

# Iowa State University Graduate College Handbook

05/09/2024

---

This *Graduate College Handbook* is a comprehensive resource for policies and procedures that pertain to graduate students and postdoctoral scholars. Members of the graduate faculty craft policies through their elected representatives on the Graduate Council. Faculty and staff in the Graduate College implement the policies as efficiently and fairly as possible. Students and faculty are invited to collaborate with their representatives on the Graduate Council to enact policy changes that may improve graduate education at Iowa State University.

---

# Chapters and Subsections

## Chapter 1 - Admissions

- 1.1 - Admission Process
- 1.2 - Application Requirements
- 1.3 - Admission Standards and Requirements
- 1.4 - Special Applicant Categories

## Chapter 2 - Enrollment, Registration, Tuition and Fees

- 2.1 - Enrollment Policies
- 2.2 - Registration Policies
- 2.3 - Special Populations
- 2.4 - Withdrawals and Cancellations

## Chapter 3 - Graduate Student Financial Support

- 3.1 - Fellowships
- 3.2 - Graduate Assistantships
- 3.3 - Tuition Scholarship and Fee Awards
- 3.4 - Other Financial Support

## Chapter 4 - Degree Programs and Requirements

- 4.1 - Graduate Administrative Components
- 4.2 - Changes in Graduate Program or Status
- 4.3 - Special Graduate Majors and Degree Programs
- 4.4 - Graduate Degree Requirements

## Chapter 5 - Courses, Credits, and Grading

- 5.1 - Courses and Credits
- 5.2 - Grading

## Chapter 6 - The Graduate Program of Study

- 6.1 - POS Committee
- 6.2 - POS Committee Makeup
- 6.3 - Developing the Program of Study
- 6.4 - POS Committee Responsibilities: A Summary

## Chapter 7 - Finishing Up

- 7.1 - Academic Requirements
- 7.2 - Financial Obligations for Graduation
- 7.3 - Graduation Ceremony Arrangements
- 7.4 - Diplomas
- 7.5 - Certification of Degree
- 7.6 - Registration Hold for Graduates

## Chapter 8 - Opportunities and Services Provided by the Graduate College

- 8.1 - Advising and Mentoring Opportunities for Graduate Students
- 8.2 - English Skills Improvement

- 8.3 - Graduate and Professional Student Senate**
- 8.4 - Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies**
- 8.5 - Mediation of Student Grievances**
- 8.6 - Non-departmental Home for Postdoctoral Fellows**
- 8.7 - Oversight of Interdepartmental Graduate Programs**

## **Chapter 9 - Graduate Student Rights & Responsibilities**

- 9.1 - Introduction**
- 9.2 - Environment for Student Success**
- 9.3 - Resources and Best Practices to Promote Graduate Student Success**
- 9.4 - Specific Policies and Laws of Interest to Graduate Students**
- 9.5 - Student Grievance Procedures**
- 9.6 - Maintaining Academic Standing**
- 9.7 - Dismissal for Failure to Maintain Academic Standing**
- 9.8 - Expectations for Assistantship Appointments**
- 9.9 - Termination of Assistantship Appointments**
- 9.10 - Inability to Perform Duties**
- 9.11 - Discipline of Graduate Assistants Other than by Termination**
- 9.12 - Behavioral Expectations**

## **Chapter 10 - Postdoctoral Appointments**

- 10.1 - Definition**
- 10.2 - Appointment**
- 10.3 - Performance Management**
- 10.4 - Dismissal**
- 10.5 - Appeals Process for Postdoctoral Scholar Dismissal**
- 10.6 - Postdoctoral Scholars Dispute/Complaint Resolution**

## **Appendices**

- Appendix A - The Graduate College**
- Appendix B - Majors, Minors, Degrees, and Areas of Specialization**
- Appendix C - Graduate Certificate Programs**
- Appendix D - Master's Programs at Iowa State University**
- Appendix E - Professional Master's Coursework Only Guidelines**
- Appendix F - Dual-Listed Courses**
- Appendix G - Graduate Faculty Membership & Associate Membership**
- Appendix H - Graduate Program Learning Goals**

# Chapter 1 - Admissions

---

## 1.1 - Admission Process

All application materials for graduate study are submitted via the online application.

### 1.1.1 Deadlines

The Graduate College establishes dates to open and close applications for particular academic terms. Graduate programs may establish deadlines earlier than the date on which the application closes by which applicants must submit all required materials to be considered for admission. The application for all applicant types, except nondegree, will close the day prior to the start of the term. The graduate nondegree application closes once the second half of the entry term begins.

### 1.1.2 April 15 Resolution

The Graduate College abides by the April 15 Resolution of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS). Applicants offered financial support to matriculate in a fall semester must be given until at least April 15 of that year to accept or decline the financial offer.

### 1.1.3 Fees

A nonrefundable application fee may be required as described in the online application.

