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Introduction

The Graduate College admits students into programs leading to both professional and research-oriented advanced degrees beyond the bachelor's degree. The master's and doctoral degrees are awarded to students completing programs that culminate in research and creative endeavors. The Ph.D. degree is the highest university award, conferred on candidates who have proven their ability as scholars and original researchers. For a list of ASU graduate degrees, see graduate degree listings at: www.asu.edu/aad/catalogs/graduate/grad-degs.html.

Academic Integrity

The highest standards of academic integrity are expected of all graduate students, both in the academic coursework and in their related research activities. The failure of any graduate student to meet these standards may result in serious consequences including suspension or expulsion from the university and/or other sanctions as specified in the academic integrity policies of individual colleges as well as the university.

Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to: cheating, fabrication, tampering, plagiarism, or aiding and/or facilitating such activities. At the graduate level, it is expected that students are familiar with these issues and each student must take personal responsibility in their work. In addition, graduate students are expected to follow university guidelines related to the Student Code of Conduct. University policies related to academic integrity and code of conduct are available in the Office of Student Life, or at www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial.

Graduate Student Responsibilities

Graduate students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with all graduate policies and procedures. Each student should also communicate directly with her/his degree program department to be clear on its expectations for degree completion.

Admissions

Applications

Submission of an Application and Deadlines

For admission information and procedures, see graduate.asu.edu/admissions. Students are encouraged to apply via the website to expedite processing time. The application deadlines are set by the degree programs so applicants are urged to contact the programs directly. For fall enrollment, international applicants must submit application materials by the previous December. For spring enrollment (when allowed by the academic unit) international applicants must submit application materials by the previous August. Not all programs accept applications for both fall and spring semesters. Applicants are advised to contact the specific degree program departments for this information.

Application Fee

Each application to an ASU graduate program must be accompanied by a nonrefundable application fee. For current fees please see the [Graduate Admission website](#).

Application Requirements

All applicants must submit official transcripts to the Graduate College from all post-secondary institutions previously attended (see graduate.asu.edu/admissions). Degree programs, departments, or colleges, may have admission requirements in addition to those of the Graduate College. Many graduate programs require scores from a national admissions test such as the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), or the Miller Analogies Test. Some programs require a portfolio, letters of recommendation, and/or a statement of goals.

Applicants should contact the degree program for specific additional requirements. Degree programs will make a recommendation to the Graduate College dean regarding their willingness to admit an applicant.

Because ASU receives applications from many highly qualified students, some applicants may be denied admission for reasons not related to their academic performance (e.g., program capacity, mentor availability, program match).

Additional International Requirements

International Applicants: Additional Requirements

Applicants who will hold an F-1 or J-1 visa must:

1. Meet the regulations of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency.
2. Obtain insurance coverage against illness and accident before being permitted to register. Insurance must be maintained throughout the student's enrollment at the university.
3. Must submit additional materials as stated on the Graduate College's website at graduate.asu.edu/admissions.
4. Verify that they have the financial resources to cover their expenses during graduate study at ASU. The Financial Guarantee form is available through the Graduate College website at graduate.asu.edu/forms.

The I-20 or the DS-2019 (documents needed to obtain a student visa) is issued **only** after the completed and properly verified Financial Guarantee form and supporting documents have arrived. International students may enroll at ASU only if they have been admitted to a degree program, a certificate program, or the post-baccalaureate teacher education program.

Immediately upon arrival on campus, students must report to an advisor in the International Student Office (ISO), www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/iso.

English Language Requirement

Applicants from a country whose native language is not English must provide evidence of English proficiency as indicated by acceptable scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), as follows:

1. The minimum TOEFL requirement for entry into any graduate program is 550 (paper-based) or 80 internet based TOEFL (iBT).
2. The minimum IELTS requirement for entry into any graduate program is an overall band score of 6.5 with no individual band score below 6.0.
3. Individual degree programs may have higher TOEFL or IELTS requirements for their various programs. Consult the individual department websites for more information.

The following exceptions apply to the English proficiency requirement:

1. Applicants who have completed at least 90 semester credit hours (or equivalent) with a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or higher (on a 4.00 scale) at a regionally accredited institution in the United States are exempt from the English proficiency requirement.
2. Applicants who have earned a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited university in the United States are exempt from the English proficiency requirement. This study must have been done within the United States.
3. Applicants who have completed a minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate level study at a regionally accredited college or university in the United States with a GPA of 3.00 or higher are exempt from the English proficiency requirement.
4. Applicants who have completed the ASU American English and Culture Program Advanced 2 Level (with grades of "B" or higher) are exempt from the English proficiency requirement.

All international applicants who are from a country whose native language is not English and who wish to apply for teaching assistantships must pass an examination that certifies their skill in speaking English—either the Test of Spoken English (TSE), which may be taken in the student's home country, or the Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK) test, which is administered at ASU. Some degree programs also require TSE or SPEAK scores of applicants whose native language is not English. For specific information about TSE requirements, contact the head of the program.

Admission

Graduate College Admission Requirements

An individual who holds a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) or a graduate degree from a regionally-accredited college or university of recognized standing is eligible to apply for admission to the Graduate College. Remedies for undergraduate deficiencies may be assigned by academic units if the undergraduate degree is based on credits not accepted by ASU, such as life experience, or noncredit workshops and seminars.

