

**PhD Program Notes 2009-2010  
TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<b>Foreword</b>	page 2
<b>I.</b>	<b>Office of Economics Graduate Studies</b>	page 3
<b>II.</b>	<b>Rules Governing the PhD Program</b>	page 4
	Credit Hours and Required Courses	
	Transfer Credit and Reduction of Credit	
	Consortium Courses	
	Qualifying Exams	
	MA in Route to PhD	
	Program of Study	
	Field Exams	
	Dissertation Advisor and Committee Selection	
	Dissertation Credit (ECON 998 and 999)	
	Advancing to Candidacy	
	Writing and Defending a Dissertation	
	PhD Conferral	
	Termination/Dismissal from the Program	
<b>III.</b>	<b>Information for New Students</b>	page 12
	University Policy	
	Student Identification	
	Email Accounts	
	Patriot Web	
	Preparing for Start of Classes	
	Getting to Campus (Parking and Transportation)	
	A Note on Advising	
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	page 15
	Sample first year class schedules	
	Sample Program of Study Form	
	Applying for In-State Tuition	
	Full-Time Status Information	
	Principles Governing Financial Aid	
	For New International Students	
	Some Websites to Assist You in Relocating	
	Frequently Requested Phone Numbers	

[top of page](#)

## FOREWORD

[back to Table of Contents](#)

These *Program Notes* summarize various pieces of information for students who are pursuing the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Economics at George Mason University. *Section I* describes the organization of the Office of Economics Graduate Studies and the division of labor within the Office.

*Section II* summarizes the primary rules regarding the PhD program. Some of these rules are departmental in origin, while others are established by the university. With respect to university rules, you should also read the [Mason university catalog](#), particularly as it pertains to academic policies toward graduate students.

*Section III* provides some information that should prove particularly helpful to students who are new to Mason. The final two segments of this section, on parking and on advising, are, of course, relevant to continuing students as well.

*Section IV* presents eight Appendices, the first two of which are particularly relevant to entering students.

Additional sources for information can be found at the following websites:

College of Humanities and Social Sciences <http://chss.gmu.edu/>

Resources for Current Students <http://www2.gmu.edu/resources/students/>

[back to Table of Contents](#)

## I. OFFICE OF ECONOMICS GRADUATE STUDIES [back to Table of Contents](#)

The Office of Economics Graduate Studies consists of three people with different types of responsibility. This section provides a brief map of the Office so that you can organize your contact with that office effectively. The personnel and some relevant information about them are displayed in the table below:

Richard E. Wagner	Carlos Ramirez	Mary Jackson
PhD Director and Director of Economics Graduate Studies	MA Director	Program Coordinator
Enterprise Hall #334	Enterprise Hall # 341	Enterprise Hall #336
703-993-1132	703-993-1145	703-993-1135
<a href="mailto:rwagner@gmu.edu">rwagner@gmu.edu</a>	<a href="mailto:cramire2@gmu.edu">cramire2@gmu.edu</a>	<a href="mailto:econgrad@gmu.edu">econgrad@gmu.edu</a> <a href="mailto:mjacksoq@gmu.edu">mjacksoq@gmu.edu</a>

There is a clear division of labor and responsibility within this office. For most of the issues and questions you might have, **Mary Jackson** is the person you should approach. She is the person within the Office who is most knowledgeable about relevant rules and procedures. She also organizes and coordinates the flow of work and information, both within the Office and between the Office and other precincts within the University. As Program Coordinator, most of the work that reaches the desk of the PhD Director will originate with Mary Jackson.

In his capacity as Director of Economics Graduate Studies, **Richard Wagner** has overall responsibility for the conduct of the Office and all programs it administers. In his capacity as PhD Director, he will end up signing various forms pertaining to your progress through the program, but these forms will emanate from Mary Jackson in her capacity as Program Coordinator. Professor Wagner also serves as advisor to PhD students and as admissions officer into the PhD program.

