Interdisciplinary Study at Northwestern

An orientation for PhD students
Your Dept. +

Go to talks in multiple departments, programs, and centers
Dissertation committees

Coursework +

Requirements + electives
CIC & CME
Auditing vs. credit

Clusters

Affiliation
Expectations
Multiple clusters

Certificates

Expectations
Transcripts

Dual Degrees

Multiple degree paths

Something for Everyone
Go to talks in multiple departments, programs, and centers
Dissertation committees

Extra-curricular:
- Talks, mini-conferences, symposia
- Who serves on dissertation committees?
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Coursework +
- Requirements + electives
- CIC & CME
- Auditing vs. credit

Courses:
- Credit-bearing
  - Departmental requirements
  - Permissions
  - 300 and 400-level courses outside your department (graduate credit)
  - Electives
  - CIC & CME Travelling Scholars

Auditing
The Graduate School's Interdisciplinary clusters are designed to facilitate connections between doctoral students and faculty who have natural intellectual affinities yet may not be in the same department or program. Northwestern's excellence in interdisciplinary study and research is facilitated and, in many ways, realized through the Cluster Initiative. Clusters exist in a variety of emergent research areas, new disciplinary configurations, and unique synergistic collaborations among scientists, engineers, humanists, and social scientists.

Clusters enable participating graduate students to join a cohort of students not only in their degree program but also potentially in many other departments, labs, and research traditions who are working on a common set of problems. In this way, many students at Northwestern experience "dual citizenship" in both a program and a cluster. Many draw upon these experiences when designing their research projects, preparing for qualifying exams, and selecting dissertation committees.

Each cluster offers programs of study that cross degree boundaries and enable students to further customize their graduate education. Students who affiliate with clusters are counseled to take core and elective courses and to participate in co-curricular and extra-curricular symposia, lectures, seminars, mini-conferences, and other events that bring together students and researchers from Northwestern and beyond. These events broaden students' training opportunities and widen their networks of contacts and colleagues, provide additional intellectual stimulation, and ensure exposure to cutting edge inter- and multi-disciplinary research.

Cluster students must fulfill all the requirements of their doctoral program, but in addition to receiving a PhD in a discipline are credentialized in the topical area of the cluster. Students participate in the cluster while completing their home program's course requirements. Each cluster has its own requirements - usually three courses - and some have additional requirements, including original research. (These projects also may be used to fulfill requirements for the home program.) Some clusters are also complemented by five-course certificates that can be listed on transcripts.

The Graduate School clusters fall into three areas:
- Humanities and Non-Quantitative Social Sciences (HNQSS)
- Sciences and Engineering
- Life and Biomedical Sciences (NULBS)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster Areas</th>
<th>Humanities and NQSS</th>
<th>Science and Engineering</th>
<th>Life and Biomedical Sciences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affiliation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>When can students apply to formally affiliate with a cluster?</td>
<td>Application and beyond&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Second year and beyond</td>
<td>Beginning of second year&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>When are students formally accepted as fellows?</td>
<td>Time of Application</td>
<td>Second year and beyond</td>
<td>Second year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding</strong>&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Financial support available?</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participating Programs&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>African American Studies, Anthropology, Art History, Comparative Literary Studies, English, German, History, Media, Technology &amp; Society, Performance Studies, Slavic Languages and Literatures, Sociology, Theatre and Drama</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science, engineering, and related programs in McCormick, Weinberg, the School of Communication, Medill, and Kellogg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interdepartmental Biological Sciences program (IBIS) and Driskill Graduate Program in Life Sciences (DGP)</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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</table>

<sup>1</sup> Students are selected as Mellon Fellows only at the time of application but may formally affiliate with a cluster as a cluster fellow at any point in their careers. To learn more, visit the Humanities and NQSS page.

<sup>2</sup> Students in the Life and Biomedical Sciences select a cluster with which to affiliate within their chosen research lab and most often do not need a formal application.

<sup>3</sup> Funding varies by cluster. Science and Engineering Fellows receive financial aid support for one or more quarters. Humanities and NQSS Mellon Fellows receive a research award at the time of admission, however doctoral students may opt to affiliate with a cluster at any point, regardless of their funding source.

<sup>4</sup> Please note that these are programs most frequently affiliated with a cluster but this does not represent an exhaustive list.
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• Humanities & Non-quantitative Social Sciences (14+)
• Sciences & Engineering (5)
• NU LaBS (9)

How to get involved
Requirements & responsibilities
Multiple clusters
Coming and going
• African Studies
• African American and Diaspora Studies
• Ancient Greek
• Biotechnology
• Classical Latin
• Classical & Reception Studies
• Clinical & Translational Research
• Cognitive Science
• Comparative & Historical Social Science
• Critical Theory
• Education Sciences
• Gender & Sexuality
• Italian Studies
• Language, Music, & Communication
• Medieval Studies
• Predictive Science & Engineering Design
• Society, Biology & Health

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Requirements
Procedures for getting a certificate
Northwestern University offers a number of opportunities to pursue joint and dual degree programs. These combined degree programs include joint professional and doctoral degrees:

Bachelor’s/Master’s Degree

- Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Combined MD/MS
- Healthcare Quality and Patient Safety, Combined MD/MS
- Life Sciences and Public Health, Combined MPH/PhD
- Medical Anthropology, Combined MPH/PhD
- Medical Humanities and Bioethics, Combined MA/MD
- Medical Scientist Training Program, Combined MD/PhD
- Medicine and Public Health, Combined MD/MPH
- JD/PhD
- Physical Therapy and Engineering, Combined DPT/PhD
Northwestern
- JD/PhD
- MD/PhD

Sciences Po
- Sociology
- Political Sci

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Dual Degrees Multiple degree path
Concurrent masters & PhD
Dual degrees: NU & foreign

Northwestern
- JD/PhD
- MD/PhD

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Questions?

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