next academic year.

Credit toward degree requirements for any graduate elective outside of economics must be approved by the Associate Chair of Graduate Studies and reported to the PhD program coordinator.

INDEPENDENT STUDY/OUTSIDE ELECTIVES

Students in some cases may substitute an independent study or a course offered outside the economics department for one of the six required 8000-level PhD electives in economics. This substitution is only allowed in a very narrow set of circumstances and must be approved by the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies. Specifically, the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies will evaluate the following criteria:

1. The course or independent study must provide training at the level and scope of an 8000-level PhD elective in economics in content, depth, rigor and amount of work.

2. The course or independent study cannot be a direct substitute for one of the 8000-level electives currently being offered regularly in the department.
3. The student's interest in the current 8000-level offerings in the department does not factor into the Associate Chair's decision.
4. The course or independent study must be relevant and useful to the student's program of study and research. Usefulness, however, is a necessary, rather than sufficient condition. It is normal for graduate students to read a wide literature and develop new skills in the course of dissertation research, but these activities do not necessarily displace an 8000-level elective. More specifically:
    a. Independent study is not granted for the purpose of reading literature for dissertation research.
    b. Outside course work that is useful for dissertation research (e.g. GIS training, data set training, topic-relevant courses on research conducted in other disciplines) but not at the level and scope of an 8000-level economics elective will not be allowed to substitute.

To apply for an outside course to replace a graduate elective, students must submit the course syllabus and a statement to the Associate Chair. If the Associate Chair denies the request, the student can still take the course and it will appear on their transcript, but it will not count toward the required PhD electives.

To be eligible for independent study, 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. Additionally:

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.

To enroll in independent study coursework:

1. Obtain a Graduate Independent Study Contract: https://www.colorado.edu/economics/sites/default/files/attached-files/independentstudycontract.pdf

2. Verify eligibility with Graduate Program Coordinator
3. Develop a detailed course plan with your faculty sponsor. A minimum of 75 hours of work is required (25 hours per credit hour).
4. Turn in signed contract and course plan to the associate chair for graduate studies
5. If independent study is approved, the Graduate Program Coordinator will set up the course and enroll you.

Independent Study Contract
A contract must be signed by the student, their 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 the independent study contract is located on the graduate webpage. Here is a direct link to the contract:
https://www.colorado.edu/economics/sites/default/files/attached-files/independentstudycontract.pdf

MASTER'S (M.A.) DEGREE

After passing all first-year coursework (18 core credits in 7000 level) and at least four field elective courses (a total of 30 credit hours), as well as passing ("Masters Pass" or "PhD Pass") at least two preliminary exams, students have earned master's degree equivalency. Students must apply for their diploma in their online portal. This application must be completed if a student wishes to formalize the degree. It has no bearing whether they plan to attend the department or university commencement ceremony.

Students must pass all three preliminary exams ("PhD Pass") if they plan to continue into the doctoral phase of the program. If they elect to withdraw from the program with only a master's degree, they must have completed all required coursework, passed ("Masters Pass") at least two of three preliminary exams and have a GPA of at least 3.0.

MASTER'S DEGREE – CANDIDACY APPLICATION

The Candidacy Application for Advanced Degree reminder will be sent to students by the PhD program coordinator. The department will approve or revise the form and notify students of changes or approval. Students must

complete the Candidacy Application for Advanced Degree by the deadline given. The PhD program coordinator will provide information, deadlines, and reminders (via email) to qualifying students each semester.

When completing this form, all courses taken in the graduate program at UCB will populate the form by logging in with your identikey. **Only include the 30 hours of credit required for the degree, including** courses you are currently enrolled in but have not yet completed.

MASTER'S DEGREE – APPLICATION FOR DIPLOMA
The Application for Diploma is available in your student portal.

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 the student's degree is official. An official diploma is mailed to students after commencement. Contact the University's diploma office if you would like to pick up your diploma before it is mailed.

Students who 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 master's 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. We will also use a prioritization of these appointments for the qualified applicants. The prioritization is as follows:

- Priority 1: 4th years with no prior GPTI experience
- Priority 2: 3rd years with no prior GPTI experience
- Priority 3: only one previous GPTI experience

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 with a larger stipend than a 50% TA. A 50% GPTI usually teaches one class, has office hours and works no more than 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.

The lead GPTI will provide training information for new GPTIs as well as information about training offered through the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL).

THIRD-YEAR COURSEWORK

Third-year coursework consists of a completing the research colloquium (ECON 8209 and ECON 8219), completion of any remaining elective coursework, 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 those hours is aware of and approves. The PhD program coordinator creates a report each semester that lists all students taking dissertation hours and their faculty advisors. This report is sent to faculty and students each semester 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” and transcripts will show the grade for ECON 8999 as “IP”, until a grade is entered after the successful final defense of the dissertation.

RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM (8209, 8219)

Research Colloquium is series offered in Spring of second year in addition to the non-credit introduction to research course (taken in the fall of second year) and Fall of the third year. Completion of this course should result in completion of each student’s first paper, possibly the first of three required for the final dissertation. The expectation is that this paper will be presented before a faculty committee, qualifying as the oral comprehensive exam, by the end of year three.

