

# graduate policies and procedures



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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.

### 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 are familiar with these issues and that students assume personal responsibility in their work.

### Notice of Non-Discrimination

ASU prohibits all forms of discrimination, harassment and retaliation. To view ASU's policy please see <https://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd401.html>.

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](mailto:titleixcoordinator@asu.edu) or 480-965-0696 for more information. Office located at 1120 S. Cady Mall, INTDSB 284. For information on making a report please go to [www.asu.edu/reportit/](http://www.asu.edu/reportit/).

### 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.

Information is provided to students via [MyASU](#). Students should frequently check their MyASU account for the most up-to-date information regarding their status, holds, items to attend to and other important information.

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."

## Submission of an Application

For admission information and procedures, see [students.asu.edu/graduate](https://students.asu.edu/graduate). Applications for all graduate degree programs, certificate programs and/or non-degree must be submitted via the [students.asu.edu/graduate/apply](https://students.asu.edu/graduate/apply).

Prior to submitting an application to the Graduate College, applicants should review information regarding the [graduate program](#) and academic unit application requirements and deadlines. Students who have a Graduate College approved *Leave of Absence* on file with the Graduate College prior to their semester of non-registration and are re-entering the same graduate program for the semester immediately following the approved request, are not required to submit a new application.

## Application Deadlines

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

\*Please note that international students wishing to attend an in-person program must apply to Sessions A or C only (Session B is 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.

- ⤴ Domestic application fee: \$70;
- ⤴ International application fee: \$115.

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 MyASU. Applicants should review [MyASU](#) to monitor their application status, "To Do" items and "Holds".

## Application Requirements

Applicants must submit official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions previously attended to the Graduate Admissions Services office (see [students.asu.edu/graduate/standards](https://students.asu.edu/graduate/standards)). **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 for 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 who attended school in the United States must hold a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited U.S. institution in order to be eligible for admission. Applicants are required to provide proof that a

bachelor's or graduate degree was awarded before completion of their first semester of graduate studies at ASU.

Applicants who attended school outside of the U.S. must hold a bachelor's or graduate degree, or equivalent, from an institution that is officially recognized by that country. 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. Applicants are required to provide proof that a bachelor's or graduate degree was awarded before completion of their second semester of graduate studies at ASU.

Photocopied documents certified by a notary public are not official. For more information regarding official academic credentials see [students.asu.edu/graduate](https://students.asu.edu/graduate). For additional information regarding official international academic credentials see [students.asu.edu/graduate/apply](https://students.asu.edu/graduate/apply).

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.

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.

## Additional International Requirements

### International Applicants

Please consult the Graduate Admission Services websites at [students.asu.edu/graduate](https://students.asu.edu/graduate), and [students.asu.edu/international/immigration](https://students.asu.edu/international/immigration) 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 at [students.asu.edu/graduate/apply](https://students.asu.edu/graduate/apply).
5. Verify that they have the financial resources to cover their expenses during graduate study at ASU. The *Financial Guarantee* form is available through the Graduate College website at [students.asu.edu/graduate](https://students.asu.edu/graduate). 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 the office of 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. International students may enroll in an online certificate program without enrolling in a degree program. After arrival in the U.S., students need to complete the online SEVIS check-in.

Applicants residing in the U.S. on a valid visa must provide proof of a current visa. Enlarge the image and fax the copy to 480-965-5158.

## English Language Requirement

English proficiency is required for all students that wish to enter an ASU graduate program. There are several ways to meet the English proficiency requirement:

- ✦ **TOEFL** score of at least 550 (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.
- ✦ **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.

**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](mailto: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 in-person International Graduate Preparation Program (IGPP) at ASU with grades of "B" or better.
- ✦ Applicants who have completed Global Launch's English for Graduate Admission online course with 80% or better.
- ✦ Applicants who have a U.S. High School Diploma. (official transcript required)
- ✦ Applicants who attended an English speaking university.