[back to Table of Contents](#)

## II. RULES GOVERNING THE PhD PROGRAM

[back to Table of Contents](#)

### CREDIT HOURS AND REQUIRED COURSES [back to Table of Contents](#)

- 72 credit hours must be applied to the degree.
- No more than 24 credit hours of [dissertation credit](#) can be applied to the degree (a minimum of 12 credit hours must be applied).
- 18 credit hours of core course work must be applied to the degree (exceptions or waivers must be approved by the PhD Director):
  - 6 credit hours of Microeconomic theory (ECON 811 and 812)
  - 6 credit hours of Macroeconomic theory (ECON 715 and 816)
  - 3 credit hours of Mathematical Economics (ECON 630)
  - 3 credit hours of Econometrics (ECON 637)
- Two or more courses in each of two fields must be completed prior to taking [field exams](#) (see “Field Exams”).
- At least 42 credit hours must be earned as a degree seeking student in the Economics PhD program at George Mason University (see [Transfer Credit and Reduction of Credit](#)).
- Up to 6 credit hours of course work may be taken outside of the Economics department (through another discipline) with the approval of the PhD Director.
- Up to 6 credit hours of course work may be taken through the Consortium (see [Consortium Courses](#)) with the approval of the PhD Director.
- Students must [advance to candidacy](#) within 6 years after first enrollment and must complete dissertation requirements and graduate within 5 year after advancing to candidacy.

### TRANSFER CREDIT AND REDUCTION OF CREDIT [back to Table of Contents](#)

**Transfer Credit** may be awarded for graduate course work taken at another university or through the GMU Extended Studies Program (non-degree) prior to admission to the Economics PhD program at George Mason University if a degree was not conferred at the previous university. Transfer credit cannot be awarded for courses that were taken more than six years prior to a student’s first enrollment or for courses for which a student received a grade below B (3.0). Students wishing to receive transfer credit must notify the PhD Director during the first semester of study.

**Reduction of Credit** may be awarded for course work that was applied to a degree earned at another university prior to admission to the Economics PhD program at George Mason University. Students may receive up to 30 credit hours of credit reduction at the discretion of the PhD Director. Reduction of credit follows the same rules as transfer credit, but the six year time limit does not apply. Students wishing to receive a reduction of credit must notify the PhD Director during the first semester of study.

Approved transfer credit and credit reduction may not appear on the transcript until after the 6th week of classes.

**All students are required to take the micro and macro sequence, even if they have taken similar courses at another institution.** Exceptions must be approved in writing by the PhD Coordinator prior to the start of the first semester of study. Waivers of required courses (micro, macro, math econ, econometrics) may not be awarded to students who do not pass the qualifying exams on the first attempt.

Students who are awarded any reduction of credit or more than 12 credit hours of transfer credit are not eligible to confer an MA degree at George Mason University while pursuing the PhD (see [MA Degree Conferral](#)).

## **CONSORTIUM COURSES** [back to Table of Contents](#)

George Mason University is a member of the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area. With the approval of the PhD Director, eligible GMU students may take courses at any consortium university provided that the courses are not offered at Mason. A student may only take one consortium class per semester, and may not exceed 6 credit hours of consortium work. **Students will not be permitted to take consortium courses prior to successfully completing qualifying exams.** Any exceptions must be approved by the PhD Director.

Students enrolling through the consortium are billed by Mason, so those receiving in-state tuition at Mason will pay in-state tuition for classes taken through the consortium. Consortium paperwork must be filled out and approved by the PhD Director well in advance of the start of classes to allow the registrar's office time to process your request. Consortium policies and procedures are available online through the [Registrar's](#) or you can contact the Consortium Coordinator at 703-993-2439 for more information.

## **QUALIFYING EXAMS** [back to Table of Contents](#)

- All students must take qualifying exams, also known as prelims, in microeconomics and macroeconomics after completing the micro and macro course work.
- Students are allowed two attempts at each exam.
- Any student who fails an exam twice may appeal to the committee for a third attempt – if the appeal is not granted, or if a failing grade is received on the third attempt, the student will be terminated from the program .
- A Marginal Fail on an exam is considered a pass at the master's level, and can be applied to an MA degree – a Marginal Fail on the second attempt of an exam entitles the student to a 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt at the exam without an appeal.
- Qualifying exams must be passed before the field exams can be attempted.
- Each qualifying exam is three hours in length and is offered twice yearly (fall/spring).
- Students who have not attempted both qualifying exams by the third semester in the degree program will not be considered for financial aid from the department without special permission from the PhD Director.

- Qualifying exams will not be waived under any circumstances.
- Qualifying exams from other universities are not acceptable.
- Copies of past exams are available in the Economics Graduate Studies Office and online at the [department website](#).

