

Graduate College Policy Manual

Graduate policies
and procedures

2024-25

A large, silver, spherical water tower stands on a metal lattice structure. The ASU logo is prominently displayed on the side of the tower. The background features a sunset sky with soft, colorful clouds and green trees.

ASU Graduate
College
Arizona State University

Arizona State University Graduate Policies and Procedures for Academic Year 2024-25

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Introduction

The Graduate College admits students into programs leading to both professional and research-oriented advanced degrees and certificates 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 doctoral degree is the highest university award, conferred on candidates who have proven their ability as scholars and original researchers.

Students are admitted, therefore, both to their academic programs and to the Graduate College of Arizona State University. This Policy and Procedures Manual outlines those policies and procedures that apply across the board to all graduate students who matriculate at Arizona State University, from application to graduation. Graduate College policies supersede all academic program policies, although units may impose stricter policies. The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate College, hereafter referred to as "Dean," has final authority in matters of Graduate College policy and procedure.

Academic Integrity

The highest standards of [academic integrity](#) and compliance with the university's [Student Code of Conduct](#) are expected of all graduate students in academic coursework and research activities. The failure of any graduate student to uphold 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 of data, tampering, plagiarism, or aiding and/or facilitating such activities. At the graduate level, it is expected that students be familiar with these issues and that students assume personal responsibility in their work. Toward this end, the Graduate College makes available an online Academic Integrity Tutorial, which all newly admitted graduate students are expected to complete within their first semester of coursework. This Tutorial appears under "Priority Tasks" in their [My ASU](#) screen.

Additionally, graduate students pursuing research that is funded by external sponsors are responsible for understanding and undertaking the trainings necessary to ensure the responsible conduct of such research. It is very important that students check with their thesis/dissertation advisor well in advance of data collection to ensure compliance with university regulations, and may seek further assistance from the university's [Office for Research Integrity Assurance](#). It is very important that students check with their thesis/dissertation advisor well in advance of data collection to ensure compliance with university regulations regarding the collection of research data. Please see the section of this guide titled "Research Involving Human and Animal Subjects."

Notice of Non-Discrimination

[ASU prohibits all forms of discrimination, harassment and retaliation.](#)

Title IX protects individuals from discrimination based on sex in any educational program or activity operated by recipients of federal financial assistance. As required by Title IX, ASU does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education programs or activities that we operate, including in admission and employment. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator or to the U.S. Department of Education, Assistant Secretary, or both.

Contact titleixcoordinator@asu.edu or 480-965-0696 for more information. Information on [making a report](#) can be found online.

Inclusive Excellence

As part of the ASU community, the Graduate College upholds, values, and enacts the [ASU Charter](#) on behalf of its graduate students and postdoctoral scholars. Our commitment to just and equitable treatment starts with our policies, continues with our processes, and imbues our practices in all we do, from admissions to alumni relations. That means treating every graduate student and postdoctoral fellow fairly and justly, demonstrating our commitment to [inclusive excellence](#) and our promise to whom we include and how they succeed.

Graduate Student Responsibilities

Graduate students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with all university and graduate policies and procedures. Students should also communicate directly with their academic unit to be clear on expectations for degree completion.

Communications with the Graduate College

Important information from the Graduate College is provided to students via their [My ASU](#) portal, their interactive plan of study (iPOS) and their ASU email account. Students should frequently check their [My ASU](#) account, iPOS and ASU email account for the most up-to-date information regarding their status, holds, items to attend to and other important information. All email communication to the Graduate College must come from the secure ASU email account.

Expressing Concerns and Resolving Conflicts

Occasionally, it may happen that a student will run into difficulties with a peer, faculty member, or even advisor or supervisor that seem to defy resolution. While every situation is different, we encourage the following steps for reporting issues within and beyond a program or school:

For matters related to sexual harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation, follow the [reporting procedures](#).

For matters that appear to be outside the scope of formal reporting to the Title IX Office or Office of University Rights and Responsibilities, but are nevertheless difficult to resolve and interfere with the student's effective academic progress, we recommend the following:

- 1) If possible, students should report program-specific issues to the program area head or area coordinator.
- 2) If this report does not resolve the issue or the student is uncomfortable speaking to the program area head or area coordinator, the student may approach the appropriate graduate administrator in their school (e.g., Director of Graduate Studies).
- 3) If a student feels that their concern has not been adequately heard or resolved, they may schedule a meeting with the Director of their school.
- 4) If a student feels that their concern has not been adequately heard or addressed after meeting with individuals in the school, they may report to the appropriate Dean's Office representative.
- 5) If a student is uncomfortable working through the school procedure for any reason, they may go directly to the Dean's Office representative.

Graduate Student Government

Graduate Student Government (GSG) is the graduate student government for Arizona State University. We advocate for students, not only on the university level, but in all levels of government and provide services and resources that facilitate and empower student success in all aspects of academic and professional life. From travel grants to research grants and professional development initiatives, we enhance the graduate student experience. Join us in championing graduate student concerns on all levels. Visit the [GSG webpage](#) for more information and join us on [social media](#) to stay informed of real time events and resources.



Ombudspersons

Designated as impartial fact-finders who can facilitate problem-solving, ombudspersons at the university can help students who are unsure how to resolve their complaints or unsure where to go next. Refer to the list of [designated ombudspersons](#) at ASU.

Application

Submission of an Application

General [admission information and procedures](#) are available online. Applications for all graduate degree programs, certificate programs and/or non-degree seeking students must be submitted via the [graduate application portal](#).

Prior to applying to the Graduate College, applicants should review information regarding their specific [graduate program](#) and academic unit application requirements and deadlines.

Note: Students who are returning to school after an approved Leave of Absence are not required to re-apply, so long as the following applies: they must have a Graduate College- approved Leave of Absence on file with the Graduate College prior to their semester of non-registration, and be re-entering the same graduate program for the semester immediately following the approved request.

Application Deadlines

Application deadlines are set by the graduate programs. Consult the program website or the [Graduate Degree and Certificate Search](#) tool for specific application deadlines.

International students wishing to attend an in-person program must apply to Sessions A or C only (Applications for Session B are not available to international students due to visa requirements).

Application Fee

Each application to an ASU graduate program must be accompanied by a non-refundable application fee, payable by credit or debit card at the time of submission. The application fee covers Graduate Admission Services' administrative costs of processing all applications and is not refundable under any circumstance.

Applicants receive an email acknowledgement once the application has been successfully submitted. The acknowledgement includes an ASURITE ID and activation code so that students

may follow the progress of their application through [My ASU](#). Applicants should review [My ASU](#) to monitor their application status, “To Do” items and “Holds”.

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit official transcripts from their bachelors granting post-secondary institution. Additional transcripts may be required. 1. To verify that international credentials are comparable to a U.S. bachelors. 2. If significant coursework used towards the bachelor's degree was completed at another institution. 3. If the applicant intends on transferring coursework into a graduate program. Information about specific [program requirements](#) and [general requirements](#) are available online.

Academic units may have admission requirements in addition to those of Graduate Admission Services. 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, a statement of goals and/or a resume.

Applicants should consult the academic unit regarding program admission requirements prior to submitting an online application. Programs will submit a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate College regarding their willingness to admit an applicant.

All documents received by Graduate Admission Services in connection with an application become property of ASU and will not be returned.

Academic Credentials

Applicants must have earned a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution in the U.S. or the [equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree](#) from an international institution that is officially recognized by that country. Effective spring 2025, international three-year bachelor's degree programs are acceptable for admission purposes. Applicants are required to have completed their bachelor's degree prior to the start of their graduate program, and provide the final, [official documents](#) to ASU showing completion and attainment of a bachelor's or graduate degree prior to registration in the second semester of graduate studies at ASU.

If original credentials are issued in a language other than English, applicants must provide the original language transcripts as well as an official and literal translation. Photocopied documents certified by a notary public are not official. Professional third-party credential evaluation reports may not be used in place of official transcripts or in place of literal English translations.

Applicants must have maintained a minimum grade point average of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = “A”) in the last 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours of undergraduate coursework. Students may be admitted with additional requirements, often referred to as provisions or deficiencies.

Because ASU receives applications from many highly qualified students, some applicants may be denied admission for reasons not related to their academic performance. Examples include, but are not limited to: program capacity, mentor availability and/or program match.

