A successful candidate for the Ph.D. in computer science is responsible for all the general requirements for a doctoral degree as set in the Graduate Catalog. Each student should have completed the qualifications for candidacy for the Ph.D. by the end of the sixth semester in residence, excluding summers. In general, a PhD student advances to candidacy when he or she successfully passes both the Graduate Qualifying Examination (GQE) and the Graduate Comprehensive Examination (GCE). Once a student becomes a PhD candidate, she or he is then eligible to take Doctoral Dissertations credits under the supervision of the research advisory committee. The following PhD flowchart depicts the steps needed to become a PhD candidate.

**Step 1:** Select a research advisor from among the Computer Science faculty and create your advisory committee.

**Step 2:** Design the Plan of Study (POS) using the form provided by School of Graduate Studies. To this end, you need to consult with your research advisor to properly complete the form. Once you devised your POS, seek the needed approvals from chair and/or the director of graduate study. Submit the POS form to the School of Graduate Studies for final approval by the Dean.

**Step 3:** Pass the Graduate Qualifying Examination (GQE).

**Step 4:** Pass the Graduate Compressive Exam (GCE). The GCE requires the preparation of a 12-15 pages of research proposal prepared according to the department guidelines. The proposal must be distributed (at least) two weeks in advance of the intended Oral Presentation to the student’s advisory committee. In addition, it requires successfully passing of the oral presentation of the proposal and questions by the student’s Advisory Committee.

**Step 5:** Once the GCE is passed, make sure that the “Topic Proposal” form has been approved by the Advisory Committee. File a copy of the approved form with Computer Science Department and submit the original form to the School of Graduate Studies for final approval.

**Step 6:** Take dissertation research credits to prepare a dissertation. The dissertation must be formatted according to the guidelines sets by the UND Graduate School.