## **MA IN ROUTE TO PhD** [back to Table of Contents](#)

Students who receive more than 12 hours of transfer credit are not eligible to apply for the MA degree while pursuing the PhD degree. Reduction of credit cannot be applied to master's degrees, so **students who receive a reduction of credit toward the PhD degree are not eligible to apply for the MA degree while pursuing the PhD degree.** All other students who have at least a 3.0 GPA may earn an MA degree from Mason after completing 30 credit hours of course work, of which 18 credits must be completed in MA degree-seeking status, and passing the PhD qualifying exams.

Eligible students need to submit the following:

- Secondary Program Application (before completing 12 graduate credits)
- Graduation Intent (during semester prior to degree conferral date)

Contact the Program Coordinator for more information on finding and completing the required forms. There is a deadline to apply each semester, so begin your paperwork as early in the semester as possible.

## **PROGRAM OF STUDY** [back to Table of Contents](#)

The Program of Study lists all course work, dissertation hours, and transfer credit/credit reduction to be applied to the PhD degree. The College of Humanities and Social Sciences Dean's Office requires that an approved Program of Study accompany the request to advance to candidacy.

Students should submit a Program of Study for approval after successful completion of both qualifying exams and prior to requesting a registration number for ECON 998. All completed course work should be listed, as well as course work yet to be completed (use old class schedules as a reference to estimate which classes will be taken when).

The Program of Study is then submitted to the Program Coordinator to be approved by the Director of Economics Graduate Studies and the Chairman of the Economics Department.

Prior to completing the qualifying exams, the Program of Study form may be used as a planning tool for self-advising. A [template](#) of the Program of Study is included in the *Appendices* section, and the Program Coordinator has an electronic version as well.

## FIELD EXAMS [back to Table of Contents](#)

All students must successfully complete two field exams prior to advancing to candidacy. Students are not permitted to take field exams prior to successful completion of the qualifying exams unless they meet the exception discussed in the Qualifying Exams section or have special permission from the PhD Director.

Field exams are presently offered in the following fields:

Austrian Economics	Institutions and Development
Constitutional Economics	Law and Economics
Economic History	Monetary Theory
Experimental Economics	Public Choice
Industrial Organization	Public Finance

Field exams are three hours in length and are offered during the same timeframe as qualifying exams.

Students are allowed two attempts to pass each field exam. Any student who fails the same field exam twice may appeal to the committee for a third attempt. If the appeal is not granted, or if a failing grade is received on the third attempt, the student must choose a different field of study.

Prior to taking a field exam, a student must take all of the required course work in that field. The following Table lists the courses presently suitable for the various field exams. It should also be noted that occasions might arise that a student is not able to take the two courses required to sit for a field exam. This is most likely to happen through faculty leaves of absence or through timing conflicts in student scheduling. In such instances, a student has three options: (1) delay taking the exam, (2) take a different field exam and (3) petition the PhD Director to offer a substitute for the missing course.

Austrian Economics	880, 881
Constitutional Economics	828, 895 (Const. Econ)
Economic History	623, 823
Experimental Economics	885, 886, 838
Industrial Organization	844, 846
Institutions and Development	676, 829, 866 (2 of the 3)
Law and Economics	840, 841
Monetary Theory	817, 871
Public Choice	852, 854
Public Finance	849, 950

## DISSERTATION ADVISOR AND COMMITTEE SELECTION [back to Table of Contents](#)

Prior to enrolling in dissertation credit, you must choose a dissertation advisor. The dissertation advisor must be a full-time tenure or tenure-track faculty member within the Economics department, and should be someone who specializes in the area in which you plan to write a dissertation. If you have difficulty selecting a dissertation advisor, you can seek advice from the PhD Director or do directed readings (ECON 896) with different faculty members to get a feel for them. Keep in mind that students are limited to 6 credit hours of ECON 896 unless the PhD Director approves an exception.

The dissertation committee consists of the dissertation advisor, a 2<sup>nd</sup> faculty member from the Economics department, and a Mason faculty member from outside the department. Additional members may be added to the committee, but the 3 core committee members must be full-time tenure or tenure-track faculty members. Any exceptions must have the approval of the PhD Director and the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. The dissertation advisor should be able to assist in the creation of a dissertation committee.

## DISSERTATION CREDIT (ECON 998 AND 999) [back to Table of Contents](#)

All students are required to apply at least 12 credit hours and no more than 24 credit hours of dissertation credit to their degree programs. Most students will apply 24 credit hours of dissertation credit to their degrees, but students who take extra elective courses will see a reduction in the total number of dissertation hours that can be applied to their degrees. A student can take more than the required number of dissertation hours, but can only apply the number of credit hours indicated in the Program of Study.