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH ADD ON COURSE

This add on course is to be taking in fall of your second year. Course will cover current research topics in the fields offered by the department. Students will be

expected to make a presentation summarizing a (published) paper in their field of interest. This is an additional non-credit course to the research colloquium. The defense may result in abandonment of an initial paper idea in favor of a new topic. A *failing grade* due to lack of sufficient progress may result in expulsion from the program.

ORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

Students are expected to complete and pass an oral comprehensive exam by the end of the fall semester of their second year. The exam is based on a research paper, and students will receive constructive feedback from the research methods faculty and their third-year advisor. To advance to PhD candidacy, students must pass the exam by the end of the spring semester; at that point, tuition and fees may be reduced. The exam may take place during the student's research presentation in ECON 8219 or be scheduled for a later date.

Students should work with their faculty advisor to determine when they are ready for this exam. The PhD program coordinator will provide information, deadlines, and reminders (via email) to qualifying students each semester.

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.

PHD CANDIDACY

Students must be admitted to PhD candidacy before they may obtain a doctoral degree.

Students are formally admitted to Candidacy for the PhD degree after completing all qualifying coursework (45 credit hours), passing ("Ph.D. Pass") 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 1 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 "Oral 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.

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 May 15th of their 4th year.

The proposal defense is administered *internally* in the department so there are no graduate school forms or written approvals required prior to taking this exam. The committee for the Proposal Defense consists of your main faculty advisor (committee chair) and 3 additional Economics faculty. The student should send the committee member list and current dissertation title to the PhD program coordinator a week before the defense date.

Students planning to complete a PhD oral comprehensive exam at the same time as the defense proposal (rare, but possible), will need to follow instructions for the proposal and for the comprehensive exam.

Completion of a Proposal Defense is required by November 15th for students planning to enter the job market.

Each semester, the PhD program coordinator will send detailed instructions via email for completion of this exam.

FIFTH-YEAR COURSEWORK

By the fifth year of study, students' coursework will consist of dissertation research hours (ECON 8999) only, with 30 credit hours required to graduate (having completed at least 45 hours).

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 fourth year, preferably May 15th. 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 or sixth year. Students should work with their faculty advisor to determine whether 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.
3. Their faculty advisor expects them to defend their dissertation no later than August of the following year.

Each year, the PhD program coordinator and Graduate Placement Director will send detailed information and instructions via email with job market placement expectations, meeting dates and deadlines. Pertinent information for job market candidates will also be contained in each year's job market placement manual.

If students would like to see the job market placement manual at any time, they may contact the PhD program coordinator.

FINAL DEFENSE/DISSERTATION/GRADUATION

Students work with their faculty advisor to determine when they are ready for their final defense. Generally, most students defend in the Spring term.

The final defense is a presentation of a student's completed dissertation and one of the final steps in fulfillment of requirements for the doctoral degree.

Final Defense committees should consist of the student's main faculty advisor (committee chair), three Economics faculty members and one outside committee member. Outside committee members can be faculty in another pertinent UCB department or in special circumstances, an outside committee member who is economist at another institution can serve in place of faculty member. Students will discuss and recruit committee members at their main faculty advisor's direction. The final defense committee member list with email addresses. The complete dissertation shall be distributed to the entire examination committee and the PhD program coordinator a minimum of two weeks prior to the examination date. Whether the dissertation shall be distributed earlier than this deadline is at the discretion of the dissertation examination committee.

Each semester, the PhD program coordinator will send detailed instructions and a graduation checklist, via email, with deadlines for completion of all graduation requirements.

It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the department and graduate school calendars and to comply with all administrative deadlines.

Additional information is available on the graduate school website: https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/academics/graduation-requirements/doctoral-graduation-information

As part of the department's PhD graduation checklist, students are asked to provide a hard copy of their dissertation for the ECON department library. An extra copy can be ordered during the online dissertation submission process.

We also ask that students:

- remove all personal items and clean their office space, returning key(s) to ACCESS Services at Folsom Stadium.
- send placement information to the PhD program coordinator.
- provide a forwarding (email) address.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students must abide by the University's Academic Integrity Policy. All students are required upon entering the program to sign a form stating so.

For University policy information:
https://www.colorado.edu/policies/academic-integrity-policy

ETHICS

To avoid conflicts between personal and university interests, students must comply with the University of Colorado's Code of Ethics. As such, all students are required to undergo ethics training when entering the program, and ongoing as required by the University. Students should report any actual or potential conflicts.

For more information and/or to submit an (anonymous) report:
https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/14973/index.html.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The University of Colorado Boulder encourages innovation, scholarship and research that lead to commercial and consulting activities and global engagement. Such activities, however, have the potential to lead to conflicts of interest and/or commitment. On the CU Boulder campus, annual online reporting of conflicts occurs by submitting a Disclosure of External Professional Activities (DEPA). The Conflicts of Interest & Commitment (COIC) reporting process is a component in protecting faculty, staff, students, departments and the university as a whole.

