

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS-MATH GRADUATE PROGRAM

DEPARTMENT LOGISTICS:

1. ***How can grad students acquire a parking pass on campus?***

YES. Go to <http://www.parking.uci.edu/> and log in. Sign up for Sustainable Transportation. A list of incentives for students who walk/bike to school are listed here:

<http://www.parking.uci.edu/AT/incentives/graduate.cfm>

Students will receive 60 total day passes (5 passes/month) and 60 total evening/weekend passes (5 passes/month) that can be used from July 1 to June 30th the following year. The later you sign up, the fewer passes you will receive. Steps to receive these permits are listed on the link above.

2. ***How do I place myself on the private tutoring list on the math department website?***

Email Donna with your rate, description of yourself, contact info, and they will place you on the list. (Refer to the current students private tutoring listings for examples).

3. ***How do I create a website with a math.uci.edu URL?***

First you need access to the math department server. Download WinSCP (for windows) or Fugu (for macs) or a SFTP software for our computer. Sign into the server: home.ps.uci.edu, your user name is your UCInetID, your password is your math.uci.edu email password. On the home.ps.uci.edu window, create a new folder with the name public_html, create a similar folder on the Local window.

On your computer, create a .html file on Notepad or a similar text processing software on your computer (Word will not work). Save the file with the name index.html. Find the file on your SFTP software, and drag the file to the math sever and save it under the public_html folder. Right click the public_html folder and click "get info" or "properties", on the octal mode representation type in 0755

Now on your internet browser, go to math.uci.edu/~UCInetID, where it says UCInetID, insert your UCInetID. The website should work now.

4. ***Where are the printers located? How do we get access to them?***

There are printers in the 410 hallway, 440M (math library), 540 hallway, and in the 510 computer lab. The printers can be accessed by IP address. On your computer, add printer through preferences, and there is an option to add by IP address. Input the IP address for the printer(s) that you want access to.

5. ***Can we checkout textbooks for courses that we are enrolled in?***

NO, you can only checkout textbooks for the courses that you are a Teaching Assistant.

6. ***What do we need to report on our taxes? (i.e. Fellowships, TA appointments, etc.)***

This depends on your marital status, etc. You will receive a W-2 from UCI to report your salary (TA/Reader, GSR), and your 1098-T to report any fellowships/tuition etc.

You can contact Faye Shores in the Tax Compliance and Reporting Division @ 949-824-7228 or Elaine Wiederman, Tax Relief Act Coordinator, elainew@uci.edu 949-824-1940. They are in the UCI payroll Department and you can also consult a tax professional for additional information.

7. ***What are the steps to become a California resident? And why do we need to become in-state resident?*** Out of state students are charge tuition. The Mathematics Department expects that students will become CA residents by their 2nd year. Once students are CA residents, tuition will not be charged. Please refer to this link for detailed information: <http://www.reg.uci.edu/residency/classification.html>
8. ***How do I get a building key to get access to the building on Sundays/holidays?***
You may receive a key on a case-by case basis from the Mathematics Department Front Office Coordinator in RH 340.
9. ***Can we switch our offices?***
Possibly upon availability. Send the request to Donna, with justification and it will be forwarded to the Front Office Coordinator, in order to determine if it is possible to switch offices, if you are a 2nd year and beyond student.
10. ***Does the department provide funding for travel?***
YES, until the funding has been exhausted. The Math Department may give up to \$500 per request, per year, with a \$1500 maximum during your entire academic career. You must write a formal request addressed to the Vice Chair of Graduate Studies, Patrick Guidotti, and send to Donna McConnell via email. The request will include 1) a description of the purpose of the trip, name of the conference, dates and location, 2) tentative budget and an email from a faculty/advisor confirming your participation with a presentation or poster in the conference, 3) copies of receipts of the budget, 4) copies of the program in which you are presenting in the conference.