Dissertation credit includes Dissertation Proposal Research credit (ECON 998) and Dissertation Research credit (ECON 999). Students may take any combination of ECON 998 and ECON 999 to complete the required dissertation credit hours, but all students must take at least one credit hour of ECON 999 (which means that a student cannot both propose and defend a dissertation during the same semester). Students who have completed their course work and are enrolled in dissertation credit only are considered full-time with a course load of 6 credit hours.

Dissertation Proposal Research credit (ECON 998) is taken by students who have finished their course work, but have not yet advanced to candidacy. Some students choose to begin taking ECON 998 while completing their final course work. ECON 998 is a variable credit course, which means that the student can choose the number of credit hours to be assigned to the course. Students who wish to enroll in ECON 998 must email [econdiss@gmu.edu](mailto:econdiss@gmu.edu) to request a course registration number. Requests should include the name of your dissertation advisor and number of credit hours you are requesting. **Only those students who have passed qualifying exams (micro and macro), both field exams, and submitted a Program of Study to the program coordinator will be given a course registration number.**

Dissertation Research credit (ECON 999) is taken by students who have advanced to candidacy. Although ECON 999 is a variable credit course, the College of Humanities and

Social Sciences requires students to register in chunks of 3 credit hours (i.e.-3,6,9,etc.) until they have completed the number of dissertation credit hours required in the Program of Study. Students who wish to enroll in ECON 999 must email [chssdiss@gmu.edu](mailto:chssdiss@gmu.edu) to request a course registration number.

**Students enrolled in ECON 998 or 999 must maintain continuous registration (register for at least one credit hour every fall/spring semester) until they graduate.**

Students who fail to maintain continuous registration are required to pay for missed credits during the semester that they return. These courses are graded IP until the dissertation has been successfully defended, at which time they are changed to S.

## **ADVANCING TO CANDIDACY** [back to Table of Contents](#)

Students enrolled in ECON 998 should be working toward creating a written dissertation proposal to be formally presented to and approved by the dissertation committee. Templates for the proposal paper and proposal approval signature sheet are available online at <http://thesis.gmu.edu>.

You should plan to present your proposal to the committee during the semester before you intend to enroll in ECON 999. It is not recommended that this process take place between semesters (winter break or summer session), as many faculty members are unavailable during those periods and it can be difficult to coordinate meetings with them.

After the committee has approved the proposal and signed the signature sheet in black ink, submit the proposal signature sheet to the Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator will submit a memo to the Dean requesting that the committee be approved and the student be advanced to candidacy. The Program of Study and proposal signature sheet will be sent to the Dean with the memo for approval.

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences will notify you by mail when you have been advanced to candidacy and your committee has been approved. Once you receive this notification, you are eligible to register for ECON 999 and should contact [chssdiss@gmu.edu](mailto:chssdiss@gmu.edu) for a course registration number.

## WRITING AND DEFENDING A DISSERTATION [back to Table of Contents](#)

The dissertation is a written piece of original thinking that demonstrates doctoral candidates' mastery of the subject matter, methodologies, and conceptual foundations in their chosen field of study. Guidelines for the content and general format of doctoral dissertations are in the *Thesis, Dissertation, or Project Guide*. You will be expected to adhere strictly to all of the guidelines listed on that website, so it is imperative that you read the information on that website carefully and follow the guidelines to the letter. You will not graduate as scheduled if you fail to write, defend, and submit your dissertation according to the library guidelines.

In your last semester of dissertation writing, there will be a strict timeline of when you have to complete certain tasks. If you are unsure about the timeline of events after reading the library website, refer to the information provided on the [Economics website](#) or contact the Program Coordinator as early in the semester as possible for more information.

The main tasks that you will need to complete during your last semester are as follows:

- Submit graduation paperwork to the Registrar's Office.
- Format review with the Thesis and Dissertation Coordinator in the library.
- Schedule your dissertation defense with your committee.
- Reserve a room for your defense (often the Economics conference room).
- Submit a copy of your dissertation to the Johnson Center library for public review.
- Contact the Program Coordinator regarding dissertation flyer to announce your dissertation to the university community.
- Defend your dissertation.
- Get approval signatures from the committee, Director of Economics Graduate Studies, Department Chair, and Dean.
- Submit your dissertation paper and additional required materials to the library.