### 1.1.4 Fee Payment

Applicants typically pay the application fee. However, any graduate program, department, or college may pay the fee by providing an applicant a coupon code to enter in the application. The Graduate College provides coupon codes to McNair Scholars. Applicants may only receive one coupon code per term of desired admission.

### 1.1.5 Application Validity

Applications are valid for four consecutive entry terms. An application submitted for a fall semester is valid for that fall as well as the spring, summer, and fall term immediately following.

### 1.1.6 Application for Resident Status

To be considered for tuition at the resident rate, individuals must submit required documents to the Office of the Registrar.

### 1.1.7 Evaluation of Applicants

Departments and programs convey recommendations concerning admission to the Graduate College. Final decisions regarding admission rest with the Dean of the Graduate College. The Graduate College, or the Office of Admissions acting on behalf of the Graduate College, will seek

to ensure the authenticity of application materials. Graduate programs are expected to uphold ethical practices as they evaluate applicants by using principles of holistic review.

## **1.1.8 Admission Decisions**

Official letters to applicants to report the outcomes of their applications are sent from the Dean of the Graduate College. Earlier reports to applicants from graduate programs and academic departments may share only admission recommendations and must state that the official decision on admission from the Graduate College will follow.

If an offer of admission should need to be revoked, for any reason, the Graduate College must review and approve the request.

After Census Day (10th day of the term), a currently enrolled ISU student cannot make changes to their graduate major for the current term. Any unresolved applications for concurrent-level admission or to pursue additional graduate programs on census day will be deferred to the following term.

## **1.2 - Application Requirements**

### **1.2.1 Required Application Documents**

1. Online graduate application.
2. Unofficial transcripts from all previously attended institutions for undergraduate and post-baccalaureate study.

Official transcripts are only required from applicants admitted to the Graduate College. Electronic copies provided by the applicant are not considered official.

3. Applicants whose first language is not English must submit a valid, official test report from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or from an approved alternative examination. Applicants who otherwise would need to submit scores are exempt if they hold baccalaureate or higher degrees from countries where the only official language is English.
4. A statement of purpose for each major to which the applicant is applying.
5. Additional documents such as letters of recommendation, résumé/curriculum vitae (CV), statement of purpose, writing samples, publications, portfolio, etc. may be required by programs.

## 1.2.2 Standardized Tests

Except for tests of English for nonnative English speakers, the Graduate College does not require scores from standardized tests. Individual programs may require scores from tests such as the GRE, GMAT, MAT, or Praxis. The Graduate College expects that, when scores are required, programs review them as part of a holistic evaluation. Use of minimum/cutoff scores is strongly discouraged, and admission recommendations should not be based only on scores from these optional tests.

## 1.2.3 Supplemental Application Forms

Graduate programs or departments cannot require an applicant to submit supplemental application forms that are not part of the ISU Application.

# 1.3 - Admission Standards and Requirements

## 1.3.1 Baccalaureate Degree

A baccalaureate degree, or equivalent from a suitably accredited college or university is required. Evidence of a conferred baccalaureate is needed by the start of the second semester of graduate study. Any exceptions to this admission standard must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College.

## 1.3.2 Grade Point Average

A cumulative grade point average of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale, or equivalent, in undergraduate work or in previous graduate work is expected. Recommendations from graduate programs to admit applicants who do not meet this standard will be reviewed by the Graduate College. The GPA may also be met through one of the following:

Undergraduate degree with GPA greater than 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale)

Completed 9 to 14 credits of graduate coursework with grade B or better in all courses

Completed 15 or more credits of graduate coursework with GPA above 3.00 and no F grades

## 1.3.3 English Proficiency

Minimum scores for tests of English are shown below. Graduate programs may set higher minima for applicants to their programs.

Students whose first language is English or those who earned degree from countries where the only official language is English are exempt from the language proficiency requirements.

Applicants whose native language is not English must demonstrate proficiency in English equivalent to a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of at least 550 on the paper-

based test, or 79 on the internet-based test as a part of the admissions process. International students may also submit IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scores in lieu of the TOEFL. The ISU Graduate College minimum is 6.5.

TOEFL Paper (PBT)	550
TOEFL Internet (iBT)	79
IELTS	6.5
PTE	53
Duolingo	105 (approved through Spring 2025)

## 1.4 - Special Applicant Categories

### 1.4.1 Non-degree Seeking

Nondegree seeking graduate students are those who are not seeking a graduate degree. There is a limit of nine credits taken in this status that may be used to satisfy graduate degree requirements. Non-degree seeking students are not eligible for financial aid.