ACADEMIC LOGISTICS:

11. ***How many seminars are we supposed sign up for during our first and second year?***
Two seminars. (1) is the graduate seminar that is held almost every Friday at 4pm. One of the purposes of this seminar is to expose first and second year students to the research of the professors in the department and also Teaching Assistant workshops. (2) The other is a research seminar in an area of your specialization interest. The purpose of this seminar is to expose first and second year students to research in their chosen area. Guest speakers from other universities are invited to come speak on their research.
12. ***What are the steps to file for a Master's Degree?***
First is to be sure that you are eligible for a Master's Degree. The criteria is (1) Pass two exams (comprehensive or qualifying) with at least a Master's pass, (2) Complete 45 quarter units with a B or better, this is equivalent to about 12 courses, (3) Complete either 210/220/230 ABC series, and (4) be an enrolled student the quarter the degree is to be conferred. You must advance the quarter prior to the quarter that you want the degree to be conferred.

13. **Fill out the petition for Master's Degree form:** http://www.grad.uci.edu/forms/current-student/Adv_to_Candidacy_Masters.doc

Once you have completed this form, bring it to Donna to get it signed and they will process the form and send it to Graduate Division for advancement.

During the quarter the degree is to be conferred, you will receive an email from Donna to fill out the Master Exit survey. Open the Master Exit Survey:

<https://apps.grad.uci.edu/exitsurvey/> (PhD students that are pursuing their MS degree reroute to the PhD, will need to initially sign in to the exit survey; however, they will not be required to actually complete the survey. Instead they will get a message on the screen saying they do not have to take the survey at this time, print this notification and submit it along with your paperwork. Master Students must complete the survey and print it and submit to Donna.

14. **What happens when I miss a graduate seminar?**

Email the Vice Chair of Graduate Studies and copy Donna (the Vice Chair will be hosting the seminar) to let them know.

15. **What if there are graduate courses that I want to take but they are scheduled in the same hour?**

Contact the instructor of the courses that are in conflict, and explain the situation and ask if they are willing to change the time of their classes. If there are students signed up for the classes already, ask them to see what time works best for them. If the instructor agrees, they will make contact the department (Undergraduate Coordinator, Mike Vo) to see if it is possible to change the time or the course.

16. **What happens when I receive a B- in a course?**

Generally (1) exception can be requested for a B- if it is used for a course requirement (MS or PhD). Donna will contact you for procedures. You are not in dire peril, however it is not a passing score. Students must maintain at least a 3.1 GPA in order to be appointed as a TA.

17. **What are the steps for Advancing to PhD Candidacy?**

Once you are in your 3rd year and your advisor has deemed that you are ready to advance (you should have done a significant amount of research with your advisor at this point), contact professors that you and your advisor will want to be on your Advancement Committee. Your committee must consist of (1) your advisor, (2) three Senate-faculty members of the department (Senate-faculty members of the department can be found on <http://www.math.uci.edu/category/position/faculty>), and (3) one Senate-faculty member outside of the department. Ultimately, you will need five Senate-faculty members, at least three must be in the math department and at least (1) must be outside the department.

Once you have contacted your committee, schedule a date that works for all five members. This date must be at least two weeks from when you assemble your committee. Once you and your committee settle on a date, email Donna to let her know (she needs at least two weeks notice of the date) and she will assign a room and a time for your advancement. Let your committee know of the day, time, and room. Remind them the week of.

If you have a working document on your research that you will be presenting for your Advancement, email that document to your committee so that they can review your work prior to seeing your presentation.

Prior to the day of your advancement, fill out the advancement to candidacy form:

http://www.grad.uci.edu/forms/current-student/PhD_Form_I.doc

Once you pass your advancement, give the form to Donna to sign. Go to the cashier's office, located in Aldrich Hall, and pay the \$90 filing fee (cash only). And turn in the form with the receipt of the filing fee to Grad Division (101 Aldrich Hall).

18. *How can I give a talk on my research in the department?*

YES. There are the research seminars that you can present by the permission of the professor who is leading the seminar. There are also the Learning Seminars in the department, where the purpose of these seminars is to learn and teach each other in the seminar on research topics related to the field of interest.

Finally, there is the Mathematics Graduate Student Colloquium (MGSC, <http://www.math.uci.edu/~mgsc/>) that is hosted by grad students. The purpose of the MGSC is for grad students to present their research or any related topics to other grad students, this is to create a safe space for grad students to inquire each other about the research they are doing, work on presentation skills, and to get advice on their work.

