

## Application and Admission Process for PLSC Graduate Programs

Applicants with questions are urged to contact PLSC Academic Support Coordinator  
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The PLSC department policy is that we **DO NOT** accept a graduate applicant unless a faculty member possessing adequate financial support is interested in advising the student or if the student is self-funded. *Please **DO NOT** submit a formal application until a tentative agreement of support is reached with the potential advisor. As such, the applicant must take primary responsibility for guiding the application process.*

### Step 1: Review PLSC Admissions Requirements

Prospective students should review the [PLSC Admissions Requirements](#) to determine eligibility for admission to the M.S. (thesis and non-thesis) and Ph.D. Programs.

### Step 2: Identify a Faculty Advisor

**Important: All applicants MUST complete this step before moving to Step 3. Failure to complete Step 2 will result in your application being declined without review by the Graduate Admissions Committee. No exceptions!**

Review PLSC [faculty profiles](#) and identify individuals who work in your area(s) of interest. Prospective students should contact potential faculty advisors by e-mail and/or phone to determine if the advisor is recruiting graduate students for the upcoming term. Include a statement of introduction and a resume for review in any written communication. Applicants should follow-up if a response is not received within a reasonable amount of time (approximately 2 weeks).

Students Seeking Funding: Most prospective students require financial assistance in the form of a fellowship or research/teaching assistantship to attend graduate school. **Departmental support for graduate teaching and research assistantships is extremely limited.** Graduate student financial support is typically contributed by the advising PLSC faculty member. When contacting PLSC faculty as potential graduate advisor, it is important to inquire about the availability of funding for research or teaching assistantships. This should be done well in advance of application deadlines.

Our department's official application deadlines are:

- Fall semester matriculation: **December 15** for priority funding consideration; **March 15** for consideration for remaining open positions. Under special circumstances, applications may be considered until **July 1**.
- Spring semester matriculation: **September 1** for priority funding consideration; **November 15** for consideration for remaining open positions. Under special circumstances, applications may be considered until **January 15**.
- Summer Semester Matriculation: **January 1** for priority funding consideration; **March 15** for consideration for remaining open positions.

Self-Paying Applicants: Faculty members who currently lack financial support for graduate students may still consider students who are self-paying. A self-paying student provides their own financial support for all tuition, fees, and living expenses (including health insurance) either with personal funds or with an external fellowship. If you are interested in the self-pay option, please clearly indicate this when you contact potential faculty advisors. **This option is less common. Students should only indicate willingness to self-pay if they have the financial means to cover all costs for the entire duration of the degree program.**

### Step 3: Apply for admission

Apply online at [UD Grad Admissions](#). Be sure to include all required documents in your application as indicated on the [PLSC Admissions Requirements](#) webpage. Students should identify the PLSC faculty advisor who has provided the candidate with an informal commitment to serve as academic advisor (all applicants) and financial support (all students seeking financial assistance) in the statement of research essay. **Note: Failure to identify a PLSC faculty advisor in this essay will result in the application being automatically declined without review by the PLSC Graduate Admissions Committee. Do not identify a PLSC faculty advisor without their permission!**

Notify your prospective PLSC faculty advisor and the academic program coordinator by email once your application has been submitted. The prospective faculty advisor will then initiate application review by the PLSC Graduate Admissions Committee who will make a recommendation to the PLSC Department Chair. The PLSC Department Chair makes the final decision on whether or not to admit a student.

If a decision is made to admit, the student will receive a letter of acceptance from the graduate office and an offer letter from the department outlining responsibilities, assistantship type and funding amount (if applicable) and other important information.

*Best of luck to you!*