### 1.4.2 Undeclared

Undeclared graduate students are those who meet the Graduate College minimum requirements for admission but have not been admitted to a degree-seeking program. There is a limit to the number of courses taken in this status that may be used to satisfy degree requirements. Admission as an undeclared graduate student can only be recommended by the program if the applicant is not accepted for degree-seeking admission to that major. [effective fall 2024]

### 1.4.3 Re-admission

Previous applicants to the Graduate College who did not enroll within one academic year of admission must submit a new application and pay the required fee because the prior application is no longer valid.

### 1.4.4 Re-entry

Applicants who previously were active students within the Graduate College, have not registered for four or more consecutive fall and spring semesters, and seek readmission to the same degree program should submit a re-entry application through the reinstatement process.

#### **1.4.5 In-session**

Current graduate students who seek to change programs or pursue additional graduate degrees/credentials should complete an in-session status change application. The DOGE or DOCS (or designee) is responsible for approving the admission to the new major and submitting the form to the Graduate College.

# Chapter 2 - Enrollment, Registration, Tuition and Fees

---

## 2.1 - Enrollment Policies

Registration processes are administered through the Office of the Registrar. Policies regarding tuition, fees, and residency should be directed to the Registrar.

All students who attend classes at ISU must register and pay assessed tuition and fees. The ISU Office of the Registrar's website at <http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/> is the official source of information about registration for all students at ISU. Specific dates for registration are listed:

- on the Registrar's Web page,
- on the University Calendar, and
- in the Iowa State Daily

Registration for summer session should be completed during the spring at the same time as registration for fall semester. All students are encouraged to register for courses on the Web through AccessPlus. Detailed instructions are provided at <http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/registration/>.

### 2.1.1 Full-Time Status

During the academic year, graduate students not on assistantship must be registered for a minimum of nine credits to be considered full-time students or five credits to be considered half-time students. Students on an assistantship appointment during the academic year are considered full-time.

### 2.1.2 Credit Load Limit

Registration in credit courses is limited to a maximum of 15 credits per semester (10 credits for summer session) for graduate students, per Board of Regents. Maximum limits for graduate students are shown in the following table:

Appointment Base	Semester	Summer Session
no appointment	15 credits	10 credits
1/4 - time or less	15 credits	10 credits
over 1/4 - time to 1/2 time	12 credits	6 credits
over 1/2 - time to 3/4 - time	9 credits	5 credits

The credit-hour limits for graduate students may be exceeded only in exceptional circumstances with the written recommendation of the major professor. For more information on registration requirements for those students on assistantship appointments, see [Graduate Students on Assistantship in Chapter 3](#).

## 2.2 - Registration Policies

A graduate student is required to be registered during the following:

Preliminary and final oral examinations

*In cases where the term of degree conferral is after the term of the final oral examination, the registration requirement is met during the term of the final oral exam.*

Assistantships that are more than 5 class days

Every fall and spring between the preliminary oral exam and final oral exam

Once registered, the graduate student is responsible for all tuition and fees. Tuition and fee schedules for the current year are published on the Registrar's website at <http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/fees/>. For more information on fee payment options and other concerns, browse the Account Receivables website at <https://www.ubill.iastate.edu/>.

### **2.2.1 Doctoral Post-Prelim Continuous Enrollment**

Doctoral students who have completed coursework and passed (full or conditional) the preliminary oral examination are required to register each fall and spring term, regardless of whether university facilities, equipment, or staff time are used in person or in absentia.

Continuous registration may be maintained by taking 1) required and/or elective courses or research hours to complete the plan of study or 2) Doctoral Continuous Registration (GR ST 681A). Doctoral Continuous Registration (GR ST 681A) requires a one credit hour tuition and fees payment and is not allowed on the POSC. Registration for GR ST 681A is required only in the fall and spring terms.

### **2.2.2 Required Registration During Graduate Assistantships**

The Graduate College requires that graduate assistants register for a minimum of one credit each term that they hold an appointment.

If an appointment encompasses fewer than five class days, no registration is required. Assistants who do not register by midterm of the current term will be registered by the Graduate College; applicable tuition and late fees will be added to their university bill. The minimum registration requirement for a graduate assistant is one credit (GR ST 681B or 681C meets this one credit requirement).

### **2.2.3 Required Registration for Preliminary and Final Oral Exams**

Doctoral students must register during the term of the preliminary oral examination, and all graduate students must register during the term of the final oral examination for a minimum of 1 credit or for Examination Only (GR ST 681B) if no course work is needed. Examination Only (GR ST 681B) requires payment for one credit hour tuition and fees and is not allowed on the POSC. If students take the final oral examination between terms (including the first day of classes), registration can be either for the term before or the term after the examination. A student who fails to register as specified above must complete the appropriate registrations before the "[Graduate Student Approval Form](#)" is signed by the Graduate College.

