A Ph.D. with Real Estate Focus

The MIT Center for Real Estate does not itself grant a Ph.D. degree, but several MIT departments associated with the Center do. Students wanting to pursue a doctoral degree in real estate can take advantage of the Center’s affiliations with the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, the Department of Economics, or the Sloan School of Management. After being accepted into a doctoral program in one of these departments, then completing its basic program requirements, students can focus on real estate studies through courses offered by MIT/MSRED faculty.

Program Requirements

Candidates for a Ph.D. with real estate focus must fulfill the degree requirements defined by their academic department. Requirements generally include:

1) At least two years of advanced course work. 2) Successful completion of a general examination. 3) Preparation and defense of a dissertation.

Required course work varies from department to department, as do the fields in which the general examination may be taken. The requirements for the three programs are as follows:

Department of Urban Studies and Planning

Doctoral students may take course work in a variety of departments, but the courses must lead to (1) competence in a disciplinary field, and (2) expertise in a field of planning practice. The student will be examined in both of these fields. For students interested in real estate, the typical disciplinary field is urban and regional economics. Typical fields of planning practice include Real Estate or Housing Finance, Housing Policy, or Real Estate Development. A student’s dissertation may be supervised by a faculty committee from various departments in addition to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning.

Department of Economics

Doctoral students must take a core curriculum of eight courses in basic economic theory and econometrics, followed by advanced courses in four fields. For students interested in real estate, two of these fields should be Financial Markets and Urban Economics. A dissertation in economics involves original academic research leading either to a potentially publishable book or to a series of articles in scholarly journals.
Sloan School of Management

Doctoral students must undertake course work in a major and a minor field. For those focusing on real estate, the accepted major field is Finance, which requires a core curriculum in economic theory and econometrics similar to that in Economics, and complemented by a series of courses in capital markets and finance. An appropriate minor field would be either Economics (including urban economics), or Statistics. The research component of a Business Ph.D. involves a second year independent research paper and a subsequent dissertation.

For more information about a Ph.D. in Real Estate, please contact:

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