Generally, an applicant must have a GPA of 3.00 (scale: 4.00 = A), or the equivalent, in the last two years of work leading to the bachelor's degree. A student who enters a graduate degree program is expected to have undergraduate educational experiences, including general education studies, that are similar to those required for the baccalaureate degree at ASU. The Graduate College evaluates the equivalency of the student's bachelor's degree to determine if the degree is acceptable for a graduate program at ASU.

Admission Decisions

Only the Graduate College dean can make formal offers of admission. The Graduate College notifies all applicants in writing of the admission decision. Applicants are admitted into the university for the semester and year indicated on their admission letter and must initiate their program by registering for courses in that semester.

All academic credentials and supporting materials received by the university in connection with an application for admission become the property of ASU.

Deferral of Admission Decisions

A student may, with the recommendation of the degree program, defer his/her initial semester and year of admission to the next semester in which the program is admitting students. No further deferrals are allowed.

Admission Status

There are several admission status levels which can be applied to a student's application:

Regular Admission Status:

Regular admission status is assigned to an applicant who fulfills all requirements for admission and is academically acceptable to both the degree program and the Graduate College.

Regular Admission with Deficiencies Status:

Regular admission with deficiencies status is assigned to an applicant whose grades and test scores are at an acceptable level but who does not have the undergraduate background expected by the degree program and the university. Deficiency courses may not be applied toward the minimum hours required for the degree program.

Provisional Admission Status:

Provisional admission status is assigned to a student who does not meet minimum academic standards but has additional evidence to suggest the potential for success. This status provides the degree program with an opportunity to better evaluate the student's academic potential. Students who do not meet the provisions of their admission will be withdrawn from their program. When students have completed their provisional requirements, they should check with their advisors to make sure that change of status has been recommended. A provisional student may also be assigned deficiency courses. Students with Provisional Admission are not eligible to submit their *Plan of Study*.

Post-baccalaureate Non-degree Admission Status:

Students not immediately intending to earn a degree may enroll as post-baccalaureate non-degree students. The application process does not require submission of test scores or transcripts unless the student is applying to a graduate certificate program as well. For post-baccalaureate non-degree admission information and procedures, access the website at graduate.asu.edu/admissions/nondegree. See the [Pre-Admission Credits](#) paragraph in the Graduate Degree Requirements section of these policies for maximum credit hours that can be applied to a degree program. Please note that courses in some academic units are open only to degree-seeking students.

Registration and Enrollment

Graduate students register during terms indicated in the Registration and Tuition Payment Guide issued by the [University Registrar's Office](#). Details regarding registration and course drop/add procedures are also provided in the Registration and Tuition Payment Guide. Day and evening graduate classes, offered on or off-campus during the academic year (fall and spring semesters) and the summer sessions, are considered part of the regular program. Students may register at [MyASU](#).

Enrollment Verification Guidelines

The Registrar's Office will verify students' enrollment each semester according to the general guidelines below.

Enrollment Verification Guidelines for Graduate Students

	Full Time*	Half Time	Less Than Half Time
Regular semester			
Graduate	9 or more hours	5–8 hours	4 or fewer hours
Graduate assistant**	6 or more hours	—	—
Five-week summer session			
Graduate	3 or more hours	2 hours	1 hour
Graduate assistant**	2 or more hours	1 hour	—
Eight-week summer session			
Graduate	5 or more hours	3–4 hours	2 or fewer hours

* An audited course does not count for full-time enrollment.

** For enrollment verification purposes, “graduate assistant” is a generic term that includes teaching assistants, research assistants, teaching associates and research associates.

International students are required to maintain full-time enrollment status to maintain their U.S. visa.

Maximum Course Load

The Graduate College does not have a maximum credit hour enrollment policy. It is expected that academic advisors will set course loads for their students that facilitate academic success.

Maximum Employment Hours for International Students

Employment for international students on F-1 or J-1 visas must be limited to 20 hours per week while school is in session (summer sessions are voluntary and are not limited.) This is a federal regulation and the individual degree program is responsible for enforcement.

Continuous Enrollment and Leave of Absence Policies

Once admitted to a graduate degree program, master's and doctoral students must be registered for a minimum of one credit hour (not audit) during all phases of their graduate education. This includes periods when they are engaged in research, working on or defending theses or dissertations, taking comprehensive exams, taking Graduate Foreign Language exams or in any other way using university facilities or faculty time including the term in which they graduate. This credit must appear on the *Plan of Study* or must be an appropriate graduate-level course (e.g. 595, 695, or 795, Continuing Registration). Courses with grades of "W" and "X" are not considered valid registration for continuous enrollment purposes.

Students planning to discontinue enrollment for a semester or more must request approval for a leave of absence. Student may petition the Graduate College for a leave of absence for a maximum of two semesters during their entire program. A petition for a leave of absence, endorsed by the members of the student's supervisory committee and the head of the academic unit, must be approved by the Graduate College dean. This request must be filed and approved before the anticipated absence.

An approved leave of absence will enable students to re-enter their program without re-applying to the university. Students who do not enroll for a fall or spring semester without an approved leave of absence by the Graduate College are considered withdrawn from the university under the assumption that they have decided to discontinue their program. Student removed for this reason may reapply for admission to resume their degree program; the application will be considered along with all other new applications to the degree program.