Graduate students who are not required to take a final oral examination should complete all required coursework on the POS before or during the term of graduation. Any transfer credits must be completed the term before the graduation term and follow normal transfer rules

## 2.2.4 Registration After Graduation

Upon conferral of a graduate degree, there will be a hold on future registration. A graduate student must be actively pursuing a Program of Study, or be classified as a nondegree graduate student, to enroll in graduate classification. The student must apply to pursue an additional Program of Study if they wish to continue graduate enrollment. Several options are available to students who wish to continue taking classes (see [Chapter 7](#) for more information on releasing the graduation hold).

## 2.2.5 Registration/Schedule Changes

After a student has enrolled for classes, registration is completed for the semester unless the student wishes to change the class schedule. Changes must be processed before the deadlines printed in the university calendar, available on the Registrar's website at <http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/calendar/> or in the ISU Schedule of Classes. Students who fail to attend class are not dropped automatically; they must submit a "Request for Withdrawal" form. Consult the ISU Schedule of Classes for instructions on dropping and adding classes during the three periods of the term.

## 2.2.6 Audit Registration

Audit registration means taking courses without receiving formal credit. The audit policy provisions are as follows:

Instructors must approve ALL audits.

Students must register for audits by day 10 of the semester.

Changes to or from an audit must be made in the first 10 days of the semester.

Students are assessed tuition and fees as though they were taking the course for credit.

The course DOES NOT count in determining full-time student status.

Audited courses do not appear on the student's permanent record unless the "Audit(s) to Appear on Transcript" form is completed and signed by the student, course instructor, and major professor. Copies of this form, which are available from the Graduate College website, must be filed with the Graduate College, 1137 Pearson Hall. (For a list of Graduate College forms, check the Graduate College's website at <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/student/forms/>.) After the fifth class day, if a student changes a regular course to an audit, that course will appear on their permanent record as a drop. Audits are not acceptable as registration for loan deferments.

Audits may be listed on the plan of study, but do not carry credit.

## 2.2.7 Off-campus Registration

Students who take off-campus courses taught by members of the graduate faculty must register for off-campus credit. Only students who are enrolled in graduate off-campus degree programs and who register for research credit (599 or 699) as part of the program will be allowed to register in an off-campus section of the research course.

However, if an off-campus student is enrolled only in research credits, they must be registered for the Graduate College minimum of one credit. Registration in these sections will be restricted to students who are in the off-campus program. Thus, graduate students in on-campus programs will not be allowed to register for an off-campus section as a mechanism to avoid or lower tuition and/or fees. Instructions for registering for off-campus credit courses are available from the website at

<http://www.distance.iastate.edu/>

## 2.2.8 Reentry Registration

Reentering graduate students with active status do not need to complete a reentry application, but they should contact their major professor(s) to select courses and to obtain registration information. Students with inactive status must undergo a reinstatement process. Students enter inactive status when they have not been registered for four consecutive terms excluding summer.

## 2.3 - Special Populations

### 2.3.1 ISU Staff Members and Credit Load Limit

Any full-time member of the research, instructional, or extension staff at the rank of instructor, research associate, or assistant scientist may carry up to six course credits per semester and three credits per summer session, subject to the approval of the head of the department or section and provided it does not interfere with other duties. This privilege may be extended to members of the research, instructional, or extension staffs at the rank of assistant professor with approval of the college dean and the Dean of the Graduate College. Staff members at the rank of associate professor or professor cannot become candidates for graduate degrees from ISU.

### 2.3.2 International Students Taking CPT or OPT

International students may be required or may choose to supplement their regular coursework with Curricular Practical Training (CPT), or they may wish to engage in Optional Practical Training (OPT) after completing their programs at ISU.

CPT is an academic learning experience (sometimes an internship) related to the major field of study that allows students to apply the knowledge that they gained through their coursework in a business environment. Students can engage in CPT while they are still completing their programs at ISU. Participation in CPT is authorized by the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) after a student submits an electronic application. A student needs to be enrolled in a CPT-related course each semester they engage in CPT. Some students may use internship coursework credits. If no formal instruction is included as a part of CPT activities, an international graduate student may opt to take an internship/practicum course for R credit. If an internship course is not available in the student's discipline, they may take GR ST 697 for R credits. However, GR ST 697 is acceptable only for students engaging in full-time CPT. Similarly, departmental courses like this cannot be used for part-time CPT. The internship R credits may not be used to meet the registration requirement for the term of the preliminary or final oral examination. If the CPT is related to a student's research, they may use research credit registration for CPT.

OPT, authorized by the U.S. Federal Government, allows a student to work in the U.S. in a job related to the student's major for up to 12 months after completing their program at ISU. Note that a student is considered to have completed their program at the end of the semester in which they have defended the dissertation/thesis/creative component. Students should apply for OPT well in advance of completing their programs, as the OPT authorization process can take more than three months. Furthermore, students who pursued a STEM major are eligible to apply for a 24-month extension of their OPT. There are additional requirements which should be reviewed when considering the STEM OPT extension.