ASU may make an exception to the U.S. equivalent bachelor's requirement for admission to certain preapproved programs. This exception may require specific documentation including, but not limited to: postsecondary education, significant work experience in the discipline and/or a non-U.S. equivalent degree that the college leadership and the ASU Graduate College Dean deems equivalent to the learned skills of a bachelor's in that discipline. For specific program requirements are available in [degree search](#).

ASU Personalized Graduate Admissions

ASU undergraduate students who meet the eligibility criteria for specific participating master's degree programs will receive an offer for [ASU Personalized Graduate Admissions](#) in their final undergraduate semester. Students who accept an ASU Personalized Graduate Admissions offer will be automatically admitted to one selected ASU graduate degree program without submitting a graduate admission application or supplemental materials.

Additional International Requirements

International Applicants

Please consult the [Graduate Admission Services](#) and [international student visas](#) websites for complete information.

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 accidents before being permitted to register for classes. Insurance must be maintained throughout the students' enrollment at the university.
- 3) Submit proof of [English proficiency](#).
- 4) Submit additional materials as outlined on the [Graduate Admission Services website](#).

Verify that they have the financial resources to cover their expenses during graduate study at ASU. The [Financial Guarantee form](#). In addition to the Financial Guarantee form, if ASU is providing an assistantship, an official offer letter must be sent to the Graduate Admission Services office. Similarly, if a governmental entity is funding the student, an official letter from the government must be submitted to the Graduate Admission Services office in addition to the Financial Guarantee form.

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, proof of [English proficiency](#) and supporting documents have been received by Graduate Admission Services. International students may enroll at ASU only if they have been admitted to a degree program or the post-baccalaureate teacher education program.

International students must be enrolled in a graduate degree program to enroll in an in-person certificate program.

English Language Requirement

English proficiency is required for all students who wish to enter an ASU graduate program. There are several ways to meet the [English proficiency requirement](#):

- [TOEFL](#) score of at least 66 (PBT) or 80 (iBT). The TOEFL is administered by TOEFL/TSE Services. ASU's institutional code is 4007. ASU accepts only electronic copies of the TOEFL score report. ASU does not accept TOEFL iBT® Home Edition, TOEFL iBT® Paper Edition, or TOEFL Essentials Exams.
- [IELTS](#) overall band score of at least 6.5. The IELTS is administered by the University of Cambridge. No institutional code is needed.
- [Pearson](#) Test of English (PTE) score of at least 60. The PTE is administered by Pearson.
- [Duolingo](#) English Test score of at least 105.

Alternatively, [Global Launch](#) provides options for satisfying the ASU English Proficiency requirement with completion of Advanced Level 2. It is recommended that students check with their department first before enrolling to ensure the college which their program resides in will accept one of these options.

Graduate Options:

- English for Graduate Admissions and Achievement Online Course.
- Completion of online course with a passing score.
- English Language Program – In-person or Online.
- Complete Advanced Level 2 with passing score.

Individual academic units may have higher requirements for English proficiency.

Consult the academic unit's website. English proficiency is only valid for two years and must be taken within two years from the beginning of the semester for which the student applied.

Some applicants are exempt from the English proficiency requirement. The following exceptions must be met exactly to be considered for an exemption:

- Applicants who are U.S. Citizens or U.S. Permanent Residents.
- Applicants who have earned a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited college/university in the United States.
- Applicants who have earned the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree or higher from an international institution that is officially recognized by that country, and the country is on the ASU English Speaking Country and Territory List (official transcript required).
- Applicants who have earned the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree or higher from an international institution that is officially recognized by that country, and the sole medium of instruction for the program was in English (official transcript required). Student should email gograd@asu.edu to request exemption and include a letter from the institution on letterhead indicating language of instruction or provide information on the institution website to verify language of instruction.
- Applicants who have completed at least 9 semester hours of graduate coursework with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) or higher at a regionally accredited college/university in the United States or from an international institution that is officially recognized in that country and is on the [ASU English Speaking Country and Territory List](#) (official transcript required).
- Applicants who have completed at least 90 semester hours of undergraduate coursework with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) or higher in residence at a regionally accredited college/university in the United States (official transcript required).
- Applicants who have completed ASU Global Launch's English for Graduate Admissions and Achievement Online Course with a passing score.
- Applicants who have completed Advanced Level 2 of [ASU Global Launch's English Language Program](#) – either in-person or online with passing scores.
- Applicants who have a U.S. High School Diploma (official transcript required).
- Applicants who are citizens from a country or territory listed on the [ASU English Speaking Country and Territory List](#).

All international applicants from countries where the native language is not English must pass an examination that certifies their skill in speaking English before applying for teaching assistantships. English proficiency for admission may not fulfill the English proficiency requirements for teaching assistantships. Visit the [International Teaching Assistant website](#) for information on how to fulfill this requirement. Departmental requirements may differ so it is recommended that applicants contact their departments for specific details.

Non-Degree Seeking Applicants

Applicants who do not immediately intend to pursue a graduate degree may [apply as non-degree seeking students](#). The application process does not require the submission of academic credentials or test scores

Non-degree applicants must have earned a bachelor's degree or higher from a U.S. regionally accredited institution or the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's or graduate degree from an international institution that is officially recognized by that country.

There is no limit to the total cumulative credit hours students can take as non-degree students. However, to apply the credit hours toward an ASU master's or doctoral degree, students are limited to twelve credit hours taken within three years of admission to the degree program.

Non-degree students may not be eligible to enroll in some classes. Students should check the enrollment requirements before registering and contact the academic unit offering the courses with questions regarding qualification for registration. See "Non-Degree Students" in the section "Registration and Enrollment" for more information.

Financial aid is not available to non-degree students.

In-person non-degree study is typically not available to international students on F-1 or J-1 visas. For exceptions, prior to applying, students must contact their Designated School Official (DSO) at the school managing their SEVIS record to inform them that they have applied to take non-degree classes at ASU.

After Applying

Applicants receive an email acknowledgement once the application has been successfully submitted. The acknowledgement includes an ASURITE ID and activation code so that students may follow the progress of their application through [My ASU](#). Applicants should review [My ASU](#) to monitor their application status, "To Do" items and "Holds".

Admissions

A minimum grade point average of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours of undergraduate coursework is required to be considered for admission to an ASU graduate degree program.

Academic units submit recommendations regarding admission decisions to Graduate Admission Services, but only the Dean of the Graduate College can make formal offers of admission.

Applicants monitor the status of their application through [My ASU](#). If admitted, the formal letter of admission can be downloaded from [My ASU](#). If denied admission, letters are sent via email to the address on record.

Upon Admission

Students may apply to programs that are both campus-based immersion programs, as well as online-based digital immersion. However, students have to choose one modality to attend if admitted to both.

Admission Requirements

Applicants may be admitted with additional admissions requirements and a deadline, as determined by the program of admission. These requirements may include successful completion of specific coursework or minimum grades and/or GPA. Additional admission requirements are outlined in the student admission letter and will appear on the iPOS.

Admission Deferrals

Students may, with the recommendation of the degree program, defer their initial start semester and year of admission. Requests for deferrals must be submitted by the last day to drop a class for session C for campus immersion students and the last day to drop a class for session B for ASU online students. Students who miss the deferral deadlines have the option to submit a petition for an enrollment exception for the original admit term.

International Student Admission

International students planning to attend ASU on an F-1 student visa or a J-1 exchange visitor visa must provide documentation required by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. [Visa documents](#) are only issued for international students enrolled in a degree program or the post baccalaureate teacher education program. There are strict regulations regarding when an I-20 or DS-2019 can be issued.

Academic Renewal

Academic renewal is a university policy administered to reset the graduate cumulative ASU GPA of a returning ASU graduate student. To request an academic renewal, applicants must have:

- Not previously received an academic renewal; and
- A cumulative ASU GPA below 3.0; and
- Been admitted to a graduate degree program after an absence from ASU of at least five calendar years; and
- Not been previously dismissed from ASU due to Academic Integrity or Student Conduct violations.

Students approved for academic renewal cannot apply any previously completed coursework or credit hours to their degree program and must complete all degree requirements after admission. All courses completed before and after the academic renewal remain on the transcript and may be considered when students apply for other graduate programs. To pursue an academic renewal, students should seek advising from the intended program of admission.