A student on leave is not required to pay fees, but in turn is not permitted to place any demands on university faculty or use any university resources.

Enrollment Policy for the Teaching and Research Assistantships/Associateships

All teaching and research assistants and associates (i.e., TAs and RAs) must enroll for a minimum of six semester hours of appropriate credit during each semester of their appointment. The six hours cannot include audit enrollment.

TAs and RAs are treated as residents for tuition purposes. To be eligible for tuition remission, TAs and RAs must be employed a minimum of 10 hours per week (25 percent Full Time Equivalency {FTE}). TAs/RAs working 10-19 hours per week (25-49 percent FTE) receive a 50 percent remission of tuition for the semester or summer session of their employment. TAs/RAs working 20 hours per week (50 percent FTE) do not pay tuition during the semester or summer session of their employment. In addition, the university pays the individual health insurance premium for those TAs and RAs working 20 hours per week (50 percent FTE).

See the [TA/RA Handbook](#) for application procedures for assistantships and associateships.

Graduate Degree Requirements

Plan of Study

Determination of Academic Requirements

A student graduates under the degree requirements and policies in effect at the semester and year of admission to a graduate degree program.

The *Plan of Study* (POS)

The *Plan of Study* specifies the requirements that students must complete for their degree and is submitted and revised electronically via the interactive POS system (iPOS). In order to facilitate degree completion and shorten time to degree, graduate students with regular status must submit their POS by the time they have enrolled for 50 percent of the minimum credit hours required towards their degree program.

The POS must be approved by a student's committee, the head of the academic unit, and the Graduate College dean. The POS becomes a contract between the University and the student that guides the student in completing degree requirements.

Courses numbered 500 or higher are graduate level courses. Core courses required by a graduate degree program must be 500-level or above. A **maximum** of six credit hours of 400 level coursework may be used on an approved POS (400 level courses taken for a grade of Pass/Fail cannot be included on a POS). Courses with grades of "D" (1.00) and "E" (0.00) cannot be included on a POS.

Students may not include on their *Plan of Study* any credit hours that have been applied towards a previously awarded degree.

Grading Exceptions

Special Graduate Grade Considerations

Graduate coursework (i.e. 500, 600, and 700 level) reported as incomplete (“I”) must be completed within one calendar year of the end of the scheduled course. If the course has not been completed and a regular grade assigned, it will become a permanent incomplete. The student will need to re-register for the course to receive credit.

Thesis and dissertation credit may only be assigned a grade of “Y” or “Z.”

A grade of “W” is given whenever a student officially withdraws from a course after the drop/add period.

Audit Enrollment

Graduate students may register to audit one or more courses with the approval of the supervisory committee chair and the consent of the instructor involved. An audited course does not count towards the minimum number of credits required for international students with visa restrictions, students employed as TA/RAs, or students receiving financial assistance.

Pre-Admission/Transfer Credit

Pre-Admission Credits

Credit hours completed before the semester and year of admission to an ASU graduate degree program are considered pre-admission credits. With approval of the degree program and the Graduate College, a maximum of nine credit hours of pre-admission credits may be included on the POS for a master’s degree and a maximum of 12 credit hours for a doctoral degree provided the credits have not been used in a previously awarded degree program. Only pre-admission credits earned in graduate level courses with a grade of "B" (3.00) or higher may be used towards a graduate degree.

Using Graduate Credits earned by Undergraduate Students towards a Graduate Degree

Credit hours earned in graduate level courses (per Graduate College policy) by undergraduate students can count towards their graduate degree at ASU as long as these credit hours have not been used towards a previously awarded degree. These credit hours are classified as “pre-admission credits” (see above). At ASU, prior to awarding of their bachelors degree, undergraduate students must contact their undergraduate advisor to set aside any graduate courses for use towards a future graduate degree so that these courses do not count towards their undergraduate degree.

Transfer Credit

Transfer credits are those accepted from another institution for inclusion on an ASU Plan of Study. Official transcripts of any potential transfer credit for a POS must be sent directly to the Graduate Admissions Office from the Office of the Registrar at the institution where the credit was earned.

Transfer hours may not exceed 20 percent of the total credit hours for a master's degree, and 12 credit hours for doctoral degrees. Only graduate level courses with grades of "A" (4.00) or "B" (3.00) may be transferred. Transfer credits may not be applied toward the minimum degree requirements for an ASU degree if they have been counted toward the minimum requirements for a previously-awarded degree.

Certain types of graduate credits cannot be transferred to ASU, including credits awarded (as follows):

1. By post-secondary institutions that lack candidate status or accreditation by a regional accrediting association.
2. For life experience.
3. For courses taken at non-collegiate institutions (e.g., government agencies, corporations, and industrial firms).
4. For courses, workshops, and seminars offered by other postsecondary institutions as part of continuing education programs.
5. For extension courses.

Academic credits earned at other institutions that base their credit calculation on a different scale from ASU's are subject to conversion before inclusion on a *Plan of Study*. In all cases, the inclusion of transfer courses on a *Plan of Study* is subject to approval by the degree program and the Graduate College dean.

Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law Credit

The Graduate College accepts a numerical grade of 70 or above for courses taken in the ASU Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law as part of an approved *Plan of Study*. These grades are not used in the two GPAs calculated for graduation unless needed, as determined by the Graduate College.

Repeating ASU Courses

Graduate students (degree or non-degree) may retake any course at ASU, but all grades remain on the student transcript as well as in all GPA calculations.

Graduate Foreign Language Examination

A graduate degree program may require at least a reading level proficiency of a foreign language relevant to the student's area of study. Students who are required to demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language must pass the [Graduate Foreign Language Examination](#) specific to their particular graduate program. Students must be enrolled for a minimum of one credit hour during the term in which they take the examination.

Students must successfully complete the foreign language examination before taking any required comprehensive examinations or scheduling the final oral defense of the thesis or

dissertation. A student may petition the Graduate College for a re-examination but must pass the examination in no more than three attempts.

Maintaining Academic Progress toward Degree Completion

Grade Point Averages (GPA) and Restricted Grades

There are two GPA requirements that govern academic progress in and graduation from a graduate degree program. The POS GPA is based on all courses that appear on the student's final POS. The Graduate GPA is based on all courses numbered 500 or higher that appear on the transcript, with the exception of:

1. Courses counted toward an undergraduate degree at ASU (unless shared with a master's degree in an approved bachelor's/master's degree program).
2. Courses noted as deficiencies in the original letter of admission.

Transfer credits and courses taken in the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law are not counted in calculations of the POS or Graduate GPA. Courses with grades of "D" (1.00) and "E" (0.00) cannot appear on the POS but will be used to compute the Graduate GPA.

To be eligible for graduation, students must achieve a POS GPA and a Graduate GPA of 3.00 or higher.

Satisfactory Progress towards the Degree and Time Limits on Degree Completion

All graduate students are expected to make systematic progress towards completion of their degree. This progress includes meeting the conditions listed below and achieving the benchmarks and requirements set by the individual degree programs. Each degree program should have in place policies for satisfactory academic progress. If students fail to meet the requirements of their degree program and/or the benchmarks outlined below, the degree program may recommend withdrawal of the student to the Graduate College dean. The Graduate College dean makes the final determination.

1. Maintain a minimum of 3.0 GPA both on POS and Graduate GPA. If either GPA falls below 3.0, the student must develop, with their advisor, an academic performance improvement plan that includes the conditions and timeframes for making satisfactory academic progress in her/his degree program. The student is considered to be on academic probation until the conditions specified in the academic performance improvement plan are met and both GPA's are raised above 3.0.
2. Meet all requirements of the graduate degree program.
3. Meet the maximum time limit for graduation from the student's graduate degree program (six years for master's, ten years for doctoral).

4. Doctoral students must meet the five year time limit for graduation after passing the comprehensive examinations.
5. Successfully pass comprehensive exams, qualifying exams, foreign language exams, and the oral defense of the proposal/prospectus for the thesis or dissertation.
6. Successful completion of the oral defense required in the culminating experience.

Students should verify any additional satisfactory progress policies as required by their degree program.

Thesis and Dissertation Considerations

The master's thesis and doctoral dissertation (or equivalent) must be based on original and independent research/creative activity conducted by the student, under the guidance of the graduate supervisory committee. The thesis is an introduction to scholarly writing and is intended to create an understanding of theory and methods applicable to one's field. The dissertation should demonstrate the candidate's mastery of research and scholarly methodologies, theory, and tools of the discipline. Both the thesis and dissertation should demonstrate the candidate's ability to address a major intellectual problem and to propose meaningful questions and hypotheses, as well as utilize the methods with which to study the proposed research question(s) and related hypotheses, and draw conclusions.

Graduate Supervisory Committees

Students are guided by faculty mentors who advise them through their degree program. Students should identify their advisors early in their graduate career and look to them for guidance in their graduate work. Once the student has selected a thesis/dissertation committee, the head of the academic unit recommends the supervisory committee to the Graduate College dean who reviews and appoints the Committee. Graduate supervisory committees must consist of a minimum of three individuals, including the chair or co-chairs.

Faculty Emeriti who meet Graduate College criteria may serve as members or co-chairs on graduate supervisory committees. They may serve as chairs with the recommendation of the academic unit and approval of the Graduate College dean on a case by case basis. Qualified individuals outside the university, upon the recommendation of the head of the academic unit and approval of the Graduate College, may serve as members of thesis and dissertation committees. All such requests must be submitted to the Graduate College dean for approval.

See the Master's Degree Requirements and the Doctoral Degree Requirements sections below for the composition of supervisory committees.

Thesis or Dissertation Research Involving Human and Animal Subjects

Theses or dissertations that make use of research involving human or animal subjects must include a statement indicating that the research has been approved by the appropriate university body.

Research involving human subjects conducted under the auspices of Arizona State University is reviewed by the University Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) in compliance with federal regulations. Documents containing any data collection from human subjects require that applications be submitted to the University Human Subjects IRB for approval before data collection or recruitment of subjects is initiated at researchadmin.asu.edu/compliance/irb.

Research involving the use of animals conducted under the auspices of Arizona State University is reviewed by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) in compliance with federal regulations. Documents containing any data collection from animal research require that applications be submitted to the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee for approval at researchadmin.asu.edu/compliance/iacuc.

