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What is a Doctoral Degree? by William Hauselberg

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Understanding advanced degrees can be overwhelming for some students, but the personal and professional achievements that can come from earning an advanced degree can't be measured. Once a student earns a bachelor's degree and goes on to pursue a Master's degree, the next step is a doctorate degree. Doctoral degree programs are offered by many educational institutions across the country. A few universities even offer online programs that cater to the time constraints of working students. A doctorate degree is a terminal degree, or the highest level of education that students can achieve. There are almost endless subject areas in which a student can earn a doctorate, and the most common fields are science, education and medicine.

What Type of Work is Involved?

Individual doctoral programs differ by institution but most doctoral degree programs are designed to take four years for completion. Students with a Master's degree may be able to complete the requirements in three years. The first few years are dedicated to coursework, and students are typically required to complete between 90 and 120 semester credits. These courses provide the knowledge necessary for students to master their fields. During the last year, the doctorate student will work on a dissertation, which is an independent research project. The goal of the research is to discover new information relating to the subject area and produce high quality results for publication. Some doctoral degree programs substitute a comprehensive exam or a supervised internship for the research thesis.

Who Might Pursue a Doctorate?

There are several motivations that students might have for pursuing a doctorate degree, with the most common relating to careers. Students who are aiming for a career that requires a doctorate degree will pursue this type of degree. Those who have established a career in a given field may work to earn their doctorate in order to open up advancement opportunities.

Earning a doctoral degree grants the holder new respect and prestige, as well as a sense of personal accomplishment. Those who desire to become published in their field may find this task easier with an advanced degree. The title of doctor shows others that a person is an expert in the specific subject; therefore, that person's credibility rises. Some students continue their education for the simple joy of increased knowledge and mastery of a subject. Regardless of the reasons, earning a doctorate takes time and effort with rewarding experiences and newfound opportunities.

Before applying to any degree program, it is important that students understand the admissions requirements, the course requirements and the requirements for graduation. Choosing to pursue a doctorate means a great commitment of time and money, so understanding exactly what is expected is an important first step. But there is little that can compare with the sense of personal accomplishment a student feels when completed an advanced degree program.

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The author has an immense knowledge on a doctoral degree programs. Know more about a doctorate degree related info in his website.

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