You should keep in mind that directors, chairs, and deans tend to be busy people, so it may take several days to obtain their signatures. **Most importantly, all signatures required for the dissertation and proposal process must be in black ink.** If they are not, you will have to get all of the signatures again before the library will accept your dissertation and allow you to graduate.

## PhD DEGREE CONFERRAL [back to Table of Contents](#)

In addition to completing your degree requirements, you must also let the Registrar's Office know that you intend to graduate before your degree will be conferred. At the beginning of your last semester, you should visit the [Mason Graduation Office](#). There you will find graduation instructions and answers to frequently asked questions.

To initiate the audit of your record, which must be completed before you can graduate, you must file an Intent to Graduate and an Application for Graduation. Students applying for multiple degrees (PhD and MA or Certificate) must submit separate intents and applications for each degree. You can file your Intent to Graduate online through Patriot Web. The Application for Graduation is available online at the Mason Graduation Office website under forms and

should be submitted to the Program Coordinator for review and approval. Students must have completed all degree requirements and have a degree GPA of 3.0 or better to be approved for graduation.

The intent and application forms are due five weeks after the first day of classes for the semester. The degree conferral date is usually a couple of weeks after the last day of classes. Although the conferral date is the date that you will officially graduate, your degree may take several weeks to be displayed on your transcript and mailed to you. Degree applications will not be automatically extended if graduation is postponed; students must reapply for each conferral date.

At the end of each spring semester, the [College of Humanities and Social Sciences](#) holds a convocation ceremony, and the university holds a commencement ceremony. Doctoral students may participate only if they have successfully completed all degree requirements, including defending and submitting a signed, final copy of their dissertation by the deadline. Summer and fall graduates may participate in the convocation and commencement ceremonies held during the following spring.

## **TERMINATION/DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM** [back to Table of Contents](#)

Students may be terminated from the Economics program if they fail to achieve satisfactory progress toward their degree. In the Economics program, termination is usually the result of failure to successfully complete qualifying exams, or failure to advance to candidacy or graduate within the required time limits. Students who are terminated are no longer eligible to take courses in the program, but may apply to another degree program or take courses in other programs through nondegree studies.

A student is dismissed from the university after accumulating grades of F in two courses, or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or F) in graduate courses. A notation of academic dismissal is affixed to the graduate student's official record. A student who is dismissed may not take additional course work at George Mason University.

### III. INFORMATION FOR NEW STUDENTS

[back to Table of Contents](#)

The information provided in this section provides some useful links to help you become familiar with the George Mason community, and also to gain access all the resources available to students. Major university offices have extended hours during the first few weeks of school, with some offices also offering extended hours on certain nights throughout the school year.

#### UNIVERSITY POLICY [back to Table of Contents](#)

As a Mason student, you will be expected to adhere to the policy guidelines outlined in the current university catalog. **It is important that you review the information in the catalog and be aware of University policy and how it impacts you as a student.** The following sections contain important information that you should review: *Academic Policies*, especially graduate academic policies, and *Graduate Programs in Economics*. This information, along with other useful information and forms, is also available through the [College of Humanities and Social Sciences](#).

#### STUDENT IDENTIFICATION [back to Table of Contents](#)

Your George Mason photo ID will be used for student benefits such as checking out books from the library, in-person registration, purchasing parking passes, making photo copies on campus, paying for meals on campus (if you choose to enroll in a meal plan or the Mason Money program), discounts on campus sports and theater events, as well as discounts from local merchants. Obtain your ID through the Photo ID Office in Student Union Building II on the Fairfax Campus. Photo ID offices are also located on the Arlington and Prince William campuses. For more information, visit the [Photo ID Office](#).

#### EMAIL ACCOUNTS [back to Table of Contents](#)

Your George Mason e-mail account is the primary mode of communication used by the administration to inform students about important matters related to their academic pursuits. **Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.** All official notices and information will be sent to your Mason e-mail account, so it is very important you get your e-mail account set up early and monitor the account on a regular basis. Students choosing to use another service (e.g., yahoo, msn) as their primary account should have their Mason e-mail forwarded to that address to ensure they receive all important communications. Instructions for setting up your GMU email account are available online at [http://itusupport.gmu.edu/activate\\_account\\_instructions.asp](http://itusupport.gmu.edu/activate_account_instructions.asp). Forwarding instructions are available online at <http://itusupport.gmu.edu/scfaq.asp>. This is a frequently asked questions page, so you will have to scroll down for the instructions.