It is very important that students check with their thesis/dissertation advisor well in advance of data collection to ensure university regulations are adhered to in the collection of research data.

Completing the Degree

The final culminating experiences for graduate degrees vary by program. In many master's degree programs a thesis is required, in other programs the culminating experience is an applied or professional project. In all Ph.D. programs, as well as in most professional doctoral programs, dissertations are required. Theses and dissertations are officially documented and archived. Dissertations are deposited with University Microfilms International (UMI) which makes their content available to the public. Information on the dissertation later appears in *Dissertation Abstracts International*. For this reason, all theses and dissertations must undergo Graduate College format review. The Graduate College dean reviews the content to affirm the quality and originality of the scholarly work.

Thesis and Dissertation Format Review

Prior to the defense, students must prepare their thesis or dissertation for submission to the university. This requires that the document meet format guidelines, as outlined in the *Formal Manual*, for readability, consistency, and binding. Copies of the *Format Manual* are available in the Graduate College and at graduate.asu.edu/formatmanual on the web.

To help ensure these guidelines are met, students are required to submit a complete copy of the thesis or dissertation to the Graduate College for format review at least 10 working days **before** the proposed date of the oral defense. It is very important that students familiarize themselves with format requirements before beginning the thesis/dissertation process. They should check with their degree program to make sure they have no specific additional requirements on formatting.

Doctoral students are responsible for the University Microfilms International (UMI) microfilming fee, which covers the expense of having the document sent to UMI, where it is microfilmed and cataloged.

Thesis and Dissertation Defenses

Thesis and dissertation defenses are open to all members of the university community and the general public. The oral defense engages the supervisory committee and the candidate in a critical and analytical discussion of the research and findings of the study, as well as a review of the contribution of the research topic to advancing knowledge in that discipline. The presentation of a thesis or dissertation defense in an open forum fosters a broader awareness of the state of graduate research at ASU, promotes a wider scholarly dialogue among disciplines, and recognizes publicly the scholarly contributions of master's or doctoral candidates.

Defenses must be scheduled with the Graduate College at least 10 working days in advance of the defense date. It is expected that oral defenses will be held on an ASU campus during regular business hours in order to facilitate student, faculty, and public accessibility. When there are sound educational reasons for holding a defense under different circumstances, contact the Graduate College for approval before scheduling the defense.

It is desirable that all members of a student's supervisory committee be physically present with the student at the final oral defense of a thesis or dissertation. However, there are situations (e.g. faculty travel, faculty emergencies and/or faculty leave) that may necessitate holding a defense with one or more committee member(s) absent. Contact the Student Academic Services (SAS) office in the Graduate College for additional information. The forms to schedule the defense are found at graduate.asu.edu/forms/index.html and must be submitted when the thesis/dissertation is presented for format review to the Graduate College.

Graduation

Students must apply for graduation in accordance with the University Registrar policies. See [Application for Graduation](#). Students must meet all University and Graduate College degree requirements prior to the conferral of their degree.

The graduation deadlines and procedures are set by the Graduate College and are available online at graduate.asu.edu/graddeadlines.html. Deadline dates vary slightly depending on the calendar year, so students should check them carefully in advance of the semester they plan to defend their thesis/dissertation. **It is very important that students become familiar with these deadlines so that graduation can occur during the expected term.**

Master's Degree Requirements

Master's Students' Plan of Study

Master's Students' *Plan of Study*

As noted previously, master's students must file their *Plan of Study* (POS) by the time they enroll in 50 percent of the credit hours required towards their degree program. A student is not eligible to apply for the comprehensive or final examination until a POS has been approved.

Minimum Credit Hour Requirements

A minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate work is required for the master's degree at ASU. Six (and only six) of the minimum required credit hours on a POS must be 599 Thesis credits if a thesis is required. Please note that *Plans of Study* submitted for master's degrees that do not have a thesis requirement may not include 599 Thesis credits.

Maximum Time Limit

All work toward a master's degree must be completed within six consecutive years. The six years begins with the semester and year of admission to the program. Graduate courses taken prior to admission that are included on the *Plan of Study* must have been completed within three years of the semester and year of admission to the program.

Completing the Master's Degree

The Master's Supervisory Committee

A master's student's supervisory committee must be appointed before the student may apply for the comprehensive examination or applied project or before the student can register for 599 Thesis credits (if applicable). The committee is appointed by the Graduate College dean upon the recommendation of the head of the academic unit. It is composed of a minimum of three members, including a chair or co-chairs.

For master's committees, tenured/tenure-track faculty may serve as members of a graduate supervisory committee, chair or co-chair. The chair of the committee is typically from the student's degree program and should be carefully selected by the student to guide their work. Members of the Graduate Faculty may serve as members or co-chairs of a master's committee. Graduate Faculty endorsed to chair doctoral committees may also chair master's committees. ASU academic professionals or non-tenure accruing faculty with appropriate academic credentials may serve as a member or co-chair on master's committees.

Thesis and Thesis Defense

To satisfy the research requirement for most master's degrees, a student is expected to present a thesis which is defended in an oral examination. Degree programs may have additional requirements in addition to the thesis (e.g. comprehensive examinations). Students should check with their degree program to verify requirements. An oral defense of the thesis is required and must be completed to the satisfaction of the supervisory committee. Students must be enrolled for at least one semester hour of credit that appears on the *Plan of Study* or one hour of appropriate graduate-level credit (such as 595 Continuing Registration) during the semester (including summer session) in which the student defends the thesis.