The complete information about CPT and OPT, is available on the ISSO website (

<https://www.issو.iastate.edu/>). The International Student Advisers at the ISSO will also be able to answer any questions about the specifics of CPT and OPT

## **2.4 - Withdrawals and Cancelations**

### **2.4.1 Withdrawal from Registration**

Withdrawal is not permanent for graduate students; it always applies to a specific term. Reentry is activated when registration for a future term occurs. To withdraw for a specific term, a student should consult the Office of the Registrar and request an academic withdrawal.

### **2.4.2 Cancelation of Registration**

Students wishing to cancel registration in coursework must call or write the Office of the Registrar before the first day of classes to avoid tuition assessment. A letter of confirmation is sent to each student from whom notification is received. A student who calls should request the name of the person taking the call and make a record of the name as well as the time and date of the call. Beginning the first day of classes, students must formally withdraw from the university in order to terminate their registration.

### **2.4.3 Doctoral Post Prelim Continuous Registration**

If a temporary lapse in a student's academic program is required due to military service, medical leave, maternity leave, or personal/family leave, a doctoral student may petition the Graduate College to be allowed to register for Doctoral Post Prelim Registration (GR ST 680), which allows for the assessment of a special minimum fee only. Note that registration in GR ST 680 1) is not allowed after the completion of the final oral examination, 2) is not sufficient registration for the term the preliminary or final oral examination is taken, 3) does not defer student loans, 4) needs to be requested each term, and 5) is required only in the fall and spring terms.

# Chapter 3 - Graduate Student Financial Support

---

## 3.1 - Fellowships

The term fellowship is usually associated with a named funding source. When this source is outside the University or from an endowment, the fellowship may pay tuition and fees and is not considered a graduate assistantship. When the funding source is the university, the fellowship is considered a research assistantship. Generally these awards are made prior to a student enrolling in Iowa State as a recruiting inducement. A partial list of university funded graduate fellowships follows:

**Plant Sciences Fellowships:** Research assistantships offered to outstanding graduate applicants in the plant sciences.

**Fellowships Associated with Federal Training Grants:** Various federal agencies have grant programs for funding graduate student participation in research.

## 3.2 - Graduate Assistantships

A graduate assistant (GA) performs duties that contribute significantly to their graduate education. Students holding assistantships are considered to be in training, and the graduate assistantship is a form of student aid that combines training with a stipend. The standard appointment is half time, and the university guideline suggests 20 hours per week should be spent on half-time assistantship duties, but this expectation varies depending on the nature of the assistantship. Three types of GAs are available, teaching, research, and administrative. Students who will teach, perform research, or carry out administrative duties as part of their educational program should be appointed as GAs.

Only degree-seeking students (doctoral and master's degrees) may be appointed to a GA. An assistantship awarded to a graduate student on probation must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College term-by-term (each semester or each summer session). The GA on probation will be assessed full resident tuition but will not receive a graduate tuition scholarship without special approval. The Graduate College requires that GAs register for a minimum of one credit each term they are appointed.

### 3.2.1 Types of Assistantships

#### Graduate Administrative Assistantships

An administrative assistant (AA) performs duties that contribute indirectly to a student's education. Duties vary widely from gathering, organizing, and analyzing information to working with students and performing routine research support activities. It is expected that AA duties will contribute in a general way to a student's education and that these positions will draw upon a student's disciplinary expertise. An AA's duties will generally not lead to a dissertation or thesis. Because most AA's work in a structured environment, the AA may be required to appear at specified times and coordinate their work with the appointing unit. Any graduate assistantship that is not an RA or a TA is an AA.

## Graduate Research Assistantships

A research assistant (RA) conducts research that contributes directly to their graduate education. Supervision is by the professorial staff, and appropriate research projects foster originality, imagination, judgment, and patience—the traits of an independent scholar. Many times a research project to which the research assistant (RA) is assigned eventually leads to a dissertation or thesis topic. Although a research supervisor cannot guarantee that a particular project will be suitable dissertation or thesis material, the supervisor can offer a professional judgment as to whether the project is suitable, and they should offer this judgment to the RA as soon as possible. The final decision on the acceptability of a research topic for the dissertation or thesis rests with the student's program of study (POS) committee. Because of the widely varying demands of research duties, and because most research projects become part of a student's dissertation or thesis, it is nearly impossible to set a specific workweek. The official university guideline for time spent should be viewed as minimal for a research assistantship.

## Graduate Teaching Assistantships

As the title implies, graduate teaching assistants (TAs) share the faculty's responsibility for undergraduate teaching. TAs are not permitted to teach graduate-level courses. Responsibilities may include instruction, grading, course development, and proctoring exams. The TA's teaching load will necessarily vary from program to program but should be consistent with the teaching load carried by faculty in the department. Since a teaching assistantship is an apprentice position in teaching, the TA should expect careful guidance from the department. This guidance may take the form of seminars, conferences, observations by experienced teachers, or other methods designed to develop teaching skills. The official university guideline for time spent should be viewed as maximal for a teaching assistantship.