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. Please follow this link to the International Teaching Assistant website for information on how to fulfill this

requirement: <https://learnenglish.asu.edu/international-teaching-assistant>. Departmental requirements may differ so it is recommended that applicants contact their departments for specific details.

## Non-Degree Programs

Applicants who do not immediately intend to pursue a graduate degree may apply as non-degree seeking students at [students.asu.edu/graduate/nondegree](https://students.asu.edu/graduate/nondegree). 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 prior to admission to the degree program.

Non-degree students may not be eligible to enroll in some classes. Contact the academic unit with questions regarding qualification for registration.

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, you must obtain written approval from your Designated School Official (DSO) granting permission for you to take classes.

## After Applying

After an application has been successfully submitted, applicants receive an email acknowledgement that includes an ASURITE ID and activation code. Applicants should review [MyASU](#) to check on the application status, "Priority Tasks" and "Holds".

## Admission

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; only the Dean of the Graduate College can make formal offers of admission.

Applicants monitor the status of their application through MyASU. If admitted, the formal letter of admission can be downloaded from MyASU. If denied admission, letters are sent via email to the address on record.

Students may apply to programs that are both campus based immersion programs, as well as online-based digital immersion, but if admitted to both they must choose their preferred modality.

## Admission Types

- ✦ **Regular Admission**: Applicant satisfies all requirements for admission and is academically acceptable to both the degree or certificate program and the Graduate College.
- ✦ **Provisional Admission**: Applicant does not meet minimum academic standards with respect to grade point averages as required by Graduate College and the academic unit, but has additional evidence to



suggest the potential for success. This status provides the academic unit with an opportunity to better evaluate the student’s academic potential. Students have a maximum of one academic year to satisfy the provisional condition. **The Graduate College will withdraw students from the degree or certificate program who have not met the provisions of their admission within the required timeframe.**

- ⤴ *Regular Admission with Deficiencies:* Applicant’s grades and test scores are at an acceptable level but applicant does not have the academic background expected by the degree or certificate program and the university. Monitoring deficiency completion is the responsibility of the academic unit.

## Defer Admission

Students may, with the recommendation of the degree program, defer their initial semester and year of admission to the next semester for which the degree or certificate program is admitting students. No further deferrals are allowed.

## 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. Detailed information may be found at: [students.asu.edu/international/immigration](http://students.asu.edu/international/immigration).

## Registration and Enrollment

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

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

## Enrollment Verification Guidelines

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

### Enrollment Verification Guidelines for Graduate Students

	Full Time*	Half Time	Less Than Half Time
<b>Regular Semester</b>			
Graduate	9 or more hours	5-8 hours	4 or fewer hours
Graduate Assistant**	6 or more hours	--	--
<b>Six-Week Summer Sessions</b>			
Graduate	3 or more hours	2 hours	1 hour
Graduate Assistant**	2 or more hours	1 hour	--
<b>Eight-Week Summer Session</b>			
Graduate	5 or more hours	3-4 hours	2 or fewer hours

\*Audited courses do not count toward full-time enrollment

\*\*For enrollment verification purposes, “Graduate Assistant” is a generic term that includes Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, Teaching Associates and Research Associates. **Academic units may have specific**

**requirements regarding registration requirements for Graduate Assistants; students should consult with their degree program unit.**

**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 Student and Scholars Center \(ISSC\)](#).

## Maximum Course Load

The Graduate College does not have a maximum credit hour enrollment policy. 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 credit hour during all phases of their graduate education, including the terms in which they are 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, defending theses or dissertations or graduating from the degree program.

To maintain continuous enrollment, the credit hour(s) must:

- ✦ Appear on the student's *Interactive Plan of Study*, OR
- ✦ Be research (592, 792), thesis (599), dissertation (799), or continuing registration (595, 695, 795), OR
- ✦ Be a graduate-level course.