Revisions to the thesis are normal and must be completed in a timely manner. If the student is unable to complete revisions to the thesis and meet the ASU Bookstore deadline for the semester in which the defense is held, the student must complete the revisions, remain registered, and present the finished document to the ASU Bookstore within one year of the defense. Failure to do so will require the re-submission of the document for format review and may result in re-defense of the thesis to ensure currency of the work.

Other Master's Culminating Experiences

A comprehensive examination, capstone course or an applied project is required as a culminating experience in master's programs that do not have a thesis requirement. Students must have an approved *Plan of Study* prior to scheduling their comprehensive examination and/or registering for their applied project or capstone course. An oral defense of an applied project is required and must be completed to the satisfaction of the supervisory committee.

Comprehensive Examinations Procedures

The student must schedule the comprehensive examination with their academic unit. The results of this examination must be reported to the Graduate College within the semester it is completed. Failing the comprehensive examination is considered final unless the supervisory committee and the head of the academic unit recommend a re-examination. A petition for re-examination, endorsed by the members of the student's supervisory committee and the head of the academic unit, must be approved by the Graduate College dean before a student can take the re-examination. Only one re-examination is permitted and must be administered no sooner than three months and no later than one year from the date of the original examination. If the student's petition for re-examination is not approved or the student fails the re-examination, the Graduate College will withdraw a student from his/her degree program.

Foreign language requirements, if applicable, must be fulfilled before taking the comprehensive examinations. Students are required to register for at least one semester hour of credit that appears on the POS or one hour of appropriate graduate-level credit (such as 595 Continuing Registration) during the semester or summer session in which they take their comprehensive examinations.

Doctoral Degree Requirements

Doctoral *Plan of Study*

The Doctoral *Plan of Study*

As noted previously, doctoral students must file their *Plan of Study* (POS) by the time they enroll in 50 percent of the credit hours required towards their degree program. The doctoral *Plan of Study* must be approved by the student's supervisory committee, head of the academic unit, and the Graduate College dean.

Minimum Credit Hour Requirements

A minimum of 84 credit hours of graduate work is required for the doctoral degree at ASU; 12 (and only 12) of these hours must be 799 Dissertation course credits if the student is completing a dissertation. Students may apply up to 30 credit hours from a previously awarded master's degree toward their doctoral *Plan of Study* with approval of the degree program and the Graduate College dean.

Maximum Time Limit

Doctoral students must complete all program requirements within a ten-year period. The ten-year period starts with the semester and year of admission to the doctoral program. Graduate courses taken prior to admission that are included on the *Plan of Study* must have been completed within three years of the semester and year of admission to the program (previously awarded master's degrees used on the *Plan of Study* are exempt).

In addition, the student must defend the dissertation within five years after passing the comprehensive examinations. Therefore, the maximum time limit is the shortest of the following:

1. Time period since initial enrollment (10 year time limit).
2. Time after passing the comprehensive exams (5 year time limit).

Any exceptions must be approved by the supervisory committee and the Graduate College dean and ordinarily involves repeating the comprehensive examinations. The Graduate College may withdraw students who are unable to complete all degree requirements and graduate within the allowed maximum time limits.

Completing the Doctoral Degree

Dissertation Supervisory Committee

Upon the recommendation of the head of the academic unit, the Graduate College dean appoints the student's dissertation committee. The committee must be composed of at least three members, including either a chair or co-chairs. Doctoral programs may have additional requirements for committee composition. This committee serves as the intellectual guide for the student and must approve the research/scholarly focus and substance of the dissertation. The members of the dissertation committee have the necessary knowledge and skills to advise the student during the formulation of the research topic and during the completion of the research and the dissertation.

Dissertation chairs and co-chairs must be approved by the Graduate College dean and each degree program maintains the list of faculty approved by the Graduate College to do so. Generally, most resident faculty at ASU may serve on dissertation committees with the proviso that they have appropriate expertise in the discipline.

All Ph.D. programs have a Graduate Faculty. The Graduate College maintains a web page (graduate.asu.edu/gradfaculty) of faculty approved to serve as Ph.D. committee members. The Graduate Faculty in a Ph.D. program may also include highly qualified individuals from outside

the university who have been approved to serve on committees. Each Ph.D. program maintains the list of faculty approved by the Graduate College to chair or co-chair Ph.D. dissertations. Ph.D. students are urged to communicate with their Ph.D. program to be clear on eligibility of faculty to chair committees.

The final committee membership must be appointed by the Graduate College dean before the student may apply for the comprehensive examinations, defend the dissertation prospectus, and register for 799 Dissertation course credits (if applicable).

Comprehensive Examinations

When students have essentially completed the course work in an approved *Plan of Study*, they should request permission to take the comprehensive examinations. These written and oral examinations are designed to test the student's mastery of the field of specialization. Doctoral comprehensive examinations are administered by a committee consisting of a minimum of three members.

