

OPERATIONS RESEARCH

Degree Requirements

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-208 Dual-Title Graduate Degree Programs (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-208-dual-titles/>).

To qualify for a dual-title degree, students must satisfy the requirements of the graduate major programs in which they are enrolled, in addition to the minimum requirements, or their equivalent, in the Operations Research program. Students must enroll in OR 590 for at least 1 credit in each year enrolled in the program and in residence.

Master's Degrees

For the M.S. or M.A. dual-title degree in Operations Research, the minimum requirements are:

- 6 credits in stochastic/statistical methods, including a minimum of 3 credits in each of the areas of statistical methods and stochastic processes;
- 6 credits in optimization, including a minimum of 3 credits in linear programming;
- 3 credits in computational methods; and
- 3 credits in applications/specialization. (Application courses are those that involve problem solving through the use of decision methods.)

A minimum of 9 credits must be in the 500 series. Particular courses may satisfy both the graduate major program requirements and those in the Operations Research program. A list of courses that will satisfy these requirements is maintained by the graduate program office.

A thesis may be required by the graduate major program, the supervisor of which must be a member of the Graduate Faculty recommended by the chair of the program granting the degree and approved by the Operations Research committee as qualified to supervise thesis work in operations research. If the graduate major program has an approved non-thesis track for the M.A./M.S. degree, a scholarly paper may be written in lieu of a thesis. All M.Eng. students and M.A./M.S. students who choose to submit a scholarly paper instead of a thesis must take an additional 6 credits in the Operations Research program. It is the prerogative of the graduate major program to assign these credits to one or more of the following categories: stochastic/statistical methods, optimization, computational methods, or applications.

Doctoral Degrees

The minimum requirements for the Ph.D. dual-title degree in Operations Research are:

- 9 credits in stochastic/statistical methods, including a minimum of 3 credits in each of the areas of statistical methods and stochastic processes;
- 9 credits in optimization, including a minimum of 3 credits in linear programming;
- 6 credits in computational methods, including a minimum of 3 credits in simulation; and
- 12 credits in applications/specialization.

A minimum of 18 credits must be in the 500 series, and particular courses may satisfy both the graduate major program requirements and those in the Operations Research program.

The qualifying examination committee for the dual-title Ph.D. degree must include at least one Graduate Faculty member from the Operations Research program. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs' Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role. There will be a single qualifying examination, containing elements of both the primary graduate degree program and Operations Research. Dual-title graduate degree students may require an additional semester to fulfill requirements for both areas of study and, therefore, the qualifying examination may be delayed one semester beyond the normal period allowable.

In addition to the general Graduate Council requirements for Ph.D. committees (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/phd-dissertation-committee-formation/>), the chair and at least two members of the Ph.D. committee of an Operations Research dual-title Ph.D. student must be members of the Operations Research Graduate Faculty. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs' Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role. The Operations Research representatives on the student's Ph.D. committee will develop questions for and participate in the evaluation of the comprehensive examination.

Students in the dual-title program are required to write and orally defend a dissertation on a topic that is approved in advance by their Ph.D. committee and reflects their original research and education in both their primary graduate program and Operations Research. Upon completion of the doctoral dissertation, the candidate must pass a final oral examination (the dissertation defense) to earn the Ph.D. degree. The dissertation must be accepted by the Ph.D. committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School.