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. Additionally, students completing work for a course in which they received a 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. Additional information regarding incomplete grades can be found at [asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm203-09.html](http://asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm203-09.html).

## Graduate Appointments

All Graduate Teaching Assistants and Associates (TAs), and Graduate Research Assistants and Associates (RAs) must register for a minimum of six semester hours of appropriate credit during each academic term of their appointment. The six hours cannot include audit enrollment. **Academic units may have specific requirements regarding RA/TA appointments; students should consult with their degree program unit.**

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

Due to federal regulations, international students on F-1 and J-1 visas are allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours per week while school is in session (fall and spring semesters). International students are allowed to work 40 hours per week during summer sessions with academic unit approval. International students typically are not allowed to seek employment outside the university; students must consult with the International Student and Scholars Center (ISSC).

Detailed information and application procedures regarding Graduate Assistantships can be found at [graduate.asu.edu/financing/tara](http://graduate.asu.edu/financing/tara).

## 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 Student \(iPOS\)](#). 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 reapply 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 Student and Scholars Center \(ISSC\)](#) before submitting a *Voluntary Withdrawal* form, as it most likely will affect their visa status.

## Voluntary Withdrawal from a Graduate Degree or Certificate Program

Students who wish to transition from one graduate program to another 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.

## Other Types of 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. Types of withdrawals and procedures can be found at: [students.asu.edu/drop-add](http://students.asu.edu/drop-add). For course withdrawals contact the University Registrar's Office.

## Academic Dismissals by the Graduate College

Students who do not comply with Graduate College policies may be withdrawn from their graduate program after review by the Dean of the Graduate College.

In addition, academic units may recommend withdrawal 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). Only the Dean of the Graduate College may withdraw students from a graduate program due to lack of compliance with satisfactory academic progress policies.

Students who have been withdrawn 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 withdrawal.

Students who have been withdrawn from a graduate program due to an Academic Integrity violation are not eligible for readmission to Arizona State University.

## Grade Point Averages

**GPA (Grade Point Average)** 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. 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 coursework if in 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.

## 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.
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. Graduate students must **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 on page 9.

## Determination of Academic Requirements

Students graduate under the requirements and policies in effect at the semester and year of admission to a graduate degree program. Students that fail to maintain continuous enrollment and are re-admitted to the graduate program, graduate under the degree requirements and policies in effect at the time of the new admission date.

### Master's

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 that 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

A minimum of 84 credit hours of graduate-level coursework and a written comprehensive examination are required for a doctoral 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.

## The 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 included before it 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.

To facilitate program completion and shorten time to complete the program, graduate students are encouraged to complete their iPOS in their first semester. Students who have not completed their iPOS by the time they have enrolled for 50 percent of the minimum credit hours required for their degree program will receive a registration hold.

## 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.**

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. Additional information regarding incomplete grades may be found at [asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm203-09.html](https://asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm203-09.html).

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 satisfy the Graduate College continuous enrollment policy.

Master's degree students whose culminating experience is a thesis must include 6 (and only 6) credit hours of 599 Thesis credits on the iPOS. Doctoral students whose culminating experience is a dissertation must include 12 (and only 12) credit hours of 799 Dissertation credits on the iPOS. Thesis and Dissertation credit hours may only receive grades of "Z" (research is in progress), or "Y" (research is satisfactorily complete). Doctoral students may apply 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.

## 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.

## ASU Pre-Admission Credit

### 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 the approval of the academic unit and the Graduate College office, 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. Preadmission credits must have been taken within three years of admission to the ASU degree or certificate program to be accepted.

Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's programs may use a maximum of 12 pre-admission credits which may include up to a maximum of 12 hours shared between the Bachelor's and Master's program. Students in accelerated programs should contact their advisor to ensure proper sharing of credit hours.