Registration and Enrollment

Graduate students register through [My ASU](#) according to their enrollment appointment. Details regarding registration and course drop/add procedures are provided in the [Registration and Tuition Payment Guide](#).

[My ASU](#) is an important tool to use during your ASU experience. Among other helpful information, students can access next steps and to-do items for enrollment and registration holds that need attention.

Enrollment Deposit

All master's students admitted to campus immersion programs are required to submit a [graduate enrollment deposit](#) prior to registration.

Immunizations

All students admitted to campus immersion programs are required to have proof of measles immunizations on file with [Student Health](#) prior to registration.

Enrollment Verification Guidelines

The University's Registrar's Office will verify student enrollment each semester according to the general guidelines that follow.

Enrollment Guidelines for Graduate Students

| Term | Full-time | 3/4 time | Half time | Less than half time |
|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Fall & Spring | 9+ credits | 7-8 credits | 5-6 credits | 1-4 credits |
| Summer | 3+ credits | N/A | 2 credits | 1 credit |

*Audited courses do not count toward full-time enrollment

International F-1 and J-1 students are required to maintain full-time enrollment status. Any exception to full-time enrollment must be previously approved by the International Students and Scholars Center (ISSC)

Registration for Students Holding Graduate Appointments

Students with [Graduate Research or Teaching appointments](#) (RA/TA) must maintain enrollment in a minimum of 6 non-audit credit hours during each Fall and Spring semester appointments, and a minimum of one non-audit credit hour for Summer semester appointments. Academic units may have specific requirements regarding RA/TA appointments; students should consult with their degree program unit. Failure to maintain enrollment in the minimum required hours will result in the termination of their appointment.

Full-time equivalent (FTE) is a unit of measurement used to determine the number of hours students are involved in appointment activities. An FTE of 1.0 is equivalent to 40 hours per week. An FTE of 0.50 or 50% represents an appointment of 20 hours per week and is the maximum graduate appointment allowed by ASU.

RAs and TAs appointed for 50% FTE (20 hour per week) receive a tuition award (reflected as RA/TA Remission on their student account) for 100% of ASU graduate tuition. This appointment also provides premium coverage for ASU individual health insurance if the student elects for health insurance coverage. Please note, if health insurance is needed, students must select that option when registering for classes on My ASU; if they decline, they will be without coverage from the university. The university will not cover premiums for any other insurance plan.

RAs and TAs appointed for 25% FTE (10 hours per week) will receive a partial tuition award (reflected as RA/TA Remission on their student account). Students are responsible for 50% of the Arizona base resident tuition costs. This appointment does not provide premium coverage for ASU individual health insurance.

RA and TA appointments do not cover university mandatory fees, program tuition and/or fees for the academic year or summer sessions; these are the responsibility of the student.

Due to federal regulations, international students may be appointed a maximum of 20 hours per week during fall and spring semesters.

International students may be allowed to work 40 hours per week during summer sessions. International students typically are not allowed to seek employment outside the university and should consult with the [International Students and Scholars Center](#) (ISSC) to confirm eligibility.

Maximum Course Load

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

Continuous Enrollment

Once admitted to a graduate degree program or graduate certificate program, students must be registered for a minimum of one graduate-level credit hour during all phases of their graduate education, including the terms in which they were admitted and graduate. This includes periods when students are engaged in research, conducting a doctoral prospectus, working on or defending theses or dissertations, taking comprehensive examinations, taking Graduate Foreign Language Examinations or in any other way utilizing university resources, facilities or faculty time.

Registration for every fall semester and spring semester is required. Summer registration is required for students taking examinations, completing culminating experiences, conducting a doctoral prospectus defense, defending theses or dissertations or graduating from the degree program. Summer registration is also required for students whose first matriculation term is the summer and for those graduating in the summer.

To maintain continuous enrollment, the credit hour(s) must satisfy one or more of the following:

- Appear on the student's Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS).
- Be research (592, 692, 792), thesis (599, 699), dissertation (799), or continuing registration (595, 695, 795).
- Be a graduate-level course.
- Be a 400-level course that is listed on an approved iPOS.
- Be a deficiency course that is listed on the student's admit letter.

Grades of "W" and/or "X" are not considered valid registration for continuous enrollment purposes. "W" grades are received when students officially withdraw from a course after the drop/add period.

"X" grades are received for audit courses. All other grades, including "E," "EU" and/or "EN" are considered valid registration for continuous enrollment purposes despite receiving no credit. "E" is a failing grade, "EU" is for failing and did not complete the course, and "EN" is for failing and never participated in the course. Undergraduate courses not included on the iPOS do not satisfy the Graduate College continuous enrollment policy.

Additionally, students completing work for a course in which they received an [incomplete grade](#) of "I" must maintain continuous enrollment as defined previously. Graduate students have one year to complete work for an incomplete grade; if the work is not complete and the grade changed within one year, the "I" grade becomes permanent and will remain on the students' transcripts.

Leaves of Absence

Graduate students planning to discontinue registration for a semester or more must submit a [Leave of Absence](#) request via their Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS). This request must be submitted and approved *before* the anticipated semester of non-registration. Students may request a maximum of two semesters of leave during their entire program. Having an approved Leave of Absence by the Graduate College will enable students to re-enter their program without re-applying to the university.

Students who do not register for a fall or spring semester without an approved Leave of Absence are considered withdrawn from the university under the assumption that they have decided to discontinue their program. Students removed for this reason may re-apply for admission to resume their degree program; the application will be considered along with all other new applications to the degree program.

Students with a Graduate College approved Leave of Absence are not required to pay tuition and/or fees, but in turn are not permitted to place any demands on university faculty or use any university resources. These resources include university libraries, laboratories, recreation facilities or faculty and staff time.

Voluntary Withdrawal from ASU

Students who wish to withdraw from their graduate degree or certificate program and the university must complete and submit a [Voluntary Withdrawal form](#). Students must separately complete the appropriate forms with the University Registrar to withdraw from their courses. International students should contact the [International Students and Scholars Center \(ISSC\)](#) before submitting a Voluntary Withdrawal form, as it most likely will affect their visa status.

Voluntary Withdrawal for Choosing a New Program

Students who wish to discontinue a graduate program should complete and submit a [Voluntary Withdrawal form](#). Students should not take this action until they have been admitted to the other graduate degree program.

Medical/Compassionate Withdrawal

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. An approved [Medical/Compassionate Complete Withdrawal](#) is valid towards meeting the continuous enrollment policy.

Non-Degree Students

Continuous enrollment is not required for students admitted as non-degree seeking. Students should check the enrollment requirements for courses before registering and contact the academic unit offering the course regarding registration questions. Non-degree seeking students who decide to apply to a degree program may be allowed to apply up to 12 applicable credit hours taken within three years of admission to the degree program. Students should seek advising from the intended program for applicable course options.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

All graduate students are expected to make systematic progress toward completion of their graduate program. This progress includes satisfying the conditions listed below, and achieving the benchmarks and requirements set by the individual graduate programs as well as the Graduate College. If a student fails to satisfy the requirements of their program and/or the benchmarks outlined below, the student may be dismissed from their program based on the academic unit's recommendation to the Graduate College, at which time the Dean of the Graduate College makes the final determination.

Satisfactory academic progress includes:

- 1) Maintain a minimum 3.00 for all GPAs (see definitions below).
- 2) Satisfy all requirements of the graduate program.
- 3) Satisfy the maximum time limit for graduation for the student's graduate program (six years for masters and certificates, ten years for doctoral), see "Time Limit" sections.
- 4) Successfully pass comprehensive exams, qualifying exams, foreign language exams, and the oral defense of the proposal/prospectus for the thesis or dissertation.
- 5) Successfully complete the culminating experience.
- 6) **Remain continuously enrolled** in their graduate program. Failing to do so without a Graduate College approved Leave of Absence is considered to be lack of academic progress and may result in the Graduate College withdrawing the student from their program. See full Leave of Absence rules above.

Grade Point Averages

Graduate students must maintain a minimum 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") grade point average (GPA) to maintain satisfactory academic progress and to graduate. The minimum 3.00 GPA must be maintained on all GPA's (Plan of Study (iPOS) GPA, Overall Graduate GPA and Cumulative GPA).

