# PhD Guidelines (Quick Reference)

## Milestones table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Expected semester</th>
<th>Expected semester (BS to PhD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form Committee (at least 4 members)</td>
<td>1(^{st}) or 2(^{nd}) long semester</td>
<td>3(^{rd}) or 4(^{th}) long semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostics Evaluation</td>
<td>2(^{nd}) or 3(^{rd}) long semester</td>
<td>4(^{th}) or 5(^{th}) long semester:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upon completion of the required 30 hours (see below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Exam</td>
<td>2 long semesters after diagnostics</td>
<td>2 long semesters after diagnostics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>1 long semesters after comprehensive Exam</td>
<td>1 long semesters after comprehensive Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>See 99 hour/14 semester rule below</td>
<td>See 99 hour/14 semester rule below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note: Student may not register in dissertation courses (i.e. CSE 6399, 6699, or 6999) until passing the Comprehensive exam.**
Diagnostics Evaluation

- Completion of the 4 core courses (or proof that they have been completed at a different institution at above bachelor’s level)
  - CSE 5311 – Algorithms, and
  - 3 of the following 4 courses:
    - CSE 5306 – Operating Systems
    - CSE 5317 – Compilers
    - CSE 5350 – Architecture
    - CSE 5301 – Data Modeling

- Completion of at least three 6000-level courses (i.e. 9 hours) as a PhD student at UTA.

- MS to PhD students: In total, a candidate must have completed at least 18 hours of course work at UTA, no transfers allowed. Research-oriented coursework (e.g. CSE 5393, 6397, or 6697) do not count. See “PhD Degree Requirements” below.

- BS to PhD students: In total, a candidate must have completed at least 30 hours of course work at UTA, no transfers allowed. 9 hours of Research-oriented coursework (e.g. CSE 5393, 6397, or 6697) required. See “PhD Degree Requirements” below.

- The PhD committee may increase the number of required courses subject to the candidate’s background during Diagnostic evaluation

- No grades below B or 3.0 is accepted

- To pass the diagnostics evaluation, the student must achieve a Grade Point Average of 3.5 or higher in the courses considered.

- A candidate may schedule his diagnostics exam while completing his last courses. In that case, he will receive a conditional pass subject to the completion of the courses such that the 3.5 GPA is not affected.
Comprehensive Exam

- Exam has two components: A written part and an oral part
- Each committee member assigns technical papers (at least one, no more than two)
- Each committee member assigns questions (at least one, no more than two)
- Written part: The student will be given approximately 2 weeks (specified by the committee) to provide responses to the questions in written form to all committee members.
- Oral part: The committee must meet for an oral presentation by the student, at which time the committee tests the student's understanding of the technical content of the assigned papers.
- Following the completion of the written and oral parts, each committee member will assign a letter grade similar to a course grade based on their assessment of the student's answers to their questions and the oral presentation. The committee then assigns a cumulative grade for the student's performance on the exam. A passing grade is a 3.5 or better GPA. A GPA of less than 3.5 is grounds for either allowing the student to repeat the exam or to fail (resulting in termination of PhD studies) the student as determined by the committee. A student will be given at most two chances to pass the exam.
PhD Degree requirements

1. Dissertation - 18 hours
2. Completion of Diagnostics Evaluation
3. Completion of Comprehensive Exam
4. MS to PhD Course work – Minimum of 18 hours of graduate level course (at least 9 hours must be 6000 level)
5. BS to PhD Course work – Minimum of 30 hours of graduate level course work as listed below:
   a. (12 hours) 4 Core courses (CSE 5311, 5306, 5317, 5350)
   b. (9 hours) 3 Subject area course work (6000-level)
   c. (9 hours) 3 Research-oriented coursework
Related Notes

- All paper work and procedural steps are facilitated by the graduate advisors. Committee chairs please ask the student to see the graduate advising secretary for:
  - Forming PhD Committee
  - Scheduling Diagnostics Evaluation
  - Scheduling Comprehensive Exam
  - Presenting Dissertation Proposal
  - Scheduling Final Defense and Graduation
- Follow PhD timeline as published in the “Graduate Program Guide (PhD) – CSE 2005/06” [http://cse2.uta.edu/graduate/guides/phd/](http://cse2.uta.edu/graduate/guides/phd/)
- PhD committee requires a minimum of 4 members, one can be outside department subject to approval of the member by the GSC and graduate office
- The new policy stated that any student first enrolled in a UT Arlington graduate program in Summer 1999 or after would be required to pay non-resident tuition beginning the first long semester in which: a) the student has been enrolled previously as a graduate student for 14 or more long semesters, AND b) the student has accumulated more than 99 semester credit hours of doctoral study at UT Arlington. Students exceeding both limits are not eligible for state-funded assistantships or for university-funded fellowships. Under this policy, reaching only one of the two limits will not result in higher tuition or loss of funding.