Employees shall comply with the following requirements so as to actively avoid conflicts between personal and university interests:

1. Discharge their duties in the best interest of the University and in such a manner that their professional judgment in administration, management, instruction, research, and other professional activities is not affected by any outside financial or personal interest, whether directly or indirectly through immediate family members.
2. Accord the University their primary professional loyalty.
3. Disclose all potential or perceived conflicts of interest or commitment, as required by university policy.

4. Conduct their affairs so that they shall not derive private gain from their association with the University except as provided by Regent or university policies. This includes but is not limited to:
    - Not assisting any person or organization for a fee, contingent fee or other compensation in obtaining any contract, license or other economic benefit from the University.
    - Not receiving substantial compensation from others for performance of university duties. (Substantial compensation does not include consumable items such as tickets, tokens or meals.)
    - Not using university resources for personal gain except as authorized by university policy.

Furthermore, employees should strive to avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest.

GRIEVANCES

The Graduate School Grievance Process and Procedure (Grievance P&P) establishes and describes the process through which graduate students can communicate concerns related to academic issues or academic conflicts, with the goal of ensuring that the student filing a grievance is better able to achieve academic success. This is a non-adversarial, non-judicial process. The rules of evidence, and any other rules that typically govern a criminal or civil court, are not applicable to the Grievance Procedure.

Grievances covered by the Grievance P&P include problems related to academic issues, such as arbitrary, inconsistent, or capricious actions taken against a graduate student; deviations from stated grading and examination policies as they appear on syllabi, on assignments, or in departmental guidelines for graduate study; failure to provide in writing reasons behind termination or dismissal, either from the program or from employment or other support; unfair treatment related to graduate student appointments; unfairness in the application of graduate requirements or regulations; and in general any actions taken by a program that relate to graduate students and that hinder the student's ability to make normal progress toward the degree. Individuals named in a grievance must be teaching or research faculty directly involved in the student's program of study. In those instances where a graduate student has a complaint against faculty in a campus research institute, a national laboratory, or in a setting governed by a federal grant whether on or off campus, the student's home academic department (the unit awarding the degree) is responsible for helping to identify a resolution. Nothing in the Grievance P&P is

intended to create an appeal right to an employment termination decision or otherwise undermine at-will appointments.

Full policy: https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/faculty-staff/policies-procedures/graduate-student-grievance-process-and-procedures

Among other things, the full policy includes a list of what is not covered under this policy, along with links to information/reporting for each.

Direct link to grievance form:
https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/media/40

TOWN HALL

The Department recognizes that our graduate students often have questions or would like clarification of ECON graduate student policies. Therefore, we offer a semi-annual Town Hall for all graduate students where these – or any issues of concern – can be addressed. This event is hosted by the Department chair, associate chair for graduate studies, and PhD program coordinator.

Graduate student questions and concerns can be brought to the chair, associate chair or program coordinator at any time, but the Department will specifically solicit anonymous questions/concerns/feedback from ECON graduate students for discussion at Town Hall events. This provides an opportunity for all students to hear answers and take part in discussions.

Town Hall discussions and independent student feedback often result in policy and/or procedural adjustments.

COACHING

The Department recognizes that our graduate students may benefit from coaching to help with motivation, dealing with challenges, feeling good about work being done, and preparation for the job market. Therefore, they have contracted with a coach to provide coaching services.

Information about participating in this service is provided to students by the PhD program coordinator.

Coaching is not meant to be a substitute for psychological counseling. See below for the many resources available on campus for students in distress.

RESOURCES

See the Resources Page of the Economics Graduate Program website for more Resources.

Resources for Students in Distress

Many students find grad school to be a stressful time, with new pressures, adjusting to a new city and, for many, the adjustment of living away from family. It is important to stay healthy, both physically as well as emotionally, while you are working on your PhD. Anxiety and depression, as well as impostor syndrome, are common among graduate students.

As with many health problems, mental health issues are best addressed before they become serious. The University of Colorado's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) program (https://www.colorado.edu/health/services) has a number of free resources that are available to you to help you. These include:

- Workshops for academic support, stress management and more
- Therapy groups on a variety of topics
- Individual and couples counseling
- Psychiatric medical evaluation and medication management
- Substance use counseling and educational services
- Psychological testing
- Consultation and community outreach

Crisis Care

Students can visit any CAPS location during walk-in hours to meet with a provider:
C4C (Room S440) - walk-in Hours: M - Th: 10AM - 4PM, F: 10AM - 1PM
Wardenburg - walk-in Hours: M - F: 10AM - 4PM

For after-hours care, call CAPS at 303-492-2277 to speak with a licensed professional; 24/7 support is available.

Please make use of these important resources, if need be. Many students and faculty are not well-informed about mental health issues and a little bit of advice from an expert can be extremely helpful.

There are also several day-to-day things you can do to help prevent stress from developing into more serious issues. Regular exercise, getting enough sleep, and making sure to spend time with family and friends will go a long way toward keeping things in perspective. These activities can at times seem of secondary importance and even a distraction from your work, but balance is important. Writing a PhD, and academic life in general, is a marathon, not a sprint. The habits you develop now will support you throughout your professional career.