19. *What happens when I do not satisfy my exam requirements by the beginning of the 2nd year? By the beginning of the 3rd year?*

You must talk to Donna about the next steps to take.

20. *What is expected of us at "vacation time?" Can we go home during finals week when we don't have exams?*

The only expectation that the department has, is that you should arrive back to campus at least a few days prior to the beginning of the quarter. (If you are a US-Non/resident seeking CA residency, please refer to the link on #7 above).

This is the link to the academic calendar for the year. Use this to help you plan when you should come back. <https://www.reg.uci.edu/navigation/calendars.html>

Each Advisor has different expectations; you should ask them what they expect you to do over the summer or winter/spring breaks.

21. *When should I choose an advisor?*

You should choose an advisor at the latest by the beginning of your 3rd year. At this point, you should have already finished your Qualifying exams and should have completed a majority of your course requirements. You should have been exposed to many of the professors and their research from the graduate seminar. If you are unsure of who to choose as your advisor from a certain discipline, then you should talk to many of the professors in that discipline and let them know that you're interested in their field but not sure exactly who you want to work with. They will definitely give you a better idea of who to work with. You can also talk to Professor Guidotti for his input.

22. *What are the PhD course requirements?*

You must complete the entire series of 210, 220, and 230. Once you have decided your area of concentration (this decision will be concurrent with your decision of choosing an

advisor), then you will need to complete two courses inside your area and two courses outside of your area. Note that 205/206 do not count as an inside/outside course. 210/220/230 can be used as an inside or an outside only when they are not being used for a Qualifying exam requirement.

23. The following are the courses that can be used as possible inside/outside courses:

- a. **Algebra:** Math 230ABC (core), Math 232ABC, Math 233ABC, 234ABC, 235ABC, 239ABC
- b. **Analysis:** Math 210ABC(core), Math 220ABC(core), Math 211ABC, Math 260ABC, Math 295ABC, Math 296
- c. **Applied and Computational Mathematics:** Math 290ABC (core), Math 225ABC, Math 226ABC, Math 227AB, Math 291ABC, Math 295ABC
- d. **Geometry and Topology:** Math 218ABC(core), Math 222ABC, Math 240ABC, Math 245ABC, Math 250ABC
- e. **Logic:** Math 280ABC (core), Math 281ABC, Math 282ABC, Math 285ABC
- f. **Probability:** Math 210ABC, Math 211ABC, Math 270ABC, Math 271ABC, Math 272ABC, Math 274

24. What are the steps for Advancing to PhD Candidacy?

Once you are in your 3rd year and your advisor has deemed that you are ready to advance (you should have done a significant amount of research with your advisor at this point), contact professors that you and your advisor will want to be on your Advancement Committee. Your committee must consist of (1) your advisor, (2) three Senate-faculty members of the department (Senate-faculty members of the department can be found on <http://www.math.uci.edu/category/position/faculty>), and (3) one Senate-faculty member outside of the department. Ultimately, you will need five Senate-faculty members, at least three must be in the math department and at least 1 must be outside the department.

Contact your committee; schedule a date that works for all five members. This date must be at least two weeks from when you assemble your committee. Once you and your committee settle on a date, email Donna to let her know (she needs at least two weeks notice of the date) and she will assign a room and a time for your advancement. Let your committee know of the day, time, and room. Remind them the week of. If you have a working document on your research that you will be presenting for your Advancement, email that document to your committee so that they can review your work prior to seeing your presentation.

Prior to the day of your advancement, fill out the advancement to candidacy form:

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Once you pass your advancement, give the form to Donna to sign. Go to the cashier's office, located in Aldrich Hall, and pay the \$90 filing fee (cash only). And turn in the form with the receipt of the filing fee to Grad Division (101 Aldrich Hall).

25. When is the latest that I can advance to candidacy?

By the summer before your 4th year.