Responsibilities may include instruction, grading, course development, and proctoring exams.

These university-wide services help to make the job of new TAs easier and more effective:

Teaching and cross-cultural workshops are organized by the Graduate College, Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and the Graduate and Professional Student Senate to provide general training for new TAs during the week before fall semester begins.

All international students who are nonnative English speakers and have teaching responsibilities are required to take the Oral English Certification Test (OECT) before they may be assigned duties. Students not reaching Level-1 (full certification) are required to take English 180, Communication Skills for International Teaching Assistants.

### 3.2.2 Diversity Funding

The Graduate College diversity funding initiatives encourage the recruitment, enrollment, retention, and graduation of students from underrepresented groups (African American, American Indian, Hispanic/Latinx, Alaska Native, and native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander). Current funding initiatives are the George A. Jackson Award and the Iowa State Ronald E. McNair Scholarship.

### 3.2.3 Assistantship Policies and Procedures

#### Tenure of Appointment

Assistantship appointments are made fiscal year by fiscal year. Because of this, each appointment

is made for one year or less. Appointments may be terminated for two reasons only: 1) for cause, or 2) loss of funding. Termination for cause is discussed in Chapter 9. The satisfactory completion of one appointment, plus satisfactory academic performance, will ordinarily make a student eligible for reappointment. However, departments have the discretion not to reappoint. Failure to reappoint is not termination and is not subject to formal appeal. Departments do have an obligation to provide reasonable notice if reappointment is not to be made. Also, programs may make commitments to support students for periods longer than one year. Such commitments are not formally treated as appointments. Students should obtain the terms of such commitments in writing. Assistantship support for more than seven or eight years is strongly discouraged, and departments may set limits on the number of years a student is eligible for assistantship support.

## **Letters of Intent**

The department or other administrative unit offers graduate assistantships using the "Graduate Assistantship Letter of Intent" form, which contains a description of the position offered, stipend, and length of appointment.

Such matters as the specific nature of the graduate assistant's responsibilities, requirements concerning office hours and staff meetings, particular conditions for re-appointment, benefits, and pertinent department requirements are established at the beginning of the appointment. All assistantship appointments are subject to the continuing availability of funds.

## **Conditions of Appointment**

The university provides services and equipment essential to performance of an assistant's duties, within the limitations established by departmental and university resources.

During an appointment period, the academic program or administrative department may evaluate the quality of the assistant's performance in teaching, research, or administrative duties. The program should make evaluation of the graduate assistant an educational experience. Consequently, the graduate assistant's evaluation is usually discussed with them; if the program does not initiate a discussion, the assistant may request one. A graduate assistant who feels unfairly evaluated has recourse through the procedures for grievances related to scholarly and professional competence. See also appointment termination procedures.

Iowa State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran. Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies may be directed to the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, Title IX /ADA Coordinator, and Affirmative Action Officer, 3350 Beardshear Hall, Ames, Iowa 50011, Tel. (515) 294-7612, email [eooffice@iastate.edu](mailto:eooffice@iastate.edu). Additional information can be found on the Office of Equal Opportunity's website at: <http://www.eoc.iastate.edu/>.

If an assistant resigns their appointment, resulting in an appointment of less than 3 months during the fall or spring terms, eligibility for resident tuition, tuition award, and medical insurance will be effected. See [Chapter 2](#) for more information.

## **Stipends**

The usual graduate assistantship is a 1/2-time appointment with a stipend sufficient to cover modest living expenses. The university establishes a minimum and maximum monthly stipend for 1/2-time teaching, research, and administrative assistantships. Stipends for other fractional

appointments are scaled proportionally. The guidelines and procedures for setting stipends used by the graduate assistant's department are filed in the department office, where they are available to a graduate assistant upon request.

## **Hourly Work**

U.S. citizens and permanent residents who are on graduate assistantships may also work on an hourly basis provided that the additional work is approved by the unit awarding the assistantship and that the hourly work is not related to the students' educational program. Total hours (assistantship and hourly work) cannot exceed 30 hours per week. Non-immigrant international students must abide by the terms of their visa status and immigration guidelines according to total hours worked. For visa questions, contact the International Students and Scholars Office, 515-294-1120, or their website at <http://www.isso.iastate.edu/>.

All hourly work for graduate students must be pre-approved by the Graduate College using the ["Request to Hire a Graduate Student on an Hourly Basis" form.](#)

## **Predoctoral Associate Positions**

Predoctoral associates are appointed at least half-time to serve in a role that furthers their education. Their appointments are term appointments and must be renewed annually. The benefits and stipend scale associated with these appointments are the same as those of postdoctoral associates. A predoctoral associate must have completed oral and written preliminary examinations or possess a D.V.M. (or equivalent) or M.D. degree and must be registered for at least one graduate credit (minimum) each semester. The predoctoral scholar appointment time is counted towards the five-year maximum postdoctoral appointment. International students appointed to predoctoral associates must follow the immigration regulations concerning work.