- 1) The iPOS GPA is calculated on all courses that appear on the student's approved iPOS.
- 2) The Cumulative GPA represents all courses completed at ASU during the graduate career.
- 3) The Overall Graduate GPA is based on all courses numbered 500 or higher that appear on the transcript after admission to a graduate program (or graduate non-degree). This includes shared 500-level coursework taken as part of an approved accelerated bachelor's/master's program.

Transfer credits and some courses taken in the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law are not calculated on in the iPOS GPA or the Graduate GPA.

Courses lower than a "C" cannot appear on the iPOS but will be included when calculating the Graduate GPA. Courses with an "I" grade cannot appear on the iPOS.

Academic Dismissal by the Graduate College

Students who do not comply with Graduate College policies for continuous enrollment or satisfactory academic progress may be dismissed from their graduate program after review by the Dean of the Graduate College.

In addition, academic units may recommend dismissal of students from graduate programs for lack of compliance with published departmental policies or lack of satisfactory academic progress. All

such recommendations must be submitted to the Graduate College with appropriate documentation (e.g., nature of issue, communications with student). Students may appeal such recommendations at the level of their program, department, and/or college level. When they come to the Graduate College, they will be reviewed for procedural due diligence only. If the Dean of the Graduate College (or the Dean's designee) concurs with the recommendation, the student will receive the official notification of dismissal from the Graduate College. Only the Dean of the Graduate College may dismiss students from a graduate program due to lack of compliance with satisfactory academic progress policies.

Students who have been dismissed from a graduate program due to lack of compliance with published departmental or Graduate College policies, or lack of satisfactory academic progress are eligible to apply for admission to the same program only after one year has passed from the term of the dismissal.

It is important to note that program dismissal is **not** an option for students who have been found in serious violation of ASU's Academic Integrity policies by their unit; they must be recommended either for suspension (for a specified period of time) or expulsion (with no expectation of readmission) to the Provost's office, which has the ultimate authority in matters of suspension and expulsion. Students are afforded a final appeal at the university level in such cases. For further information on policy and procedures, consult the [Academic Integrity Student Policy](#).

Graduate Program Requirements

Determination of Academic Requirements

The requirements and policies that students must follow are based on the catalog and manuals for the semester and year of their admission to a graduate program. Students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment and are re-admitted to the graduate program, graduate under the requirements and policies in effect at the time of the new admission date. All programs are required to have program handbooks specifying all program requirements and to make them available to students at the beginning of their degree programs.

Master's Degree Programs

A minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate-level coursework including a culminating experience is required for a master's degree, although individual programs may have higher requirements. The culminating experience may be a written comprehensive examination, a capstone course, an applied project, a written portfolio, a thesis or equivalent.

Students who have a capstone or applied project course requirement must receive a grade of "B" or better. Students who fail to achieve a final grade of "B" or better must retake the course and earn a "B" or better to complete the program.

Doctoral Degree Programs

A minimum of 60 credit hours of graduate-level coursework are required for a professional doctorate degree. A minimum of 84 credit hours of graduate-level coursework and a written comprehensive examination are required for a PhD degree, although individual programs may have higher requirements. Additionally, the Foreign Language Examination, oral comprehensive examination and/or dissertation or equivalent may be required. A written comprehensive examination and prospectus (research proposal) is required for all programs requiring a dissertation.

Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS)

The Interactive Plan of Study ([iPOS](#)) functions as an agreement between the student, the academic unit and the Graduate College. The iPOS contains certain requirements such as coursework, a committee and a culminating experience which must be specified before the final plan of study can be approved. The academic unit's graduate support staff should be the primary contact for questions regarding iPOS, degree and certificate requirements. The iPOS must be approved by a student's committee, the head of the academic unit, and the Dean of the Graduate College.

Graduate students are required to complete their iPOS in their first enrolled semester. This requirement will be monitored by the student's academic unit and is considered critical to satisfactory academic progress.

Coursework

Graduate-level courses are those numbered 500 or higher. All core courses required by a graduate program must be at least 500-level. A maximum of 6 credit hours of 400-level coursework can be included on an iPOS with program approval. 400-level courses taken prior to admission and 400-level courses graded as "Pass/Fail" are not acceptable. Courses with grades of "D", "E", or "W" and audited courses (graded as "X") cannot be included on an iPOS. **Courses applied to a previously awarded degree cannot be included on an iPOS unless the student is enrolled in an approved course-sharing degree program.**

Any course with a grade of Incomplete ("I") must be completed within one calendar year of the end of the scheduled course. If a regular grade is not assigned within the calendar year, the "I" becomes permanent. The student will have to re-register for the course to receive credit. For additional information regarding incomplete grades, consult the [Student Services Manual](#).

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 toward the minimum number of credits required for international students with visa restrictions, students employed as TA/RAs or students receiving financial assistance. Courses taken for audit do not satisfy the Graduate College continuous enrollment policy.

Undergraduate courses not included on the iPOS do not automatically satisfy the Graduate College continuous enrollment policy unless they are notated on the admission letter as an additional requirement (deficiency).

Master's degree students whose culminating experience is a thesis must include 6 (and only 6) credit hours of 599 Thesis on the iPOS. Doctoral students whose culminating experience is a dissertation must include 12 (and only 12) credit hours of 799 Dissertation on the iPOS. Thesis and Dissertation credit hours may only receive grades of "Z" (research is in progress), or "Y" (research is satisfactorily complete). PhD students may apply up to 30 credit hours, sometimes referred to as a blanket 30, of appropriate coursework from a previously awarded master's degree toward their

PhD plan of study with approval of their academic unit and the Graduate College. Professional doctorates may apply either up to 15 or up to 30 credit hours of appropriate coursework from a previously awarded master's degree toward their doctoral plan of study with approval of their academic unit and the Graduate College. Students should consult their program handbook for specific rules regarding their professional doctorate.

Petitions

A formal request for an exception to any Graduate College policy requires a petition to be completed by the student, and must be approved by the committee chair and the head of the academic unit. The Graduate College office will review the petition and make a final determination. Petitions to utilize coursework older than 3 years may result in maximum time limit being adjusted. The Graduate College Dean has final authority in all matters of Graduate College policy.

Pre-Admission Credits

Credit hours completed at ASU or at another regionally accredited U.S. institution or international institution officially recognized by that country, before the semester and year of admission to an ASU graduate degree program, are considered pre-admission credits. With approval of the academic unit and the Graduate College, students may include a maximum of 12 graduate-level credit hours with grades of “B” or better that were not used towards a previous degree. Coursework taken while completing another degree awarded at another institution cannot apply to an ASU graduate degree, except for the blanket credit hours of appropriate coursework from a previously awarded master’s degree that can be used towards a doctoral degree, or unless enrolled in an approved course-sharing degree program.

Pre-admission credits must have been taken within 3 years of admission to the ASU degree or certificate program to be accepted. If special approval is granted for coursework older than 3 years from the admission term to apply towards the program, the maximum time limit may be updated to reflect the start date of the pre-admission coursework.

Note: All ASU credits used to earn a certificate may also be used towards a graduate degree as part of an approved stackable degree program. The certificate must have been completed within the last three years with grades of “B” or better in applicable coursework.

Accelerated Master’s programs may use a maximum of 12 pre-admission credit hours which may be shared between a Bachelor’s and Master’s program. Students may not exceed the 12- credit hour pre-admission policy. Students in accelerated programs should contact their advisor to ensure proper sharing of credit hours. See “Accelerated Master’s Programs” under “Master’s Degree” for more information.

With program and Graduate College approval, former ASU graduate students who are admitted and reenroll in a program in which they were previously enrolled may apply previously completed ASU coursework to their program. Returning ASU graduate students may have additional flexibility in the pre-admission time limit and credit hour limit. The maximum time limit may be updated to reflect the start date of the pre-admission coursework.

Official transcripts must be sent to Graduate Admission Services from the records office of the institution where the credits were earned.

Certain types of graduate credits cannot be applied, including credits awarded in the following situations:

- By postsecondary institutions that lack candidate status or accreditation by a regional accrediting association, or an equivalent international institution.
- Life experience.
- Courses taken at non-collegiate institutions (e.g., government agencies, corporations, and industrial firms).
- Courses, workshops and seminars offered by other postsecondary institutions as part of continuing education programs.
- Extension courses.