Foreign language requirements, if applicable, must be fulfilled before taking the comprehensive examinations. Students are required to register for at least one semester hour of credit that appears on the POS or one hour of appropriate graduate-level credit (such as 795 Continuing Registration) during the semester or summer session in which they take their comprehensive examinations.

Failure in the comprehensive examinations is considered final unless the supervisory committee and the head of the academic unit recommend, and the Graduate College dean approves a re-examination. Only one re-examination is permitted. A petition for re-examination, endorsed by the members of the student's supervisory committee and the head of the academic unit, must be approved by the Graduate College dean before a student can take the second examination. Re-examination may be administered no sooner than three months and no later than one year from the date of the original examination. The Graduate College may withdraw a student from his/her degree program if the student's petition for re-examination is not approved, or if the student fails to successfully pass the retake of the comprehensive exam.

Doctoral Prospectus Defense

All doctoral degree programs that require students to complete a dissertation must require students to complete a dissertation proposal/prospectus and submit the results to the Graduate College. Failure of the doctoral dissertation prospectus defense is considered final unless the supervisory committee and the head of the academic unit recommend, and the Graduate College dean approves a second proposal defense. If a petition is approved, the student must submit the new prospectus by the end of six months (the six months start from the date that the first doctoral dissertation proposal defense was held). If the academic unit does not grant the student permission to retake the proposal defense, or if the student fails to pass the retake of the proposal defense, the Graduate College may withdraw the student from the degree program.

Candidacy

Doctoral students (with specific degree program exceptions approved by the Graduate College dean) achieve candidacy status in a letter from the University Registrar dean upon:

1. Passing the foreign language examination, if applicable.
2. Passing the comprehensive examinations.
3. Successfully defending the dissertation prospectus, if applicable.

Doctoral students who have been advanced to candidacy are required to maintain continuous enrollment until all degree requirements have been completed and graduated. See [Continuous Enrollment](#).

Doctoral Dissertations and the Doctoral Defense

The written doctoral dissertation is based on an original and substantial scholarly work that constitutes a significant contribution to knowledge in the student's discipline. The dissertation research must be conducted during the time of the student's doctoral studies at ASU, under guidance of ASU Graduate Faculty, and in accordance with Graduate College policies and procedures. The composition of the dissertation is defined by the degree program with the approval of the Graduate College dean.

The dissertation research experience culminates in a final oral exam, commonly known as the "dissertation defense." A final public dissertation defense is required. Each student must be enrolled for at least one semester hour of credit that appears on the *Plan of Study* or one hour of appropriate graduate-level credit (such as 795 Continuing Registration) during the semester (including summer session) in which the student defends the dissertation.

Revisions to the dissertation are normal and must be completed in a timely manner. If the student is unable to complete revisions to the dissertation and meet the ASU Bookstore deadline for the semester in which the defense is held, the student must complete the revisions, remain registered, and present the finished document to the ASU Bookstore within one year of the defense. Failure to do so will require the re-submission of the document for format review and may result in re-defense of the dissertation to ensure currency of the work.

Other Graduate Educational Opportunities

Graduate Certificates

The graduate certificate is a programmatic series of linked courses. Graduate certificates facilitate professional growth for people who already hold the baccalaureate degree. For more information on current graduate certificates see the [Graduate Degree and Certificate Search](#) page.

Admission

All applications for graduate certificate programs must be submitted through www.asu.edu/gradapp.

Certificate Requirements

A minimum of 15 semester hours of graduate work are required to complete a graduate certificate. No more than one-fifth (20 percent) of the minimum required credit hours for a graduate certificate may be transferred from another university. All transfer work must meet Graduate College transfer policies. All course work used to complete an ASU graduate certificate must be completed within a six-year time limit. Courses at a 400-level may be allowed with prior approval from the appropriate certificate program, however, a minimum of two-thirds of the courses taken to complete the certificate must be at the 500-level or above. No more than 40% of coursework towards the requirements of a graduate certificate can be completed prior to admission to the certificate program.

Awarding of the Graduate Certificate

A student will be eligible for the official posting of the graduate certificate to their transcripts when all applicable coursework has been successfully completed and Graduate College scholarship requirements have been met. Students must complete, sign and submit to their specific graduate certificate program the [Application for Awarding of a Graduate Certificate](#) form to be verified first by the certificate program and then by the Graduate College, thus ensuring that all requirements have been met before the graduate certificate will be officially posted.

Concurrent Master's Degree

A student may pursue concurrent master's degrees with prior written approval from the head of the academic unit for each degree program and the Graduate College. A maximum of 20 percent of the minimum total semester hours for the completion of both degrees may be common hours shared between the *Plans of Study*. The total number of hours common to both degree programs may vary from this maximum value only when the Graduate College has formally approved coordinated degree programs.

Course work common to both programs must constitute a well-planned and meaningful part of each of the programs and may only include course work completed after admission to both degree programs. In all cases, these guidelines must be followed:

1. The student must be enrolled in both programs each fall and spring semester to maintain continuous enrollment or must petition for a leave of absence. Any approved leave of absence applies to both degree programs.
2. Graduate credit transferred from another institution may be applied toward only one degree program.
3. Culminating experiences (e.g. capstone courses, theses, applied projects) and comprehensive examinations cannot be shared between concurrent degree programs.

4. The six year maximum time limit for completing degree requirements and graduation apply to each concurrent degree individually.