For more detailed information on postdoctoral scholars at ISU, consult the [Graduate College website.](#)

## **Tax Liability for Graduate Assistantships**

All assistantship monthly stipends are subject to income tax withholding. Contact the Payroll Office for more information on these withholdings.

### **3.2.4 Appointments Greater than Half-Time**

#### **Full-Time Appointments**

Effective May 1, 2011, full-time summer appointments are no longer permitted.

#### **Three-Quarter-Time Assistantships**

Continuous graduate assistant (C-base) or a combination of graduate assistantship and hourly employment up to 3/4-time are permitted at any time for U.S. students and only during the summer term for persons on student and visitor visas. International students who are on curricula practical training (CPT) are allowed up to three-quarter time appointments during the academic year. Appointments are monitored by examination of academic records at the time the "Electronic Personnel Action" (EPA) form is received in the Graduate College. Approval for greater than 1/2-time will be contingent upon proof of reasonable progress in the student's graduate program.

### 3.2.5 Benefits for Graduate Assistants

Benefits in addition to stipend support accrue to the graduate assistant during the appointment period. A full explanation of these benefits appears in the Policy Library; the following shortened description omits references to forms and approvals. Graduate Assistants are responsible for making sure they review and understand the benefit information.

Benefit information is also available from:

Student & Scholar Health Insurance Program  
3810 Beardshear Hall  
Phone: 515-294-4800  
Email: [isusship@iastate.edu](mailto:isusship@iastate.edu)  
<https://sship.hr.iastate.edu>

#### Health Insurance Plan

Graduate assistants with an appointment of one quarter time or more for at least 3 months of the fall or spring terms receive self only health insurance coverage as a benefit for the term at no cost.

#### Dental Insurance Plan

Graduate assistants with an appointment of one quarter time or more for at least 3 months of the fall or spring term are eligible for the dental insurance plan which is partially subsidized by the university and the monthly premium will be deducted from the graduate assistant's paycheck.

#### Dependents

Graduate assistants may also enroll their lawful spouse or domestic partner, and unmarried dependent children under age 26. A portion of the monthly premium will be deducted from the graduate assistant's paycheck when adding coverage for dependents. Dependents must be added within 30 days of your appointment date or with a qualifying event.

Note: Once you and your dependents are added to the plan, you will be required to remain on the plan until the end of the policy year or until your appointment ends.

For plan specifics, costs, open enrollment dates and benefits details for the health and dental insurance plans, please see the Human Resources Student & Scholar Insurance Program website at [hrs.iastate.edu/sship](https://hrs.iastate.edu/sship).

#### Leave

Arrangement for a leave of absence is made between the graduate assistant and that assistant's supervisor adhering to all grant and other funding source restrictions. When a graduate assistant needs to be absent either for personal reasons or illness, the supervisor should be understanding and accommodating to that need. At the same time, the graduate assistant should attempt to plan personal leave so that it does not interfere with or cause neglect of the duties associated with their appointment. Supervisors of graduate assistants are responsible for ensuring that their assistants do not exceed reasonable limits for leave.

When a conflict arises between the graduate assistant and that assistant's supervisor regarding leave of absence use, either party may involve the appropriate Director of Graduate Education (DOGE). If the conflict is not resolved in a timely manner, any of the parties may involve the Dean

of the Graduate College for a binding resolution. When resolving conflicts, the concerned party must present all evidence in writing (email is acceptable) and all parties involved must receive a copy. In order to accommodate schedules, allow a minimum of five business days for document review and resolution meeting to be scheduled between the two parties within two weeks. Resolutions achieved between the DOGE and parties need to be in writing (email is acceptable) and must be sent to all parties including the Dean of the Graduate College.

## **Benefits Available Through Worker's Compensation**

Any injury sustained by a graduate student while performing duties directly related to their Graduate Assistantship appointment should be reported immediately to University Human Resources by the supervisor, instructor, and/or department head using the "First Report of Injury" form.

Benefits available through the Iowa Workers' Compensation system may or may not apply, depending on the facts and circumstances surrounding the injury. Injuries sustained in the pursuit of educational objectives typically are not considered work related and are not covered by the worker's compensation system. University Human Resources can provide guidance on the claims process. ISU has a third party claims administrator, who determines compensability of claims and eligibility for benefits.

## **3.3 - Tuition Scholarship and Fee Awards**

Disciplinary colleges and units appointing graduate assistants administer funds that provide tuition scholarships for eligible graduate assistants. The various programs are described below.