Academic credits earned at institutions other than ASU that base their credit calculation on a different scale from ASU's are subject to conversion before inclusion on the iPOS. In all cases, the inclusion of transfer courses on the iPOS is subject to approval by the academic unit and the Dean of the Graduate College.

Graduate Credits Earned by ASU Undergraduate Students

ASU students enrolled in an approved Accelerated Master's degree program (formerly referred to as 4+1), may share ASU credit hours. Students must contact their ASU undergraduate advisor and graduate support staff to ensure proper sharing of credit hours. Accelerated Master's students may earn up to a maximum of 12 graduate credit hours during their undergraduate degree to be used later towards the master's degree.

Reserved Credit - Upon approval by the unit and the Graduate College, undergraduate ASU seniors with at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA may reserve up to 12 graduate-level credit hours (6 credits of which may be 400-level), for possible use towards a future ASU graduate program. Reserved courses must have grades of "B" or better for use in a future graduate program and have been completed within 3 years of enrollment in the graduate program. Courses must be officially reserved in the Degree Audit System (DARS) for eligibility, and may not be used towards any baccalaureate graduation requirement. Students may not exceed the 12-credit hour pre-admission policy.

An undergraduate degree and a graduate degree may not be awarded during the same term of enrollment. Students must be admitted and be registered as graduate students to earn a master's or doctoral degree at ASU. See "Accelerated Master's Programs" under "Master's Degree" for more detailed information.

Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law Credit

The Graduate College accepts a numerical grade of 70 or higher 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. The Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law also utilizes a letter grade system for coursework; letter grades are submitted as part of an approved Plan of Study and are calculated in the GPAs.

Repeating ASU Courses

Graduate students (degree or non-degree) may retake any course at ASU; however, all grades are part of the students' permanent academic record, remain on the transcript and are used in all GPA calculations.

Graduate Foreign Language Examination (FLE)

Graduate programs may require at least a reading level proficiency of a foreign language relevant to the 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. Students may submit a petition to the Graduate College for a re-examination but must pass the examination in no more than three attempts.

Completing Degree Programs Concurrently

Students may pursue concurrent degrees in different academic areas with prior written approval from the head of the academic unit for each degree program and the Graduate College. A separate online application is required for each degree program, except in the case of predefined concurrent programs. For concurrent master's programs, a maximum of 20% of the minimum total credit hours for the completion of both degrees may be shared. For concurrent programs that include a doctoral program, a maximum of 12 credit hours may be shared. The total number of credit hours common to both degree programs may vary from this maximum value only when the Graduate College has formally approved coordinated degree programs.

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

- 1) Students must maintain continuous enrollment as previously defined. Registration in both programs *may* be required each semester. Please see the academic unit for specific satisfactory academic progress and program rules. Students may request a leave of absence to maintain continuous enrollment, but a separate request must be submitted for each program. Students may not be registered for coursework for either program while on a leave of absence.
- 2) Graduate credit transferred from another institution may be applied toward only one of the degree programs.
- 3) Culminating experiences (e.g. capstone courses, theses, applied projects) and comprehensive examinations cannot be shared between concurrent programs.
- 4) The 15 to 30 blanket hours allowed for doctoral programs from a previously awarded master's degree may only be applied to one of the doctoral programs.
- 5) The maximum time limit for completing degree requirements and graduation apply to each concurrent degree individually (6 years for master's; 10 years for doctoral).

Pre-approved Concurrent Degree Programs

The Graduate College has formally approved coordinated concurrent degree programs that students can pursue. These programs have specific set shared hours approved in their proposals. Units should refer to these to review the proper shared credit hours and other applicable policies.

Master's Degree

Master's Degree Plan of Study (iPOS)

Graduate students are required to complete their iPOS in their first enrolled semester. This requirement will be monitored by their academic unit and is considered critical to satisfactory academic progress. Students are not eligible to schedule a comprehensive examination or defense without an approved iPOS.

Master's Degree Minimum Credit Hours

A minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate work is required for a master's degree at ASU. If a thesis is required, 6 (and only 6) of the minimum required credit hours on an iPOS must be 599 Thesis credits. Interactive Plans of Study submitted for master's degrees that do not have a thesis requirement cannot include 599 Thesis credits. If an applied project is required, the Applied Project course (XXX 593) must be included on the iPOS and requires a grade of "B" or better.

Master's Degree Maximum Time Limit

All work toward a master's degree must be completed within six consecutive years. The six years begin with the semester and year of admission to the program. Graduate courses taken prior to admission that are included on the iPOS must have been completed within three years of the semester and year of admission to the program. If coursework completed over 3 years ago is being applied towards a degree program as pre-admission coursework, the maximum time limit may be updated to reflect the start date of the pre-admission coursework. Programs may require a shorter time limit for degree completion in the program's handbook.

Any exception to the time limit policy must be approved by the supervisory committee, the head of the academic unit and the Dean of the Graduate College. The Graduate College may withdraw students who are unable to complete all degree requirements and graduate within the allowed maximum time limits.

Master's Degree Supervisory Committee

A master's supervisory committee must be appointed before the student may apply for the comprehensive examination or before the student can register for 599 Thesis credits (if applicable). The committee is appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College upon the recommendation of the head of the academic unit. For programs requiring a thesis or written examination, the supervisory committee comprises a minimum of three members, including a chair or two co-chairs. At a minimum, the Chair or Co-Chair of the committee is required to be ASU faculty or an approved faculty affiliate.

Tenured/tenure-track faculty may serve as members of a master's 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.

Master's Thesis/Thesis Defense

Students must be in good academic standing regarding GPA requirements (see previous section titled "Satisfactory Academic Progress") prior to scheduling a defense. See the Supervisory Committee section and the Thesis/Dissertation section below for more information.

Other Master's Culminating Experiences

A written comprehensive examination, capstone course, applied project or written portfolio is required as a culminating experience in master's programs that do not have a thesis requirement. The Graduate College office requires a written component to the comprehensive examination; academic units may also require an oral component. Students must have an approved iPOS prior to scheduling their comprehensive examination and/or registering for their applied project or capstone course. An applied project requires registration in the Applied Projects course (XXX 593) and requires a grade of "B" or better. A capstone course requires a grade of "B" or better.

Students must be in good academic standing regarding GPA requirements (see previous section titled “Satisfactory Academic Progress”) in the semester of the culminating experience.

Students are required to register for at least one semester hour of credit that appears on the iPOS or one hour of appropriate graduate-level credit during the fall, spring or summer session in which they complete their culminating experience.

Master’s Comprehensive Examination

Students must be in good academic standing regarding GPA requirements (see previous section titled “Satisfactory Academic Progress”) prior to taking master’s comprehensive examinations. 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 iPOS or one hour of appropriate graduate-level credit during the fall, spring or summer session in which they take their comprehensive examinations. If the date of defense falls between semesters, the student is required to register for the next available semester.

The master’s comprehensive examination must have a written component; however, individual master’s degree programs may require an additional oral component of the comprehensive exam for all of their students based on the academic progress policy of the program.

Students must schedule the comprehensive examination with their academic unit. All comprehensive examination results must be reported to the Graduate College office via the students’ iPOS immediately upon completion.

Failing the comprehensive examination(s) is considered final unless the supervisory committee and the head of the academic unit recommend, and the Dean of the Graduate College approves, a re-examination. **Only one re-examination is permitted.** A petition with substantial justification for re-examination, endorsed by the members of the students’ supervisory committee and the head of the academic unit, must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College before students can take the examination a second time.

Re-examination may be administered on a timeline recommended by the committee chair and made in consultation with the committee, which should be no later than 12 months from the date of the original examination. The Graduate College office may dismiss a student from the 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 examination(s).

Students choosing to appeal the results of their comprehensive examinations must follow the grade appeals process outlined by their academic unit.

Students who have received a final result of failure in the comprehensive examination will be recommended for dismissal by the academic unit.

Accelerated Master’s Programs

ASU allows for the simultaneous pursuit of an undergraduate and graduate degree in certain pre-approved programs. In such cases, the program must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College. Undergraduate students must meet the unit’s criteria for approval to pursue their accelerated program and be granted consent to complete up to 12 credits of graduate coursework.

Students must contact their ASU undergraduate advisor and graduate support staff to ensure proper sharing of credit hours. Students may not share any credit hours taken as an undergraduate student unless they are participating in an approved accelerated program pairing (Bachelor's/Master's). Students must meet minimum admissions standards to be admitted to the Master's portion of the accelerated program.