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 transferred to ASU, including credits awarded:

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

⤴ For 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 *Interactive Plan of Study*. In all cases, the inclusion of transfer courses on the *Interactive Plan of Study* 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 Bachelor's/Master's degree program (commonly 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. Bachelors/Master's students may earn up to a maximum of 12 graduate credits during their undergraduate degree to be used later towards a master's degree.

An undergraduate degree and a graduate degree may not be awarded during the same term of enrollment. Students must apply, be admitted and registered as graduate students to earn a master's or doctoral degree at ASU.

Students that are not enrolled in an approved Bachelor's/Master's degree program are not eligible to utilize courses earned during the undergraduate degree program for a graduate degree.

## Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law Credit

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

# Master's Degree

## Master's Degree Plan of Study (iPOS)

Students must submit an iPOS before completing 50 percent of the credit hours required for their degree program. 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 semester 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 *Interactive Plan of Study* 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 *Interactive Plan of Study* must have been completed within three years of the semester and year of admission to the program.

## 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 is comprised of a minimum of three members, including a chair or two co-chairs.

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 students to guide their work. ASU academic professionals or non-tenure accruing faculty with appropriate academic credentials may serve as members or co-chairs on master's committees; they may not serve as chairs of master's supervisory committees.

## Master's Thesis/Thesis Defense

Students must be in good academic standing regarding GPA requirements (see previous section titled "Satisfactory Academic Progress" (pg. 11)) prior to scheduling a defense.

To satisfy the research requirement for master's degrees, students are expected to present a thesis that is defended in a public oral examination. Degree programs may have requirements in addition to the thesis (e.g. comprehensive examinations). Students should check with their degree program to confirm requirements. An oral defense of the thesis is required and must be completed to the satisfaction of the supervisory committee. The defense must be scheduled officially with the Graduate College. Defenses that are held without being scheduled with the Graduate College are considered invalid. At least 50% of the committee must be physically present at the oral defense. Students must be physically present at the oral defense of their thesis. A virtual defense option is only available to students in approved online programs. 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), Thesis (599), or Continuing Registration (595 or 695); OR

Students who are required to complete a thesis as part of their graduate program must submit their document to the Graduate College for format review. See: <https://graduate.asu.edu/completing-your-degree/format>.

Revisions to the thesis are typical and must be completed in a timely manner. If students are unable to complete revisions to the thesis 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 to ensure currency of the research.

## 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" pg. 11) 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 for the Graduate College before students can take the examination a second time.

Re-examination may be administered no sooner than three months and no later than one year from the date of the original examination. The Graduate College office may withdraw students from the degree program if the students' petition for re-examination is not approved, or if the students fail 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 that have received a final result of failure in the comprehensive examination will be recommended for dismissal by the Academic Unit.

## Doctoral Degree

### Doctoral Degree Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS)

Students must submit an iPOS before completing 50 percent of the credit hours required for their degree program. 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.

### Doctoral Degree Minimum Credit Hours

A minimum of 84 semester hours of graduate work is required for a doctoral degree at ASU. If a dissertation is required, 12 (and only 12) of the minimum required credit hours on an *Interactive Plan of Study* must be 799 Dissertation credits. *Interactive Plans of Study* submitted for doctoral 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 doctoral *Interactive Plan of Study* with approval of the program and supervisory committee and the Dean of the Graduate College.

### Doctoral Degree Maximum Time Limit

Doctoral 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 doctoral 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).

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.

### Doctoral Degree Supervisory Committee

Upon the recommendation of the head of the academic unit, the Dean of the Graduate College appoints the student's dissertation committee. The committee must be comprised of at least three members, including either a chair or two co-chairs. Doctoral 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 the list of faculty 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.

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 the list of faculty approved by the Graduate College to chair or co-chair PhD dissertations. Additional information regarding ASU Graduate Faculty can be found at [graduate.asu.edu/graduate\\_faculty\\_initiative](https://graduate.asu.edu/graduate_faculty_initiative).

Doctoral students (including PhD, DMA, DBH, DNP, DBA, AuD and EdD) are urged to communicate with their academic unit to confirm eligibility of faculty to chair doctorate committees.