## **PATRIOT WEB** [back to Table of Contents](#)

The Patriot Web system allows students to view and make changes to their student records. Changes can be made to your pin, address, phone number, emergency contact information, and registration. Patriot Web also allows you to view information about your registration, transcripts, student account and holds. Patriot Web can be accessed online at <https://patriotweb.gmu.edu> .

Occasionally, changes that are made in Patriot Web do not take effect. Students are responsible for checking their schedules via the Patriot Web system before the end of the add period to verify that their schedules are correct and that they are properly enrolled.

## **PREPARING FOR CLASS** [back to Table of Contents](#)

The University Bookstore is located in the Johnson Student Center. In addition to being the source for all textbooks, the bookstore offers a wide variety of classroom supplies, magazines, cards, gifts, and George Mason logo items such as sweatshirts, hats, and mugs. Textbooks can be purchased online at <http://gmubkstore.com/> , or you can shop in person. On the Fairfax campus, textbooks are located on the lower level of the bookstore. Books are organized by class, with the classes arranged in numerical order. Classes may have more than one section and/or require more than one text, so make sure to look carefully to ensure that you get the correct books for your class section.

## **GETTING TO CAMPUS - Parking Decal and Bus/Metro Schedules** [back to Table of Contents](#)

Most students choose to live off-campus and commute via automobile to classes. In order to park on campus, automobiles must display a valid George Mason parking decal. Decals can be purchased in the Parking Services building, located next to Enterprise Hall on the Fairfax Campus. Students who work or take classes on the Arlington campus should purchase an Arlington campus parking pass.

The George Mason community is also linked to the greater Washington metropolitan area via public transportation, including an extensive bus and subway system. You can access information about Metro bus and subway routes in the Fairfax and surrounding area by going online to <http://transportation.gmu.edu/> . The Cue Bus System runs from the Fairfax Campus to the Vienna Metro, as well as to other stops around Fairfax. Maps and schedules are available online at <http://www.fairfaxva.gov/CUEBus/CUEBus.asp>. The Cue Bus is free with a Mason ID card, and Metro rates vary by destination.

## **A NOTE ON ADVISING** [back to Table of Contents](#)

The University Catalog notes: “Registration for newly admitted graduate students, as well as continuing students, begins with a visit to the student’s academic advisor.” You should interpret this statement as one of possibility and not one of necessity; you can register for classes without visiting an advisor.

Our program rules are sufficiently clear that you can select your courses and develop your programs of study without conferring with or obtaining permission from an advisor. The structure of the program is simple: there are six required courses that everyone must take, along with two qualifying exams and two field exams that must be passed. Besides these required courses, you must take ten elective courses, two of which could be from outside the Department.

Those of you who proceed within the normal framework sketched above will typically not need to seek advice. Not everyone proceeds within the normal framework, of course, and in such cases you might want to seek advice. While the PhD Director is your formal or official advisor, you should also feel free to consult such informal sources of advice as other faculty members with whom you have developed an especial rapport or other students whose previous experiences bear on the issues you are facing. Whatever you do, you should remember that you know better than anyone else what you want to accomplish or at least you should; moreover, you are the person who will bear most directly the consequences of whatever choices you make.

## IV. APPENDICES

[back to Table of Contents](#)

### A. SAMPLE FIRST-YEAR CLASS SCHEDULES

[back to Table of Contents](#)

**All core courses are taught on the Fairfax campus.** Core courses taught on the Arlington campus are designed for MA students and do not carry core credit in the doctoral program.

A typical program of study for a **full-time** doctoral student would be:

#### **FIRST YEAR**

<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>August</b>
ECON 811 Micro I	ECON 812 Micro II	Micro and Macro Prelim exams
ECON 715 Macro I	ECON 816 Macro II	
ECON 630 Math Econ	ECON 637 Econometrics	

#### **SECOND YEAR**

<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>August</b>
Field 1	Field 1 (cont.)	Field exams
Field 2	Field 2 (cont.)	
Elective	Elective	

A typical program of study for a **part-time** doctoral student would be:

#### **FIRST YEAR**

<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>August</b>
ECON 811 Micro I	ECON 812 Micro II	Micro Prelim exam
ECON 630 Math Econ	ECON 637 Econometrics	

#### **SECOND YEAR**

<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>August</b>
ECON 715 Macro I	ECON 816 Macro II	Macro Prelim exam
Field 1	Field 1 (cont.)	