Doctor of Philosophy Degree

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS)

Graduate students are required to complete their iPOS in their first enrolled semester. This requirement will be monitored by their academic unit and is considered critical to satisfactory academic progress.

Students are not eligible to apply for the Foreign Language Examination (if applicable), comprehensive examinations, dissertation proposal/prospectus or dissertation defense (if applicable) without an approved iPOS.

PhD Degree Minimum Credit Hours

A minimum of 84 credit hours of graduate work is required for a PhD degree at ASU. If a dissertation is required, 12 (and only 12) of the minimum required credit hours on the iPOS must be 799 Dissertation credits. Interactive Plans of Study submitted for PhD degrees that do not have a dissertation requirement cannot include 799 Dissertation credits. Students may apply up to 30 credit hours from a previously awarded master's degree toward their PhD iPOS with approval of the program and supervisory committee and the Dean of the Graduate College. The credit hours must be from a regionally accredited or internationally recognized institution.

PhD Degree Maximum Time Limit

PhD students must complete all program requirements within a ten-year period. The ten-year period begins with the semester and year of admission to the PhD program. Graduate courses taken prior to admission that are included on the iPOS 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 Interactive Plan of Study are exempt). If older coursework is being applied towards a degree program as pre-admission coursework, the maximum time limit may be updated to reflect the start date of the pre-admission coursework. Programs may require a shorter time limit for degree completion in the program's handbook.

Any exception to the time limit policy must be approved by the supervisory committee, the head of the academic unit and the Dean of the Graduate College. The Graduate College may withdraw students who are unable to complete all degree requirements and graduate within the allowed maximum time limits.

Supervisory Committee

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 students have selected a supervisory committee, the head of the academic

unit recommends the supervisory committee to the Dean of the Graduate College who reviews and appoints the committee. Graduate supervisory committees must consist of a minimum of three individuals, including a chair or two co-chairs.

PhD programs may have additional requirements for committee composition. This committee serves as the intellectual guide for students 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 Dean of the Graduate College and each degree program maintains a list of faculty members approved by the office for the Graduate College. Most resident faculty at ASU may serve on dissertation committees with the proviso that they have appropriate expertise in the discipline. At a minimum, the Chair or Co-Chair of the committee is required to be ASU or approved ASU-affiliate faculty.

All PhD programs have a [Graduate Faculty](#). The Graduate Faculty in a PhD program may also include highly qualified individuals from outside the university who have been approved to serve on committees. Each PhD program maintains a list of faculty members approved by the Graduate College to chair or co-chair PhD dissertations. Additional information regarding ASU Graduate Faculty can be found at [graduate faculty guidelines](#).

Doctoral students (including PhD, DMA, DPP, DBH, DNP, DBA, AuD and EdD) are urged to communicate with their academic unit to confirm eligibility of faculty to chair doctorate committees early on in the planning of their dissertation projects.

Academic programs will provide guidance to students for securing the supervisory committee. The final committee membership must be appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College before the student may apply for comprehensive examinations, defend the dissertation prospectus, and register for 799 Dissertation course credits (if applicable).

Supervisory Committee Roles and Responsibilities

The chair or supervisor is principally responsible for directing student work and facilitating the work of the committee. Typically, this involves working with the student to develop the overall approach to and plan of work for the project, including its timeframe and budget; providing initial review and guidance for the proposal and chapter drafts; reviewing and approving all subsequent drafts; helping to reconcile the comments of committee members on those drafts; ensuring the document meets ASU format and publication standards; and facilitating the defense and final revisions, as necessary.

The other members of the committee are responsible for providing additional research guidance according to their expertise; providing detailed feedback on prospectus and thesis/dissertation drafts; working with the student and the chair to reconcile differing comments; attending the defense; and reviewing any final revisions required.

The student is responsible for coordinating prospectus and thesis/dissertation defense meeting times and places; for providing all materials requested/approved by the chair to be distributed to committee members; and for communicating with committee members about review timeframes in order to meet all Graduate College deadlines.

On the occasion that committee members must be replaced, students may do so with the approval of their chairs via an iPOS petition to the Graduate College. In instances where the chair must be replaced, or if a complete committee reconstitution must occur, students are advised to consult with

the director of the graduate program and/or school leadership for assistance. The college dean would need to appoint a qualified designee to serve as a replacement for a chair.

PhD Comprehensive Examination

Students must be in good academic standing regarding GPA requirements (see previous section titled “Satisfactory Academic Progress”) prior to taking PhD comprehensive examinations.

When students have essentially completed the coursework on an approved iPOS, they must request permission to take the PhD comprehensive examination. The PhD comprehensive examination must have a written component; however individual PhD programs may require an additional subsequent oral component of the comprehensive exam for all of their students based on the academic progress policy of the program. These examination(s) are designed to assess students’ mastery of the field of specialization.

PhD comprehensive examination(s) are administered by a committee consisting of a minimum of three members. Specific professional doctorate programs may not require a written or comprehensive exam.

Foreign language requirements, if applicable, must be satisfied before taking the comprehensive examination(s).

Students are required to register for at least one semester hour of credit that appears on the iPOS or one hour of appropriate graduate-level credit during the fall, spring or summer session in which they take their comprehensive examinations. If the date of defense falls between semesters, the student is required to register for the next available semester.

Students must schedule the comprehensive examination with their academic unit. All comprehensive examination results must be reported to the Graduate College office via the students’ iPOS immediately upon completion.

Failing the comprehensive examination(s) is considered final unless the supervisory committee and the head of the academic unit recommend, and the Dean of the Graduate College approves, a re-examination. **Only one re-examination is permitted.** A petition with substantial justification for re-examination, endorsed by the members of the students’ supervisory committee and the head of the academic unit, must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College before students can take the examination a second time.

Re-examination may be administered on a timeline recommended by the committee chair and made in consultation with the committee, which should be no later than 12 months from the date of the original examination. The Graduate College may dismiss a student from the 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 examination(s).

Students choosing to appeal the results of their comprehensive examinations must follow the grade appeals process outlined by their academic unit.

Students who have received a final result of failure in the comprehensive examination will be recommended for dismissal by the Academic Unit.

PhD Prospectus Defense

All students in programs that require a dissertation are required to conduct a dissertation proposal/prospectus defense. Results of the defense are submitted via the student's iPOS. Failure of the proposal/prospectus oral defense is considered final unless the supervisory committee and the head of the academic unit recommend, and the Dean of the Graduate College approves, a second proposal defense. If a second defense is approved, students must submit the new prospectus by the end of six months (beginning from the date that the first PhD dissertation proposal defense was held). If the academic unit does not grant the students permission to retake the proposal defense, or if the students fail to pass the retake of the proposal defense, the Graduate College may dismiss the students from the degree program.

Students are required to register for at least one semester hour of credit that appears on the iPOS or one hour of appropriate graduate-level credit during the fall, spring or summer session in which they conduct their PhD prospectus.

PhD Candidacy

PhD students (with specific degree program exceptions approved by the Dean of the Graduate College) achieve candidacy status upon the successful completion of the comprehensive examination(s), the Foreign Language Examination (if applicable), and successfully defending the dissertation prospectus (if applicable). PhD students who have been advanced to candidacy are required to maintain continuous enrollment until all degree requirements have been completed and they have graduated.

PhD Dissertation/Dissertation Defense

Students must be in good academic standing regarding GPA requirements (see previous section titled "Satisfactory Academic Progress") prior to scheduling the defense. Also see "Thesis/Dissertation Consideration" section for more information.

Master's in Passing (MIP)

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 MIP for their degree. Students with an existing master's degree with the same major are not eligible.

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

Professional Doctorate Degree

Professional Doctorate Degree Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS)

Graduate students are required to complete their iPOS in their first enrolled semester. This requirement will be monitored by their academic unit and is considered critical to satisfactory academic progress.

Students are not eligible to apply for the following, if applicable, without an approved iPOS: Foreign Language Examination, comprehensive examinations, dissertation proposal/prospectus or dissertation defense, applied project or capstone.

