


ECONOMICS



University of Colorado at Boulder
Department of Economics
Graduate Program

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Link available online at: <https://www.colorado.edu/economics/graduate-program>

(Click on “Handbook”)

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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>

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.

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 3.330 or higher are guaranteed full funding (full tuition, stipend and health insurance subsidy) as long as they meet expectations for progress through the program. Cumulative GPA is evaluated each year prior to the beginning of the fall semester and is used for both fall and spring ranking. This guarantee is also 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 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.

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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, as well as 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 FOR FUNDING

Funding decisions for teaching appointments are based on a tiered ranking system using such measures as (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

By end of year	Students are expected to have
One	taken and passed all required coursework and qualify for all preliminary exams in August and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of at least 4.0.
Two	taken and passed all three preliminary exams and passed advanced theory 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 15 and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of at least 4.0.
Four	completed and passed the proposal defense exam by May 15 and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of at least 4.0.
Five	passed the final defense exam, submitted the dissertation and graduated.

Tier Placement

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Going Into	Students will be placed as follows
1 st year	<p>Tier 1: All admitted applicants. (International applicants must have a TOEFL speaking score of at least 24*.)</p> <p>Tier 2: n/a</p> <p>Tier 3: n/a</p> <p>Tier 4: n/a</p> <p>*Under special circumstances, admitted International applicants with speaking scores of <24 may be considered for funding if they undergo evaluation and special immersion training.</p>
2 nd year 2 nd year (cont.)	<p>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 FCQ average (instructor overall) of “4” or more and (if international) have a “clear” rating for English.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Tier 3: n/a</p> <p>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.</p>
3 rd year	<p>Tier 1: Students with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0, who passed all three preliminary exams and advanced theory, have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of “4” or more and (if international) have a “clear” rating for English.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Tier 3: n/a</p> <p>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.</p>
4 th year	<p>Tier 1: (Assumes GPA of at least 3.0.) Students who passed their oral comprehensive exam by May 15 of their 3rd year (for Fall ranking), October 15 of their 4th year (for Spring ranking), March 15 of their 4th year (for Summer ranking) and have an overall FCQ average of “4” or more. If international, have a “clear” rating for English.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Tier 3: n/a</p>

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Going Into	Students will be placed as follows
	<p>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.</p>
<p>5th year</p> <p>5th year (cont.)</p>	<p>Tier 1: (Assumes GPA of at least 3.0.) Students who passed their proposal defense by May 15 of their 4th year (for Fall ranking), October 15 of their 5th year (for Spring ranking) and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of “4” or more. If international, have a “clear” rating for English.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Tier 3: n/a</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>6th year +</p>	<p>Tier 1: n/a*</p> <p>Tier 2: n/a</p> <p>Tier 3: Within this tier, students are ranked as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students in year 6 who have completed their proposal defense and have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of “4” or more. b. Students in year 6 who have not completed their proposal defense but have an FCQ average (instructor overall) of “4” or more. c. Students in years 7+ with an FCQ average (instructor overall) of at least “4”. <p>Tier 4: Students in years 6+ 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.</p>

*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.

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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).

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 has the discretion to take this information into account when determining the student's tier placement for appointment decisions.

Other Exceptions

For the purpose of 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. In order to qualify for course forgiveness, students must submit an application by the appropriate deadline set by the University.

Students whose overall GPTI FCQ average 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 taken into account 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.

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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 $FCQ \geq 5$.
2. Prior experience teaching the course with $FCQ < 5$ or current experience teaching the course in Spring with $FCQ \geq 5$ in other courses. It's a judgement call if there are competing candidates in each of these categories.
3. Prior experience teaching other courses with $FCQ \geq 5$.
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 $FCQ \geq 5$.
2. Prior experience as a TA with $FCQ < 5$ or current experience as a TA for the course in Spring with $FCQ \geq 5$ 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 $FCQ \geq 5$.
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 August 1st. When August 1st 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 enter into extensive 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 Manager 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:

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<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 help@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.

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

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of these appointments may carry other duties as assigned. This position carries tuition remission of 5 credits.

Both the stipend and health 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. Consult with the ECON PhD Program Manager for assistance obtaining permission before any work in excess of 20 hours per week. Due to federal visa regulations, international students are not allowed to work more than 20 hours per week under any circumstance while enrolled in classes. Questions about this policy should be directed to the PhD Program Manager and/or International Student Scholar Services (ISSS).

Stipends for Fall term 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ that of payments made at the end of January through April.

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).

GRADUATE TEACHER TRAINING

The week before Fall classes begin, the Graduate Teacher Program (GTP, <https://www.colorado.edu/gtp/>) holds a series of graduate teacher training seminars in their Fall Intensive training program. The Lead Graduate Instructor, 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 and new GPTIs. All students are required

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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. Additional training may qualify students for a certificate in teaching and/or future faculty development. For more information, go to:

<https://www.colorado.edu/gtp/certificates>

International students are highly encouraged to attend as many seminars in the GTP series 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 GTP 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 ongoing seminars for graduate teacher certification training. Students may use the department teaching seminars as credit toward a graduate teaching certificate. Contact the Lead GPTI and/or 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 (in cases where all other measurements create a tie).

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: <https://www.colorado.edu/gtp/certificates/certificate-college-teaching>.