TEACHING:

1. If an instructor wants me to attend lecture, am I supposed to?

YES, so long as you do not have a conflicting schedule (such as you have your own class during lecture time) or if you do not go over your 20 hours of work per week, or if you do

not go over your 220 total hours of work per quarter. You should maintain constant communication with the instructor.

2. ***What percentage of the midterm are TAs supposed to grade?***

Depending on the number of TAs that are assigned to the lecture, the work should be divided almost evenly. The instructor may assign you more grading, as long as you do not go over your 20 hours of work for that week, or if you do not go over your 220 total hours of work for the quarter.

3. ***What happens when I forget to login at the Tutoring Center?***

Email Donna to let them know, and schedule to make up those hours that you missed.

4. ***What if I wanted to change the room for one of my discussions? Who do I talk to?***

Contact the Undergraduate Program Coordinator (Mike Vo) and let them know that there is an issue with your room, and that you would like to change the room. This may or may not be possible, depending on the availability of rooms, etc.

5. ***What if an instructor asks me to cover their lecture? Am I allowed to?***

NO. Grad students are not permitted to be the Instructor on Record (IR). IR roles and responsibilities are to lead lectures and provide new materials to students that will be discussed in discussion and may be tested on the exams. IR can ask if you could switch lecture and discussion times, so that they can make up their lecture during your discussion time, and your discussion during lecture time (this is to be sure that you and the IR will not work more than the 20 hours per week as mandated in your contract).

6. ***How long do TAs have to hold onto assignments that students did not pick up? (i.e. homework, quizzes, midterms, finals, etc.)***

TAs should turn in all assignments that were not picked up by students to the Instructor, he can determine if they should be turned into the department for shredding. Final exams are to be held by the IR and for a period of two academic years.

7. ***How do I reserve a room to lead a review session for my students' midterm/final?***

Contact the Undergraduate Program Coordinator two weeks prior to the date that you want to have a review session. You can fill out a form, located in the office window of the Undergrad Coordinator (RH 340B)

8. ***Are TAs responsible to submit grades at the end of the quarter?***

Typically, the Instructor of Record will submit grades at the end of the quarter.

If we are giving evening or Saturday review sessions, are there rooms open in RH? Do we have to reserve the room?

Ideally, you shouldn't give review sessions on the weekends or late evenings, and it is not encouraged.

9. In the event you would like to request this, please discuss with the Undergrad Program Coordinator (Mike Vo).

10. ***Are there syllabus files? YES, Or files of old exams? YES***

They are located on the math website.

<http://www.math.uci.edu/courses-instruction/course-syllabi>

<http://www.math.uci.edu/undergraduate/courses/calculus-2a2b-resources>

11. *When students ask you advising questions that you don't know the answer to, to whom should you send them?*

The Vice Chair of Undergraduate Studies or the Undergraduate Program Coordinator (RH 340B) or Student Affairs (RH 134).

12. *When do we find out about TA assignments for the following quarter?*

You should know about a week before the quarter begins. Sometimes, you may know the day before or as early as two weeks before. It depends on a lot of factors; when Donna receives all of the TA preference forms, and when all notifications for GSR support is received from Faculty. It is very important that you turn in your forms on time, preferably way before the deadline, so the TA pool can be determined.

13. *Can we get our teaching schedule changed?*

Most likely your assignment cannot be changed. It creates a domino effect. You may ask Donna, however, it has to be a very good reason in order to make a change to your schedule (changing instructors, switching discussions with another TA, times, rooms, etc.)

14. *Can I cancel my discussions?*

NO. Under no circumstance can you cancel your discussion. You must hold your discussion at the time that is assigned on Webreg, or you must have your TA buddy hold your discussion for you for that day. You cannot cancel your discussion in hopes to make it up at a later point in the quarter. You cannot move your discussion time to an earlier or later time without contacting the Undergraduate program coordinator or Donna (this is rarely approved).

15. *How do I find a TA buddy?*

You can ask another fellow TA from your cohort or a current grad student who is also a TA to be your TA buddy. You can email the math forum (math-forum@math.uci.edu) to ask the entire grad student body to be your TA buddy. But you must list a TA buddy within the first week of the quarter.