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).

## Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

Students must be in good academic standing regarding GPA requirements (see previous section titled “Satisfactory Academic Progress” pg. 11) prior to taking doctoral comprehensive examinations.

When students have essentially completed the coursework on an approved *Interactive Plan of Study*, they must request permission to take the doctoral comprehensive examination. The doctoral comprehensive examination must have a written component; however individual doctoral 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. Doctoral comprehensive examination(s) are administered by a committee consisting of a minimum of three members.

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

During the fall, spring or summer session that the student takes the comprehensive examination(s), they are required to register 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 (792), Dissertation (799), or Continuing Registration (795); OR

All comprehensive examination results must be reported to the Graduate College office 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 no sooner than three months and no later than one year from the date of the original examination.

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

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

## Doctoral Prospectus Defense

All programs requiring a Dissertation are required to complete a dissertation proposal/prospectus and submit the results to the Graduate College office via the students' *Interactive Plan of Study*. Failure of the doctoral dissertation 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 petition is approved, students must submit the new prospectus by the end of six months (the six months begins from the date that the first doctoral 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 withdraw the students from the degree program.

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

## Doctoral Candidacy

Doctoral 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). Doctoral students who have been advanced to candidacy are required to maintain continuous enrollment until all degree requirements have been completed and they have graduated.

## Doctoral Dissertation/Dissertation Defense

Students must be in good academic standing regarding GPA requirements (see previous section titled "Satisfactory Academic Progress" pg.11) prior to scheduling the defense.

The written doctoral dissertation is based on an original and substantial scholarly work that constitutes a significant contribution to knowledge in the students' discipline. The dissertation research must be conducted during the time of the students' doctoral studies at ASU, under guidance of ASU Graduate Faculty and in accordance with the 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.

The dissertation research experience culminates in a final oral exam, commonly known as the "dissertation defense." A final public dissertation defense is required. The defense must be scheduled officially with the Graduate College. Defenses that are held without being scheduled with the Graduate College are considered invalid. At least 50% of the committee must be physically present at the oral defense. Students must be physically present at the oral defense of their dissertation. A virtual defense option is only available to students in approved online programs. During the semester that the students defend the dissertation they are required to register 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 (792), Dissertation (799), or Continuing Registration (795); OR

Students who are required to complete a dissertation or bound document (DMA's) as part of their graduate program must submit their document to the Graduate College for format review. See:

<https://graduate.asu.edu/completing-your-degree/format>.

Revisions to the dissertation are typical and must be completed in a timely manner. If students are unable to complete revisions to the document 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 dissertation to ensure currency of the research.

## Other Graduate Educational Opportunities

### Graduate Certificates

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

### Certificate Admission

All applications for graduate certificate programs must be submitted through [asu.edu/gradapp](http://asu.edu/gradapp).

### Certificate Requirements

A minimum of 15 semester hours of graduate work is required to complete a graduate certificate. No more than one-fifth (20 percent) of the minimum required credit hours for a graduate certificate may be transferred from another university. All transfer work must meet 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. No more than 40% of coursework towards the requirements of a graduate certificate can be completed prior to admission to the certificate program. Credit hours earned in a certificate program may also be used towards a degree program, standard preadmission rules apply.

### 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. Students must submit an *Interactive Plan of Study* for the graduate certificate program, and apply for graduation.

### Concurrent Degrees

Students may pursue concurrent degrees, provided the degree programs are graduate level and 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 percent 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 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. Leaves of Absence will apply to both programs; students may not be registered for coursework in either program if approved.
2. Graduate credit transferred from another institution may be applied toward only one-degree program.

3. Culminating experiences (e.g. capstone courses, theses, applied projects) and comprehensive examinations cannot be shared between concurrent degree programs.
4. The 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).

## 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.

## Accelerated Bachelor's/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. The undergraduate students must meet the accelerated program admissions requirements and be granted consent to complete up to complete 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.

