THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA  
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL ENGINEERING  
CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM  

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Degree  

Admission:  
With Masters of Civil Engineering (MCE) or Master of Science in Engineering (MSE) from an accredited institution.  

Coursework:  
A minimum of 53 semester hours of graduate work in a program of study prepared and approved in consultation with an advisor.  
Up to 24 semester credit hours of graduate coursework earned at another accredited institution with a grade of B or better may be applied toward course requirements for the doctoral degrees upon recommendation of the appropriate graduate program and with the approval of the dean of the school. For students who earned their master’s degrees at CUA, up to 30 semester credit hours of course work with a grade of B or better may be applied toward the course requirements for the doctoral degrees.  
The remainder must be completed in a program that has been approved by the department chair and/or the dean of the school. The approved course work consists of electives and required core course work. The Civil Engineering Department requires successful completion of the following four (4) Core Courses: CE 575 Introduction to Systems Analysis*; ENGR 516 Computational Methods for Graduate Students; ENGR 520 Mathematical Analysis for Graduate Students; CMGT 547 Managerial Engineering Economics*. Continuing education courses are not acceptable in meeting requirements for graduate degree programs.  

* By school policy must pass with grade C or better.  

Comprehensive Exam:  
After the student completes a minimum required percentage of the graduate coursework set by the student’s program, he/she may request to take the doctoral comprehensive examination.  
Depending on the doctoral program, the examination may include a written and an oral portion. The student must fill out and submit the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination and Admission to Candidacy form (Form SOE-C1) to his/her department during the first week of the semester in which he/she plans to take the examination. Upon evaluation and approval of the student’s credentials by the department chair, the student will be granted written permission by the dean to take the comprehensive examination. Currently the examination format varies from program to program. In general, the examination will be prepared to test the student’s comprehensive knowledge in three specified areas, each of which is covered in 1-2 doctoral courses. The comprehensive examination is marked pass or fail. If the student fails the examination, he/she
may retake the examination only once after obtaining approval from the department chair. Depending on school/department policy, the student must retake either the entire examination or just the failed portion. A student who fails the comprehensive examination twice may not be considered for admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree. A second failing grade is noted on the student’s permanent records.

Candidacy:
Admission to a doctoral program does not automatically include admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree. The faculty of the school and department must evaluate the progress of the student and determine that the student has completed all course and other requirements, has passed the comprehensive examination, and is otherwise qualified to fulfill the requirements of the doctoral dissertation. Schools and departments may follow different procedures for formal admission to candidacy. The student should consult with the department chair or dean for information on these procedures.
Candidacy for the doctoral degree begins formally on the first day of the semester following school and departmental approval of the admission to candidacy. The student has five years from this date of formal admission to candidacy to complete, defend and deposit the dissertation. However, individual schools and departments may, at their discretion, set different time limits for completion, as long as these do not exceed the five-year limit. If more than five years, or the time set by the schools or departments, elapse between formal admission to candidacy and oral defense of the dissertation, the doctoral candidate may be required to retake the comprehensive examination or fulfill additional requirements. This is a determination made by the school and department.

Dissertation:
After the student has been admitted to candidacy, the department, the school and the vice provost and dean of graduate studies must approve the dissertation topic and dissertation committee. The vice provost, acting on behalf of the Academic Senate, will seek the assistance of a faculty reviewer in evaluating the topic and committee.
The student may not proceed beyond the preliminary stage in the investigation of the topic until both the topic and the dissertation committee have been granted final approval by the vice provost and dean of graduate studies.
The department chair, the dean and the vice provost and dean of graduate studies must also approve any subsequent changes either to the title of the dissertation or to the composition of the dissertation committee. Forms for these changes are available in the office of the department chair, the dean, and the vice provost and dean of graduate studies.
Dissertation proposals must be submitted for department and school approval no later than two years after formal admission to candidacy. Deans may extend the deadline for cause. If this is necessary, arrangements must be made in advance with the dean’s office.
The dissertation proposal should contain the following elements:

1. A brief statement of the problem to be studied and the background or antecedents of the problem which have led the student to propose a study of this particular topic;
2. A specific statement of the purpose or purposes of the proposed study;
3. A description of the methodology to be used. If the study involves the testing of a hypothesis, the hypothesis should be spelled out clearly. Where applicable, the student
should describe the techniques, statistical measures, sampling methods and any other essential methodological features he or she will be using in the research;

4. An explanation of the specific or unique contribution which this study will make to the field of knowledge under consideration;

5. A brief selected bibliography of the most important primary and secondary sources relevant to the study.

The student has five years from the date of formal admission to candidacy to complete, defend and deposit the dissertation, unless the department and/or school have set a different deadline. If the student is unable to complete the dissertation within this time period, the dean and department chair may inform the candidate that he or she must submit a request for a reasonable extension. If the student fails to request an extension, the dissertation topic may be withdrawn. In this case, the doctoral candidate will be subject to dismissal from the program. Another student may then submit the topic for approval.

The completed dissertation in definitive form must be submitted for approval to the student’s dissertation committee no later than the date specified by the school and department for each graduation date. The department and school establish the procedures for submission of the dissertation to the dissertation committee.

Defense:
Upon completion of the dissertation, but prior to final approval, the candidate must defend the dissertation in an oral examination in the presence of an examination board appointed by the academic dean of the school with the approval of the vice provost and dean of graduate studies. At least three weeks prior to the proposed examination date, the dean must submit to the vice provost and dean of graduate studies the form Oral Examination for the Doctorate: Request for Approval. The examination may not be scheduled until all members of the dissertation committee have informed the dean, in writing, that the dissertation is ready for defense. At least one week before the examination date, the dean’s office shall publish a leaflet publicly announcing the defense and containing a summary of the dissertation and biographical information on the candidate.

The oral examination board shall include, in addition to the candidate’s dissertation committee, two faculty members from outside the major department or school, one serving as chair and the other as secretary during the examination. The duration of the oral examination shall not exceed two hours. Oral examinations will not be scheduled during the summer sessions. No one may be admitted to the examination room without the permission of the dean of the school. Each member of the examination board has one vote. In order to pass, the candidate must receive a “pass” vote from at least four examiners. If merited, a notation of “with distinction” will be recorded. The examination board is not permitted to pass the candidate conditionally. After successful completion of the final oral examination, the candidate may proceed with arrangements for deposit and publication of the dissertation (see below).

If a candidate fails in the first oral examination, he or she must obtain permission from the school to retake the examination. A candidate will not be permitted to retake the final oral examination until at least one semester, or an equivalent period of time, has elapsed from the date of failure. If the candidate fails a second time in the oral examination, he or she ceases to be a candidate for the doctoral degree.
**Publication of Dissertation:**
Following the successful defense and final approval of the dissertation by the dissertation committee, the candidate must arrange for the deposit, microfilming and publication of the dissertation.

The CUA publication Dissertation Handbook, available in the Office of the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, provides detailed information on formatting and printing the manuscript; preparing the abstract; registering the copyright; and arranging for the deposit, microfilming, publishing and binding of the dissertation. All candidates preparing to write a dissertation should obtain a copy of this publication by contracting the Coordinator of Graduate Student Services in the Office of the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies. The coordinator will review the manuscript with the candidate for formatting errors.

If the graduate wishes to publish or republish the dissertation, he or she must include in the publication a statement of acknowledgement that the dissertation was written in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctoral degree from The Catholic University of America. Copyright ownership of a thesis or dissertation prepared by a student toward degree requirements shall remain with the student, provided that, unless otherwise agreed in writing, by submitting the work for credit or degree requirements, the student shall automatically be deemed to have granted a nonexclusive, worldwide, royalty-free license to the university (1) to make available to the university community through electronic or other means the entire dissertation; (2) to make available to the broader public a limited number of copies of such thesis or dissertation; and electronic means without limitation on quantity of access or copying.

**Degree:**
Doctor of Philosophy in Civil Engineering (Ph.D.) is conferred upon students who have completed satisfactorily at least three years of graduate study and have met the other conditions prescribed for the degree.