Professional Doctorate Degree Minimum Credit Hours

A minimum of 60 credit hours of graduate work is required for a professional doctorate degree at ASU. If a dissertation is required, 12 (and only 12) of the minimum required credit hours on the iPOS must be 799 Dissertation credits. Interactive Plans of Study submitted for professional doctorate degrees that do not have a dissertation requirement cannot include 799 Dissertation credits. With approval of the program and supervisory committee and the Dean of the Graduate College, students may apply up to 15 credit hours from a previously awarded master's degree towards the iPOS for professional doctorate programs requiring less than 84 credits. Students may apply up to 30 credit hours from a previously awarded master's degree towards the iPOS for professional doctorate programs requiring 84 credits. The credit hours must be from a regionally accredited or internationally recognized institution.

Professional Doctorate Degree Maximum Time Limit

Professional doctorate students must complete all program requirements within a ten-year period. The ten-year period begins with the semester and year of admission to the professional doctorate program. Graduate courses taken prior to admission that are included on the iPOS 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 Interactive Plan of Study are exempt). If older coursework is being applied towards a degree program as pre-admission coursework, the maximum time limit may be updated to reflect the start date of the preadmission coursework. Programs may require a shorter time limit for degree completion in the program's handbook.

Any exception to the time limit policy must be approved by the supervisory committee, the head of the academic unit and the Dean of the Graduate College. The Graduate College may withdraw students who are unable to complete all degree requirements and graduate within the allowed maximum time limits.

Supervisory Committee

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 students have selected a supervisory committee, the head of the academic unit recommends the supervisory committee to the Dean of the Graduate College who reviews and appoints the Committee.

ASU offers professional doctorate degrees that require a dissertation and some that do not. Professional doctorate programs that require a dissertation must follow the same committee guidelines as PhD programs. Professional doctorate programs that do not require a dissertation may have different requirements for committee composition, including the minimum number of committee members. All professional doctorate programs require an approved faculty committee.

Like PhD programs, all Chairs and co-chairs must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College and each degree program maintains a list of faculty members approved by the office for the Graduate College. Most resident faculty at ASU may serve on committees with the proviso that they have appropriate expertise in the discipline. At a minimum, the Chair or Co- Chair of the committee is required to be ASU or approved ASU-affiliate faculty.

All doctoral-level students (including PhD, DMA, DPP, DBH, DNP, DBA, AuD and EdD) are urged to communicate with their academic unit to confirm eligibility of faculty to chair their committees early on in the planning of their culminating experience.

The final committee membership must be appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College before the student may apply for, if applicable, comprehensive examinations, dissertation proposal/prospectus or dissertation defense, or register for culminating event course credits. Standard supervisory committee roles and responsibilities apply to professional doctorate committees.

Professional Doctorate Degree Culminating Events

Professional doctorate degrees that require a dissertation follow all standard policies regarding the comprehensive exams, prospectus, defense, and dissertation. Specific professional doctorate degree programs may not require a dissertation, but may still require a written or oral comprehensive exam. For professional doctorate programs that require comprehensive exams, students must follow the same standards for comprehensive exams for PhD students.

Instead of a dissertation, some professional doctorate programs may require a culminating event of an independent applied project or a capstone course, both of which require a written component and a final grade of B or better. Specific academic programs may also require an oral presentation or poster session as a component of these culminating event options. The written component, oral presentation, and poster sessions do not follow the same requirements as outlined by the Graduate College for the standard PhD defense and format process.

All students are required to register for at least one semester hour of graduate level credit during the fall, spring or summer session in which they conduct their culminating event.

Graduate Certificates

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](#).

Certificate Admission

All applications for graduate certificate programs must be submitted through [graduate application portal](#).

Certificate Requirements

A minimum of 9 semester hours of graduate work is required to complete a graduate certificate as specified in degree search. No more than 20% of the minimum required credit hours for a graduate certificate may be transferred from another university. All transfer work must meet the Graduate College transfer policies. All coursework 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.

All credit hours earned in a certificate program can be applied towards a degree program, and all credit hours earned in a degree program can be applied towards one certificate with these restrictions:

- standard pre-admission policies are followed
- there is no sharing of a culminating experience
- admission to the certificate must occur prior to completion of all courses for the certificate.

If a student completes two certificates, they may share no more than 20% of the total minimum required credit hours for both certificates.

Awarding of a Graduate Certificate

Students 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 requirements have been met (including a 3.0 minimum iPOS, Graduate and Cumulative GPA). Students must submit an approved Interactive Plan of Study, and apply for graduation in order to complete the certificate program.

Thesis/Dissertation

Format Manual and Format Wizard

Students must use the [Format Manual](#) to prepare their thesis/dissertation. The Format Manual is a comprehensive guide to formatting a thesis, dissertation or equivalent document and it always overrides a style guide if the two conflict. Questions regarding the Format Manual requirements should be directed to gradformat@asu.edu.

Use of the Graduate College's [Format Wizard](#) is required for all students going through the format process. The Format Wizard generates a template into which students can insert their document's text. It is designed to help students with the basic format requirements such as margins and spacing, and greatly improves the format review process for students.

Thesis/Dissertation Research

The master's thesis and doctoral dissertation (or equivalent) must be based on original and independent research/creative activity conducted by students, 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 candidates' mastery of research and scholarly methodologies, theory and tools of the discipline. Both the thesis and dissertation should demonstrate the candidates' 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 justifiable conclusions based on the research conducted.

The written doctoral dissertation is based on 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 Dean of the Graduate College.

Research Involving Human and Animal Subjects

Theses or dissertations that make use of research involving human or animal subjects must include an official 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 [ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance](#) for approval **before** data collection or recruitment of subjects is initiated

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 [ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance](#) for approval.

It is very important that students check with their supervisory committee or chair well in advance of data collection to ensure compliance with university regulations regarding the collection of research data. Students who are required to submit their document through Graduate College format review must attach the IRB (or IACUC) approval as an appendix to their document.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Culminating Experience

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly evolving, and the Graduate College at Arizona State University upholds standards for academic integrity and rigor. This document provides guidance on the use of generative AI within the context of the graduate culminating experience, including written and oral examinations, portfolios, applied projects, capstone courses, master's theses, and doctoral dissertations. Updated guidance and policies may be issued in the future to adapt to changing technology, legal frameworks and ethical standards.

The graduate student's committee is responsible for determining permissible amounts and types of generative AI—if any—to use as a support tool for the student's culminating experience. It is the student's responsibility to consult with their committee to understand appropriate and allowable uses of generative AI for their culminating experience. If the committee permits the use of generative AI, the student must be transparent about their use of generative AI and correctly attribute all uses in their document(s).

If a committee finds that a student utilized an unallowed generative AI tool or produced a significant portion of their culminating work using generative AI, they should report the violation according to the [ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy](#). When in doubt refer to the ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy.

Additional information and resources

Refer to the [ASU Artificial Intelligence site](#), [Office of the University Provost site](#) and [ASU Library Guide](#) on generative AI for frequently asked questions (FAQs) and more information about citing AI models, permanent links to AI results, and uses of AI in research.

All culminating experience documents are required to use the [ASU Format Wizard](#) and [Format Manual](#) for proper formatting before submission in the iPOS. Students and their committee chair(s) are responsible for ensuring that documents meet ASU format requirements.

Thesis/Dissertation Defense

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. The defense information will be published on the Graduate College Master's/Doctoral [Defense Calendar](#).

Scheduling and Holding the Defense

Students with a thesis or dissertation as a culminating event are required to present and defend it in a public oral examination and to the satisfaction of the supervisory committee. Students must schedule the defense in the iPOS at least 10 business days prior to the planned defense and have it approved by the program and the Graduate College. See [Graduation Deadlines](#).

Students work with their supervisory committee and the academic unit's graduate support staff to identify a suitable date and reserve a room (for in-person defenses). Defenses that are held without being scheduled with the Graduate College are considered invalid.

Students must be registered for:

- At least one semester hour of credit that appears on the Interactive Plan of Study; OR
- At least one semester hour of appropriate graduate-level credit, for example: Research (592/792), Thesis (599/799), or Continuing Registration (595 or 795)

Students must be physically present at the oral defense of their thesis, dissertation or equivalent document unless the student is in an online program that requires a thesis/dissertation and the defense was approved by the committee and the Graduate College. It is expected that oral defenses will be held on an ASU campus (for in-person defenses) and during regular business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m. AZ Mountain Standard Time) in order to facilitate student, faculty, and public accessibility. A student has the option to include a virtual link to encourage audience attendance. When there are sound educational reasons for holding a defense under different circumstances, contact the Graduate College for approval before scheduling the defense.