## Research Considerations

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 conclusions.

## Supervisory Committees

Students are guided by faculty mentors who advise them through their degree program. Students should identify their advisors early in their graduate career and look to them for guidance in their graduate work. Once

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.

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

## Research Involving Human and Animal Subjects

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

Research involving human subjects conducted under the auspices of Arizona State University is reviewed by the University Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) in compliance with federal regulations. Documents containing any data collection from human subjects require that applications be submitted to the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance for approval **before** data collection or recruitment of subjects is initiated at [researchintegrity.asu.edu/humans](https://researchintegrity.asu.edu/humans).

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 ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance for approval at [researchintegrity.asu.edu/animals](https://researchintegrity.asu.edu/animals).

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.

## Thesis/Dissertation Defenses

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

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

Students must be physically present at the oral defense of their thesis, dissertation or equivalent document. If, due to unforeseen circumstances, they cannot be physically present, then the oral defense must be rescheduled to another date when they can be physically present. A virtual defense option is only available to students in approved online programs.



It is desirable that all members of a student's supervisory committee be physically present with the student at the final oral defense of a thesis or dissertation. However, there are situations (e.g. faculty travel, faculty emergencies and/or faculty leave) that may necessitate holding a defense with one or more committee member(s) absent. In all cases at least 50% of the committee must be physically present. If a committee member cannot physically attend, they can tele/video conference, or they can appoint a substitute to attend in their place. The substitute should be a regular faculty member with the academic unit. The supervisory committee chair must be physically present; if there are two co-chairs, one of them may tele/video conference if needed. In either case, please email [grad-gps@asu.edu](mailto:grad-gps@asu.edu) with the student's ID number and the name of the tele/videoconferencing member or with the names of the member who will be absent and the faculty member who will attend as a substitute. This information must be submitted **before** the defense.

## *Degree Completion*

The final culminating experiences for graduate degrees vary by program. In many master's degree programs a thesis is required, in other programs the culminating experience is an applied project, capstone, written comprehensive exam or portfolio. In all PhD programs, as well as in most professional doctoral programs, dissertations are required. Theses and dissertations are officially documented and archived in the ASU Digital Repository. Theses and dissertations are submitted to UMI/ProQuest, which makes their content available to the public. Information on the dissertation later appears in *Dissertation Abstracts International*. For this reason, all theses and dissertations must undergo Graduate College format review.

### **Scheduling a Defense and Format Review**

At least 10 working days prior to the planned defense of a thesis, dissertation or equivalent, students schedule the defense through their MyASU. 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. When a defense date and location have been identified and the defense has been scheduled through MyASU, students submit a complete draft copy of the thesis/dissertation to be defended by uploading the document to their *Interactive Plan of Study*. The defense will be published on the Graduate College [Master's/Doctoral Defense Schedule](#) website.

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. Students must use the *Format Manual* to prepare their thesis/dissertation. Questions regarding the *Format Manual* requirements should be directed to [gradformat@asu.edu](mailto:gradformat@asu.edu).

The Graduate College's [Formatting Tool](#) uses the *Format Manual* guidelines to generate a template into which students can insert their document's text. The formatting tool is designed to help students with the basic format requirements such as margins and spacing, and greatly improves the format review process for students.

### **UMI/ProQuest Submission**

Students are required to create a new user account specific to the submission of their document, and must use their ASU email address. UMI/ProQuest requires all students to submit a PDF version of their final document. The Graduate College requires that the PDF document is in compliance with 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 have an opportunity to order bound copies of their document for themselves through UMI/ProQuest. The Final Document will also appear archived in the ASU Digital Repository: <https://repository.asu.edu>.

## Graduation

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

The graduation deadlines and procedures are set by the Graduate College and are available online at [graduate.asu.edu/progress/graduation\\_deadlines](https://graduate.asu.edu/progress/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.