The Department requires all students with FCQ averages of 4.4 or less to undergo evaluation and coaching in the Spring term from the Graduate Instructor Mentor (GIM). The GIM is an upper-level graduate student with heavy teaching experience (both as TA and GPTI) with consistently high FCQs. The GIM may schedule seminars in addition to those scheduled by the Lead GPTI. Hours attending GIM seminars also count toward credit for the teaching certificate.

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 taken into account 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

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immersion training before they begin teaching. After completing assessments and training, some students may be required to complete a course in accent reduction. 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 for applicants. TOEFL speaking scores of at least 23 are required for admission. A TOEFL speaking score of at least 24 is required for funding. Under special circumstances, admitted International applicants with speaking scores of < 24 may be considered for funding.

UCB's International English Center (IEC, <https://ce.colorado.edu/resources/the-international-english-center/>) offers accent reduction, writing and speech classes for international students.

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 BuffOne card activated by a staff member in the ECON front office (ECON 212).

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 (ECON 6). In order to enter the lab, students must have their BuffOne card activated by the ECON front office.

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, indicating the door is unlocked.

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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 are able to make changes.

To make reservations for any undergraduate purpose, contact the ECON course scheduler (karen.e.kelly@colorado.edu) 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 manager (krystle.kelley@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, (karen.e.kelly@colorado.edu). Copy Krystle 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:

- econ-ugse@colorado.edu (all ECON graduate students)

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- 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)

For an email list of any other special demographic within the graduate program, students should contact the graduate program manager (krystle.kelley@colorado.edu).

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 August following year one are 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 3.0 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 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 of the Graduate School Rules handbook:

https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/sites/default/files/attached-files/graduate_school_rules_6.9.18.pdf

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

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GPA calculation if the student has retaken and passed the course. In order to qualify for grade replacement (for up to 6 credit hours), students must submit an application to the Registrar by the appropriate deadline set by the University. 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

Three written preliminary examinations – in microeconomics, macroeconomics and econometrics must be taken in August following the successful completion of related core coursework in year one. These exams are generally scheduled two weeks prior to the start of the Fall term. Refer to the program calendar for exact dates, times and locations.

Past exams in each subject area are available for review online. Please contact the PhD program manager for access. Since 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.

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. A second failure will result in dismissal from the program, subject to the conditions for a third attempt outlined below. In no cases are attempts beyond the third 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.

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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.

All *ex ante* petitions must be made in writing to the Graduate Director.

A student qualifies *ex post facto* for a third preliminary examination attempt if that student:

- a) has passed two of the three required preliminary examinations.
- b) passed all first year courses (without retake) or has a cumulative GPA of 3.0 on all economics graduate courses at the time the third attempt is requested.
- c) notifies the Graduate Director in writing of his/her desire to exercise the option of a third attempt.

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 master's 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 cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

SECOND-YEAR COURSEWORK

Second-year coursework typically consists of three electives in the fall and three electives in the spring.

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 manager.

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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.

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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 manager
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 manager 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 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 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 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 master's 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.

MASTER'S DEGREE – CANDIDACY APPLICATION

The Candidacy Application for Advanced Degree will be forwarded to students by the PhD program manager. So that the department has time to review, obtain necessary approvals, and deliver the completed and signed form to the graduate school by deadline,

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

When completing page 1 of this form, note that the Department of Economics uses the “Plan II” degree option (non-thesis with final exam). Preliminary exams constitute the final exam. On page 2, list all courses taken in the graduate program at UCB (except failed courses) that qualify for the ECON master’s degree. **Only include the 30 hours of credit required for the degree, including** courses 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 “Grade” or “Notes” section, “IP” or “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 PhD program manager by the deadline provided.

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. 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.

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Compensation for Graduate Part-Time Instructors is always at the 50% level. 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 99Academic Year.

Graduate students are not allowed to work more than 20 hours per week without permission from the Graduate School as this may negatively impact their academic progress. See the PhD program manager for instructions on completing an “overload” form. 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 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ that of payments made at the end of January through April.

The lead GPTI and/or GIM will provide training for new GPTIs as well as information about required/elective training offered through the Graduate Teacher Program (GTP).

THIRD-YEAR COURSEWORK

Third-year coursework consists of a one-year research colloquium (ECON 8209 and ECON 8219), completion of any remaining elective coursework (a total of 6 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 those hours is aware of and approves. The PhD program manager 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.

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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 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.

ORAL 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 should work with their faculty advisor to determine when they are ready for this exam. The PhD program manager 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 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.

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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 PhD program manager sends a report each semester that lists all students taking dissertation hours and their faculty advisors. This report is sent to faculty and students 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 written approvals 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 instructions for the proposal and for the comprehensive exam.

If not completed in year four, students should plan for 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.

Each semester, the PhD program manager 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 a total of 30 credit hours required to graduate (having previously completed at least 45 hours coursework).

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.

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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.

Each year, the PhD program manager 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 manager.

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.

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

Additional information is available on the graduate school website:

<https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/academic-resources/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.

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- send placement information to the PhD program manager.
- 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.

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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/sites/default/files/attached-files/grievance_process_and_procedures_2019_final_linked.pdf

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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/sites/default/files/attached-files/graduate_student_grievance_form_last_draft.pdf

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 manager.

Graduate student questions and concerns can be brought to the chair, associate chair or program manager 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 manager.

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

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,

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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 (<http://www.colorado.edu/health/counseling>) 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.