Requirements for the Degree
Course Requirements

- Biostatistics 200A, B, C – Methods in Biostatistics
- Biostatistics 202A, B – Theoretical Principles of Biostatistics
- Biostatistics 250A, B – Linear Models
- Biostatistics 250C – Multivariate Biostatistics
- Biostatistics 257 – Statistical Computing
- Biostatistics 245 & 246 – Doctoral Seminar
- Biostatistics 409 – Biostatistics Consulting
- Mathematics 131A* – Real Analysis
In Addition...

- One 4 unit course in Epidemiology (either Epi 100 or 200A)
- One 4 unit course in broad public themes (PH 150 or HPM M242)
- Minimum of six 4-unit elective biostatistics courses (24 units)

The elective courses may be chosen from courses in the 200 series that are numbered 210 and above. Students may also use certain courses from outside the Department of Biostatistics (such as the UCLA Department of Statistics) provided a blue petition is approved in advance of taking the course.

- Mathematics 131A must be taken year 1 by students with limited or no prior experience to Real Analysis
- Required courses must be taken for a letter grade (except Biostat 245 & 409)
- A typical course load is 12 units for first year students. It’s recommended that you consult with your academic advisor if you are considering taking a heavier course load.
Note A

Beginning in their second year of graduate study at UCLA, all students in the doctoral program must register for Biostatistics 245 which involves attending the Departmental seminar series. In addition, every spring term, doctoral students (who are beyond their first year in graduate study at UCLA) must take Biostatistics 246. Biostatistics 246 helps prepare students to give statistical and scientific presentations.

Note B

All registered doctoral students must also enroll in Biostatistics 409 (doctoral statistical consulting seminar: field training course) for two consecutive quarters before advancement to candidacy.
Examinations

Written Examinations and Oral Qualifying Examinations
Written Examinations

The Ph.D. Preliminary Exam
This exam is offered in September just before the beginning of fall classes. Students would generally take this exam in the beginning of their second year of study. Students are expected to pass the exam at a level that would predict successful completion of the Ph.D. program. The Ph.D. Preliminary Examination covers material in the following courses and is normally taken as soon as possible after having satisfactorily completing the relevant coursework:
- Biostatistics 200A, B, and C
- Biostatistics 202A, B

Students must pass the exam at a level expected of doctoral students.

Students have a maximum of two attempts to pass the exam.

The Ph.D. Written Qualifying Exam
This exam is offered in September just before the beginning of fall classes. The scope of the exam includes material from the following courses:
- Biostatistics 250A, B, C

Students would generally take the exam after completing necessary coursework, which typically occurs either in the beginning of their 3rd or 4th year of graduate study.
Oral Qualifying Exam

The oral qualifying exam evaluates the student’s understanding of statistical theory, ability to apply the theory, and reviews the proposed dissertation topic. Students should prepare a written dissertation proposal.

Format & Delivery

The proposal should include background preliminary work and a research plan for carrying out the work. While there are no absolute page requirements, the proposal is typically between 15 to 50 pages with additional pages for figures and references. The proposal should be distributed to members of the dissertation committee in advance of the exam. Generally, the proposal is expected to be delivered to the committee members at least two weeks before the scheduled oral exam; if the student expects that the proposal will be delivered less than two weeks before the exam, the student should check with each committee member for advance approval.
The Process

- During the oral exam, the student will present and defend the proposed work. The student can expect that most of the questions will pertain to the proposal, however additional questions may be asked to assess general understanding of biostatistics principles. The overall objective of the exam is to evaluate whether the student has the ability and adequate plans for conducting Ph.D. dissertation research.
Furthermore...

The dissertation committee is formed in consultation with the student’s advisor/dissertation chair and should consist of 4 faculty members. Special rules apply as to which faculty may serve on the committee and student should check with the SAO (Roxy Naranjo) to confirm that the committee is appropriately composed. For the form and regulations on how to form the doctoral committee visit:  [https://grad.ucla.edu/gasaa/library/docnomin.pdf](https://grad.ucla.edu/gasaa/library/docnomin.pdf)

Passing of this examination is required before a student is officially advanced to candidacy. A failed examination may be repeated once, on the recommendation of the committee.
Ph.D. Dissertation and Oral Defense
The Ph.D. Dissertation is original research that advances the field of biostatistics. The dissertation is completed under the guidance of a Biostatistical faculty member who serves as the advisor. Examples of dissertations from previous graduates are available in the Biostatistics Library. After successfully completing a dissertation, an oral examination defending the dissertation is conducted by the dissertation committee. A failed examination may be repeated once on the recommendation of the committee.
**Notes for Ph.D. Applicants**

- Students who enter the Ph.D. program in Biostatistics having completed the UCLA M.S. Program in Biostatistics typically begin their Ph.D. program with year 2 course work.

- Students who enter the Ph.D. program have completed the UCLA M.S. Program in Biostatistics and have previously taken some Biostatistics electives for their M.S. degree that also qualify as electives for the Ph.D. program may apply up to 3 of such 4-unit courses toward the Ph.D. requirement of 6 courses.

- Students who enter the Ph.D. program in Biostatistics having completed the UCLA M.S. Program in Biostatistics and whose performance on the M.S. comprehensive exam was superior and at a level that indicated the student is prepared to proceed with more advanced doctoral coursework are not required to take the Ph.D. preliminary exam.

- Students who entered the Ph.D. program in Biostatistics having completed the UCLA M.S. Program in Biostatistics and fulfilled the requirement of one 4-unit course in broad public health themes are exempt from such requirement.

- Current M.S. students who plan to apply for admission to the Ph.D. program should take Mathematics 131A during their M.S. program.
THE ENDSAME!