16. *What happens when my TA buddy can't cover my discussions or tutoring center hours?*

Ideally, your TA buddy is supposed to be someone that can cover your discussion or office hours. If for some unforeseeable circumstances that your TA buddy cannot cover for you, then you must find a replacement TA buddy by asking another TA that has an assignment in the quarter that your are requesting. In the event you have your buddy or another TA cover, you must contact the Instructor and Donna, prior to the occurrence.

17. *What happens when I can't find a TA buddy?*

Ask your pedagogical fellow to be your TA buddy.

18. *Is there a timesheet for being a TA? Or being a grader?*

There is only a timesheet for being a grader. And a log-in when working in the tutoring center (this log-in is to keep track of your hours).

19. **Can we date undergraduate students? NO. Can we date peer graduate students?**
YES, as long as you are not a TA for a graduate course that they are enrolled in, and it is mutual.

20. **What if there is a question that we have about teaching that hasn't been addressed yet (in training, seminars, FAQ, etc.)?**

Contact your pedagogical fellow. Their position is to help you with all your teaching needs and answer any questions you may have, and help you. If you have any teaching problems or conflicts, with students or Instructors, please contact the 2A/2B coordinator (Professor Chris Davis and Professor Alessandra Pantano).

QUALIFYING EXAMS:

1. **How many times can I take a certain Qualifying Exam?**

You can take an exam up to 3 times. After the second time, however, you will need to submit a petition to Donna, to take an exam for a 3rd time. The petition will be forwarded to the Graduate Studies Committee for review and decision. The petition may or may not be granted.

2. **If we do not show up to take a Qualifying exam, will that still count as an attempt?**

NO. But let Donna know as soon as you decide not to take it so the exam roster will be complete and accurate.

3. **Is there a way to be removed from the roster for the Qualifying exam?**

YES, email Donna.

4. **Are we allowed to know who is on the Exam committee? How does the committee work?**

You are not allowed to know who is on the committee. For every exam, there are three professors on the committee. Historically, one of the professors on the committee is the instructor. There may be times where the instructor is not on the committee (vacation, sabbatical, scheduling, etc.) The committee will choose a set of problems for the June and September exams. It is to the discretion of the committee to decide how they want to grade the exams and decide what is a passing score. The decision on what is a passing score is determined after all exams have been graded. The passing scores are reviewed and approved by the Vice Chair of Graduate studies, prior to being released to the students.

5. **What can I expect on the day of a Qualifying exam or comprehensive exam?**

On the day of, you should have your student ID, a few pencils, and an eraser. The proctor will come into the room and take attendance of who is taking the exam. The proctor will then hand out blank pieces of paper to everyone. You should have at least one sheet for

every problem of the exam. Then you will receive the problems list (one sheet).

You must only use one side of every paper that you use. You must write your name and ID on every paper that you use. You must label every problem that you solve, and you must have at most one problem per sheet of paper (that is you cannot have two problems on the same sheet).

DO NOT staple your exam when your turn it in. The reason is so that the committee can scan your exams and grade them easily.

If you believe that there is a typo or a mistake on the exam, quietly walk up to the proctor and let them know, they will ask you to return to your seat and contact the other committee members to be sure that there is a typo. They will make an announcement of the error if there is one.

6. ***When do we find out about our results for our Qualifying exams?***

Donna will email you your results about a week after the exam has taken place or when all the results have been received from the Exam Committees. Definitely before summer session II or fall quarter begins.

7. **When can we look at our exam results?**

Donna will email you the approximate dates, but you will definitely be able to look at the exams in July (for Spring exams) or mid-October (for Fall exams). The reason for the wait is because the department needs to obtain all exams from the committee, sort them, and then file them. Each score needs to be recorded in the database and official letters are prepared and put in each students academic file.

When you are able to look at your exams, you cannot take them outside of RH 340. If you want a copy of it, Donna will be able to make a copy for you.

8. ***What happens if you feel that you would like to contest your score on the Qualifying exams?***

Email Donna, with **specific details** of the problem(s) you are addressing, and she will forward your email to the Vice Chair of Graduate Studies. He will review the issue and meet with the Exam Committee.