Graduate Admissions

Last updated on September 28, 2020 for Fall Admissions.

The Department of Mathematics offers a PhD and several Master's degrees. We have about 90 graduate students, and we typically admit 15-20 new students each year. Most of our students are funded by teaching assistantships (TA's), some are funded by research assistantships (RA's), and some are self funded or have fellowships from outside of UW. In addition to the degree program requirements linked above, applicants requesting funding should review the guidelines for TA and RA appointments.

Here are some reasons to consider graduate study at the University of Washington:

- We offer courses and research opportunities in most major fields of pure mathematics, as well as opportunities to collaborate with local companies, government labs, and with the departments of Statistics, Biostatistics, Applied Math, and Computer Science.
- There is an Advanced Data Science Option for the PhD.
- Almost all of our PhD students are supported through Teaching Assistantships, which come with union negotiated salaries, tuition waivers, and free health insurance. TAs receive extensive training and mentoring, and a wide variety of different assignments are available, including opportunities to teach one's own courses.
- We encourage collaboration, and our graduate program is deliberately structured so that students are not in any sense competing against each other. Our students' success rate is high. Over the past decade or so, about 80% of our entering PhD students have graduated with PhDs. Most of those have obtained academic jobs, typically at very prestigious institutions, or go into rewarding careers in industry, government, etc using their math skills.
- The Mathematics Department believes that excellence in graduate education is enhanced by assembling a diverse and inclusive graduate student community that reflects a wide range of differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences may include race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, abilities/disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. See the Math Department's Graduate Admissions Diversity Statement for more information.
- We have a seminar series focusing on Career Transitions to help students find a good path through the program and into their next role. We regularly invite back alumni to offer advice and support to current grad students about their current jobs in industry and academia. So far, everyone invited has accepted enthusiastically.
- Seattle is an attractive city, with great coffee, endless opportunity for exploration, good public transportation, bike paths, abundant natural beauty, cultural events, and outdoor activities. Temperatures are mild year round, and the city is not as rainy as its reputation suggests. We get only 30 inches per year on average, but many winter days are partly cloudy and drizzly. Many people who move here like the mild climate and decide they never want to leave.
- We recognize that rent in Seattle is relatively high, but students do find housing in the city that they can afford within a reasonable commuting distance to campus.

Applying to the PhD and Master's Programs

Since all entry-level graduate courses are year-long sequences beginning in the autumn, applications for admission are normally accepted only for Autumn Quarter. Applications for admission with financial support (Teaching Assistantships or Fellowships) must be complete by December 10 for admission the following autumn. If you do not need financial support, applications are due by June 1.

Follow the links below to read about admission requirements and application procedures.
PhD or Master’s?

We are in the process of revising the role of our Master's Program. Stay tuned for updates for applications in fall of 2021. If you are not sure whether to apply for the PhD or the Master’s program, read our admission requirements, and be aware that most people should apply for the PhD program if your background meets the admission requirements. The Master’s program is very small – currently two to four students entering per year. While we revise the Master’s Program, it will mainly serve the following groups of people:

- UW Math Majors who want to pursue a PhD and have mathematical talent, but whose background needs strengthening. In the past, a few students in this category were funded with TAships. Due to our changing situation, we do not intend to fund any master's students this coming year. Students admitted to the master's program will be self supported.
- Students who are enrolled in other graduate programs at the University of Washington and who also want training in mathematics. The department typically provides no financial support for these students.
- Students living in the Seattle area who want to explore graduate mathematics for professional reasons. The department typically provides no financial support for these students.

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