If possible, part-time students should arrange their work schedules to be able to take two courses per semester in the first year. Students must take at least 9 credit hours per year to advance to candidacy within the 6 year time limit. Summer classes are not offered for PhD students.



## C: Applying for In-State Tuition

[back to Table of Contents](#)

American students who are not residents of Virginia are eligible to apply for Virginia residency. There is no guarantee that Virginia residency will be granted, but if it is granted the resulting drop in tuition is dramatic. The tuition schedule in the 2009-10 Mason University Catalog shows that an in-state resident would pay \$3,582.00 for a nine-hour semester while an out-of-state resident would pay \$8,883.00. Hence, in-state status can save a full time student ten thousand dollars per year.

The [Domicile section](#) of the Registrar's Office can help graduate students seeking to acquire Virginia residency; this office is located in Room 8 in the North Chesapeake Module on the Fairfax campus.

There is some effort involved in seeking Virginia residency, and a successful outcome is not assured. Persistence seems to pay: some people who report having their first application for Virginia residence denied report that a subsequent application is accepted.

A number of students on assistantship are supported with tuition waivers. While these waivers typically cover out-of-state tuition, budgetary circumstances sometimes prevent full coverage of out-of-state tuition. Students who might be eligible for in-state tuition might thus want to apply for Virginia residency as a form of insurance policy.

## D. FULL-TIME STATUS INFORMATION

[back to Table of Contents](#)

Many students are required to maintain full-time status for various reasons. This is particularly important for international students holding F1 visas, as full-time study is a condition of maintaining the visa. Loan deferment is another common reason for a student to maintain full-time status. Whatever your reason for needing to maintain full-time status, it is important to understand what constitutes full-time status and how it changes as you proceed through your degree program.

The university catalog states that graduate students are considered full-time if they are enrolled in at least 9 credits per semester, or if they hold a full-time assistantship (20 hours per week) and are enrolled in at least 6 credits per semester. While the university allows teaching and research assistants to limit their registration to 6 credit hours, the Economics department requires them to register for 9 credit hours per semester unless special arrangements have been made with the PhD Director.

Graduate students who have completed all course work and are enrolled in dissertation credits (either 998 or 999) are considered full-time if they are enrolled in at least 6 credit hours per semester. In the dissertation credit section of the program notes, it says that students enrolled in 998 can register for as little as 1 credit hour per semester, and students enrolled in 999 can register for as few as 3 credit hours per semester. These amounts apply only to students who do not need to be considered full-time. Students who must maintain full-time enrollment should register for at least 6 credit hours per semester while enrolled in either 998 or 999 credit.

Graduate students who have completed the minimum number of credits required by their degree program, including the minimum number of credits of 999 required by their degree program, are considered full-time if they are registered for at least 1 credit hour of 999. In order to be eligible to be considered full-time under these circumstances, you have to have completed all 72 credit hours and at least 1 semester of 999 prior to the semester in which you wish to be considered full-time with 1 credit hour per semester. Students who meet the criteria must complete a [full-time equivalency form](#) (available in the Registrar's Office), have it signed by their dissertation advisor, then deliver it to the program coordinator. The Program Coordinator will review your record to ensure that you meet the requirements, and then forward the paperwork to the chair for a signature. Please submit this paperwork to the Program Coordinator at least two weeks prior to the first day of classes.

## E. PRINCIPLES GOVERNING FINANCIAL AID

[back to Table of Contents](#)

Financial aid for PhD students is provided to the Department by both the University and by a number of private donors. The amount of aid that is available to the department is invariably much less than the requests for aid we receive. Of those students whom we admit and who have applied for aid, we have been able in recent years to assist only about one in five.

Most aid involves some work in an assistantship capacity, most commonly 20 hours per week. Stipends vary in accordance with work requirements, as well as in accordance with donor stipulations. The bulk of assistant awards carry stipends that range between \$10,000 and \$20,000 per year. Most of those assistantships also carry some waiver of tuition. Some tuition waivers cover full tuition for 18 hours per year, where others cover tuition only at the in-state rate even for nonresident students.

While assistantships normally are awarded for one year at a time, Departmental policy is to renew assistantships twice. Such renewal, however, is contingent both on student performance and on budgetary circumstances. With respect to those budgetary circumstances, negative changes in our budgetary situation may affect adversely our ability to renew assistantships.