All members of a student's supervisory committee must attend 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. The committee chair must be in attendance, but if a committee member cannot attend, a qualified substitute must be appointed to attend in their place. The substitute should be a regular faculty member within the academic unit. In these circumstances, the Graduate College must be notified with the name of the member who will be absent, the faculty member who will attend as a substitute, and the student's name and ID number. This information must be submitted **before** the defense.

Once a defense has been scheduled and approved in the iPOS, students must submit within 10 days, a complete draft copy of the thesis/dissertation to be defended by uploading the document to their Interactive Plan of Study.

Passing the Defense

At the completion of the defense, faculty will determine if the student has passed or failed the defense, or if the submitted document requires revisions. Defense results are considered final. Failure will result in dismissal from the program. Therefore, it is important that the faculty committee review a student's readiness to defend prior to scheduling the defense. The preliminary defense results must be submitted by all committee members via the defense results tab in the iPOS within 10 days after the defense occurrence. If there are revisions required by the committee, they will need to be completed and approved by the committee before a full "Pass" can be designated in the iPOS. If the committee's requested revisions are not completed by the graduation deadlines for the semester of the defense, the student will need to maintain continuous enrollment until they are completed. If they are not successfully completed within one year of the defense, re-submission of the document and a re-defense of the thesis or dissertation may be required in order to ensure currency of the research.

Format Review

Students who are required to complete a thesis or dissertation as part of their graduate program must submit their document to the Graduate College for [format review](#). Format revisions are typical and must be completed in a timely manner. If students are unable to complete format revisions and submit to UMI/ProQuest by the deadline for the semester in which the defense is held, they must complete the revisions, remain continuously enrolled and present the final document to UMI/ProQuest 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 or dissertation to ensure currency of the research.

If supported by the supervising faculty chair and committee (if applicable), students may request an alternative format for their culminating experience by emailing gradformat@asu.edu. All exceptions will be reviewed by the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate College.

All students who have a culminating event document that requires format review are also required to complete the Design Aspirations tab within the iPOS. In addition, all PhD students are required to complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) as part of the format process.

ProQuest ETD Submission

ProQuest ETD requires all students to submit a PDF version of their final culminating event document. Students are required to create a new user account specific to the submission of their document, and must use their ASU email address. The Graduate College requires that the PDF document follow the formatting standards presented in the format manual. Students will receive final format approval only after the submitted PDF document has successfully passed a format review. Students are able to order bound copies of their document for themselves through ProQuest ETD. The final document will also appear archived in the [ASU Digital Repository](#).

Graduate-level Disestablished Programs

A disestablished graduate program is a graduate certificate, master's, or doctoral program that the institution has chosen to discontinue. Upon effective term and year of disestablishment, ASU may choose to stop admitting new students into the program. This includes students seeking to change into the disestablished program or pursue it concurrently with another program. Active students in a disestablished program will have the option to continue to pursue the program provided continuous enrollment, and satisfactory academic progress policies are followed, including

maximum time limits which are 6 years for masters and certificates, and 10 years for doctoral programs. Students who are discontinued from the program for any reason are not eligible to re-enroll in the disestablished program. Students who return and are in good academic standing will be required to choose a new program that is accepting applications. Students may have the option to choose a new program under the guidance of leadership from their discontinued graduate program.

Degree Conferral

Graduation

Students must apply for graduation through My ASU 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 date, including achieving a 3.0 GPA in the graduate GPA, the iPOS GPA, and the cumulative GPA. Students must continue to be registered until all degree requirements have been met. All students seeking a degree or certificate must apply for graduation.

The graduation deadlines and procedures are set by the Graduate College and are available online at [graduation deadlines](#). 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.

Helpful Websites

The following list contains URLs for all websites embedded in this manual.

| ASU Policies | |
|---|--|
| ASU Policy Manuals | policy.asu.edu/ |
| Academic Integrity Policy | provost.asu.edu/academic-integrity |
| ASU Charter | newamericanuniversity.asu.edu/about/asu-charter-mission-and-goals |
| Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Reporting and Investigation Procedure | provost.asu.edu/policies/procedures/p20 |
| Inclusive Excellence | inclusion.asu.edu/ |
| Ombudsperson | provost.asu.edu/committees/ombudspersons-committee |
| Reporting Policy Violations | asu.edu/reportit/ |
| Student Code of Conduct | eoss.asu.edu/dos/srr/codeofconduct |
| Admission | |
| ASU Personalized Graduate Admissions | graduate.asu.edu/personalized-graduate-admissions |
| Graduate Admission | admission.asu.edu/apply/graduate |
| Graduate Admission Application | admission.asu.edu/apply/graduate/admission |
| Nondegree Graduate Admission | admission.asu.edu/graduate/nondegree |
| Graduate Degree Search | degrees.apps.asu.edu/masters-phd |
| Graduate Enrollment Deposit | admission.asu.edu/apply/first-year/deposit#graduate |
| Immunization Requirements | eoss.asu.edu/health/parents/immunization |
| Transcripts for Admission | admission.asu.edu/apply/transcripts |
| Graduate Student Government | |
| GSG Webpage | eoss.asu.edu/gsg |
| GSG Social Media | instagram.com/asugpsa/ |
| International Students | |
| English Language Program – Global Launch | globallaunch.asu.edu/learn-english/english-language-program |
| English Proficiency | admission.asu.edu/apply/international/graduate/english-proficiency |
| English Proficiency – Global Launch | globallaunch.asu.edu/learn-english/asu-admission |
| English Speaking Countries | admission.asu.edu/international/english-speaking-countries |
| Financial Guarantee Form | students.asu.edu/forms/financialguarantee |
| International Graduate Admission | admission.asu.edu/apply/international/graduate |
| International Student Visas | students.asu.edu/international/immigration |
| International Students and Scholars Center | issc.asu.edu/ |
| International Teaching Assistants | globallaunch.asu.edu/learn-english/other-services/international-teaching-assistant |
| On-campus Employment | issc.asu.edu/f-1j-1-students/employment/on-campus |
| Degree Requirements | |
| Graduate Foreign Language Exam | silc.asu.edu/student-life/academic-advising/language-testing |
| Incomplete Grades | policy.asu.edu/#doc1560530 |
| Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS) | graduate.asu.edu/current-students/completing-your-degree/your-plan-study-ipos |

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| Medical and Compassionate Withdrawal Request | registrar.asu.edu/forms/medical-compassionate-withdrawal-request |
| My ASU | asu.edu/myasu |
| Voluntary Withdrawal Form | students.asu.edu/forms/voluntary-withdrawal-form |
| Research | |
| Animal Research | researchintegrity.asu.edu/animals |
| Human Subjects Research | researchintegrity.asu.edu/human-subjects |
| Office for Research Integrity Assurance | researchintegrity.asu.edu/responsible-conduct |
| Registration and Tuition Payment Guides | registrar.asu.edu/registration-and-tuition-payment-guides |
| Artificial Intelligence | |
| Artificial Intelligence | ai.asu.edu/ |
| Generative Artificial Intelligence | provost.asu.edu/generative-ai |
| Generative AI Library Guide | libguides.asu.edu/generativeai |
| Finishing Your Degree | |
| Application for Graduation | registrar.asu.edu/graduation-apply |
| Defense Calendar | graduateapps.asu.edu/defensecal |
| Format Manual | graduate.asu.edu/current-students/completing-your-degree/formatting-your-thesis-or-dissertation/asu-graduate-college |
| Format Wizard | graduateapps.asu.edu/formatadvising |
| Formatting Your Thesis or Dissertation | graduate.asu.edu/current-students/completing-your-degree/formatting-your-thesis-or-dissertation |
| Graduate Faculty | graduateapps.asu.edu/graduate-faculty |
| Graduate Faculty Guidelines | graduate.asu.edu/sites/default/files/graduate-faculty-guidelines.pdf |
| Graduation Deadlines | graduate.asu.edu/current-students/policies-forms-and-deadlines/graduation-deadlines |
| ASU Digital Repository | https://repository.asu.edu |
| Other | |
| Graduate Appointments | graduate.asu.edu/current-students/funding-opportunities/graduate-appointments-and-assistantships |