Concurrent enrollment in a doctoral program and master's degree program may not have common hours. Doctoral programs and master's degrees in the same major may not be concurrently pursued.

Concurrent Doctoral Degree

A student may pursue concurrent doctoral degrees with prior written approval from the head of the academic unit for each degree program and the Graduate College. In all cases, these guidelines must be followed:

1. The student must be enrolled in both programs each fall and spring semester to maintain continuous enrollment or must petition for a leave of absence. Any approved leave of absence applies to both degree programs.
2. The 30 hours allowed from a previously awarded master's degree may only be applied to one of the doctoral programs and graduate credit transferred from another institution may be applied toward only one degree program.
3. The comprehensive examination, the dissertation prospectus, and the dissertation cannot be shared between concurrent degree programs.
4. The student must meet the 10 year maximum time limit and five year limit after comprehensive exams for each degree.

Master's in Passing (MIP)

In those cases where there is an approved Master's in Passing (MIP) program in place for a doctoral degree, those doctoral students who complete the requirements of the approved MIP may be awarded the related master's degree. Students should check with their doctoral program to see if there is an approved Master's in Passing for their degree.

Students who include 30 hours from a previously awarded master's degree on their doctoral *Plan of Study* are not eligible for a Master's in Passing. All coursework included in an MIP *Plan of Study* must have been completed after the semester and year of admission to the doctoral program.

Withdrawals from Graduate Degree Programs or the University

Voluntary Withdrawal from the University

If a student wishes to withdraw from all graduate degree programs and the university, they must complete the Voluntary Withdrawal form found at graduate.asu.edu/forms. Students must still complete the appropriate forms with the University Registrar to withdraw from their courses. International students should contact the International Student Office (ISO) before submitting a Voluntary Withdrawal form as it most likely will affect their visa status.

Voluntary Withdrawal from a Graduate Degree Program

If a student wishes to transition from one graduate degree program to another graduate degree program, the student should complete the Voluntary Withdrawal form found at graduate.asu.edu/forms. The students should not take this action until they have been admitted to the other graduate degree program.

Procedures for Other Types of Withdrawals

There are appropriate circumstances when students may need to withdraw from the university (i.e. medical withdrawal, compassionate leave). The policies for such withdrawals are the same for both undergraduate and graduate students. Types of withdrawals and procedures can be found at: www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/usi/usi201-09.html. For course withdrawals contact the University Registrar's Office.

A grade of "W" is given whenever a student officially withdraws from a course after the drop/add period.

Involuntary Withdrawal of a Student from a Graduate Program by the Graduate College

Any student who does not abide by the Graduate College policies may be withdrawn from their graduate program after review by the Graduate College dean.

In addition, a department may recommend withdrawal of a student from a graduate program for lack of compliance with published departmental policies or lack of satisfactory academic progress. All such recommendations need to be submitted to the Graduate College, documenting the issue, communication with the student, and the failure of the student to remedy the issue. Only the Graduate College dean may withdraw a student from a graduate program due to lack of compliance with satisfactory academic progress policies.

Graduate Student Appeals

The Graduate Council Appeals Board: Policies and Procedures

The Graduate Council Appeals Board (GCAB) acts as the appeals body for graduate students seeking redress on academic decisions regarding their graduate programs. Before initiating an appeal, the graduate student must fully utilize all other appeal and review processes available in the student's program, department, or college. The student should also discuss the situation with

the Graduate College dean's office to explore resolution of the matter at the unit or college level before filing an appeal.

The GCAB reviews written appeals of graduate students concerning:

1. Retention in graduate programs (with the limitations described below).
2. Procedural matters in graduate student programs (e.g., procedures related to *Plans of Study*, theses, dissertations, and preliminary, qualifying or comprehensive exams).
3. Other academic issues that are not covered by other university policies or processes.
4. The GCAB will not entertain any appeals until the graduate student has fully utilized all other appropriate appeal procedures through their academic unit and college.
5. The GCAB does not review appeals pertaining to the following areas because these appeals are heard by other university bodies (see parenthesis below):
 - Course grades (subject to review by the academic unit and college).
 - Results of capstone experiences, comprehensive and qualifying examinations and defenses (subject to review by the academic unit and college).
 - Allegations of academic dishonesty (subject to review under the ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy).
 - Allegations of scientific misconduct (subject to review under ASU policy RSP 210 ["Misconduct in Research"] in the Research and Sponsored Projects Policy and Procedures Manual).
 - Allegations of discrimination (subject to review by the ASU Office of Diversity).

The Guidelines for Graduate Appeals describing further the GCAB appeal procedures, process, and jurisdiction are available from the Graduate College and on the website at graduate.asu.edu/files/gradappeals/GradAppeals.

Arizona State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, age or veteran status in the University's services, educational programs, and activities, including, but not limited to, admission to and employment by the University. The Office of Diversity has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's non-discrimination policies: Director, Office of Diversity, University Services Building, 1551 S. Rural Rd., Tempe, Arizona 85287, Intercampus Mail Code 5612. Phone: (480) 965-5057; TTY (480) 965-0471. For information generally about ASU's non-discrimination policies and procedures for filing complaints, please see www.eoaa.asu.edu/aa_policies.asp. Some deadlines for filing complaints are as short as thirty days.