With respect to student performance, assistantships are awarded under the expectation that students will be full-time students who will complete the degree in four years. Performance that interferes with this rate of progress may lead to a revocation of an assistantship. There are two primary avenues through which this can happen. One is through poor performance as evidenced by a GPA below 3.0 (some awards require maintenance of a GPA of at least 3.5). The second is by failing to pass the core exams in micro and macro theory after the first year, and a similar failure to pass the field exams after the second year.

## F. FOR NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

[back to Table of Contents](#)

### **Social Security Number**

Having one of these makes life easier (setting up a bank account, getting a telephone, etc.); and, the SSN is absolutely necessary to receive assistantship/fellowship checks. You will need to get a letter from Mason's [Office for International Students](#); take the letter to the SS Office on Maple Street in Fairfax City (west end of city). It will take about two weeks to get your number.

### **Telephone Company**

Call all the major long distance/international call telephone companies for information about their regular rates and special (country or promotion) rates. Do not hesitate to change long distance/international companies when the promotion rate expires.

### **Driver's License**

Even if you do not intend to drive, having a Driver's License can make life easier because it gives you a government-issued picture ID. You can get booklets to study at any office of the Department of Motor Vehicles. When you are ready to take the driving test, you might prefer to do so during non-rush hours. Taking the test in Manassas, Centreville or, possibly, Tyson's Corner, moreover, may make for an easier driving test than taking it in such high-traffic areas as Arlington or Alexandria.

### **Buying a Car**

Having a car is very useful, but remember that you have to pay property tax, insurance and registration. Having a driver's license already will make insurance on a car considerably cheaper, even if you have no driving experience.

### **Household Equipment**

Goods are inexpensive at K-Mart, which is in western Fairfax City and on the CUE bus line. WalMart is also inexpensive, but you need a car to get there. The best buys in food are usually at Shoppers Food Warehouse at Pickett Shopping Center (CUE bus); you can also shop at Giant and Safeway food stores.

### **From Airport to Campus**

A taxi will cost \$40-\$45, but is the easiest way the first time.

### **Finding Housing**

You may consider staying in a motel until you make other arrangements. There are lots of apartments and rooms to rent, but many require the use of a car. The Washington Post website is a good place to look for rentals online at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/rentals/?nav=left> . You can look for roommates online at <http://www.roommates.com/> Remember that most Americans don't smoke, and they will be offended if you smoke in their houses or cars.

## G. SOME WEBSITES TO ASSIST YOU IN RELOCATING

[back to Table of Contents](#)

Fairfax, Virginia and the metro area:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/> - Information on living in Fairfax, VA.

<http://new.homefair.com/index.asp?cid=homefair&cc=1> - Relocation Resources

<http://www.fccc.org> – Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce

<http://www.fairfaxva.com> – Information on Schools and New Homes in the area

<http://och.gmu.edu/> - Housing off-campus made easy

<http://www.equityapartments.com> – Dedicated to “Making Life Easy” apartment hunting

<http://www.virginia.gov/cmsportal2/> - Commonwealth of Virginia official website

## H. FREQUENTLY REQUESTED NUMBERS

[back to Table of Contents](#)

Information	703-993-1000	
Economics	703-993-1151	Enterprise Hall 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
Economics Graduate Studies	703-993-1135	Enterprise Hall Room 336
Mercatus Center	703-993-4930	Arlington 1 Room 450
Institute for Humane Studies	703-993-4880	Arlington 1 Room 440
James Buchanan Center	703-993-2316	Carow Hall
Public Choice	703-993-2330	Carow Hall
Bookstore	703-993-2666	Johnson Center 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor
Arlington Library	703-993-8188	Arlington 1 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor
Fenwick Library	703-993-2240	
Law Library	703-993-8120	Arlington 1
Johnson Center Library	703-993-9060	Johnson Center 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
Student Accounts	703-993-2484	North Chesapeake Module
Registrar	703-993-2441	North Chesapeake Module
Financial Aid	703-993-2353	South Chesapeake Module
Parking Services	703-993-2710	Parking Services Building
IT Help	703-993-8870	Innovation Hall Room 233
ID Card	703-993-1004	Student Union II 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor
Dining Services	703-993-3304	Student Union II 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
OIPS	703-993-2970	Student Union I 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
Housing	703-993-2720	Housing Module