### **3.3.1 Graduate Assistantship Tuition Scholarships**

Graduate students appointed to a graduate assistantship appointment of 1/4-time or more for at least 3 months in fall and spring terms and for 4 weeks in summer term are assessed tuition at the full-time resident (in-state) rate for the fall and spring term. Summer term tuition is assessed at resident (in-state) rate for the number of credits registered for. The graduate assistantship tuition scholarships are not paid directly to the student but are applied to the student's tuition bill. The scholarship awards are:

For a master's student:

- 50% of full-time tuition per semester for each student on an assistantship appointment of 1/2-time or more or
- 25% of full-time tuition per semester for each student on an assistantship appointment of 1/4-time or more, but less than 1/2-time.

For a doctoral (and terminal master's program) student:

- 100% of full-time tuition per semester for each student on an assistantship appointment of 1/2-time or more or
- 50% of full-time tuition per semester for each student on an assistantship appointment of 1/4-time or more, but less than 1/2-time.

The master's programs below are considered terminal:

- MFA in Creative Writing and Environment
- Master of Architecture
- MFA in Graphic Design

Master of Industrial Design  
MFA in Integrated Visual Arts  
MFA in Interior Design  
Master of Landscape Architecture  
Master of Design in Sustainable Environments  
Master of Urban Design

Starting in Fall 2024, master's scholarship awards are:

75% of full-time tuition per semester for each student on an assistantship appointment of 1/2-time or more or  
37.5% of full-time tuition per semester for each student on assistantship appointment of 1/4-time or more, but less than 1/2-time.

For fall and spring semesters, a student must be on appointment for at least three months to qualify for a tuition scholarship. For summer session, a student must be on appointment for at least four weeks during the term to qualify for a tuition scholarship. For all terms, appointments must have been processed by the Graduate College before the end of the first full month of classes (i.e., usually around the fifth week of the fall or spring semesters). Graduate tuition scholarships not used by the due date of the second fee payment installment will be forfeited. Students who will not be on appointment for the summer session may still be eligible for the resident (GA) tuition rate. This tuition rate is restricted to a summer session following a nine-month appointment. No action is required to receive the resident tuition rate in the summer for students who held assistantships the prior fall and spring terms.

### **3.3.2 Awards to Offset Mandatory Fees**

Graduate students appointed to a graduate assistantship appointment of 1/4-time or more for at least 3 months in fall and spring terms and for 4 weeks in summer term receive a 50% award for the Technology Fee, Health Fee, and Health Facility Fee. (Awards for Health Fee and Health Facility Fee become effective fall 2023).

Starting in Fall 2024, graduate students appointed to a graduate assistantship appointment of 1/4-time or more for at least 3 months in fall and spring terms and for 4 weeks in summer term receive a 50% award for the Technology Fee, Health Fee, and Health Facility Fee and 25% coverage of Activity, Services, Building & Recreation Fee.

### **3.3.3 Graduate College Tuition Support**

Master's students approved for the George A. Jackson Award will receive supplemental resident tuition, which together with the tuition scholarship, provides 100% tuition coverage for two years. Students must be appointed as 1/2-time or 3/4-time graduate assistants to receive this award.

### **3.3.4 Combinations of Tuition Scholarship Awards**

Some students may be eligible for more than one tuition scholarship. In no case will a student receive more than full tuition funding from all sources of tuition awards.

## **3.4 - Other Financial Support**

### **3.4.1 External Funding Sources**

If a graduate student is unable to obtain graduate assistantship support through a department, other possibilities might be explored. The student's department chair may have knowledge of special fellowships available. Additionally, assistance in locating potential non-ISU funding maybe obtained from the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development (2610 Beardshear Hall, 515-294-6344; website: <http://www.vpresearch.iastate.edu>).

### **3.4.2 Financial Aid and Work Programs**

Information is available from the Office of Student Financial Aid (0210 Beardshear Hall, 515-294-2223, <http://www.financialaid.iastate.edu>) about loan and work programs. Students applying for financial aid based on need should complete the "Free Application for Federal Student Aid" (FAFSA) form, available from the Office of Student Financial Aid or online at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa/>.

Both on-and off-campus part-time jobs are posted on the office's Web-based online job board at <http://www.financialaid.iastate.edu> and on other job bulletin boards throughout the campus. Graduate students also may use the services of the Iowa Workforce Development Center at 122 Kellogg Avenue in Ames to locate employment (515-232-6572, <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov>).

### **3.4.3 Non-Citizen Employment**

Permission to seek work in the U.S. must be requested from the appropriate office by foreign nationals before beginning employment. More information about employment rules on and off campus as well as visa and other immigration issues for foreign nationals should be obtained from a staff member in the International Students and Scholars Office (3248 Memorial Union, 515-294-1120). A student may also check this office's website at <http://www.isso.iastate.edu> for complete information on international student concerns.

# Chapter 4 - Degree Programs and Requirements

---

## 4.1 - Graduate Administrative Components

### 4.1.1 Department

The department is the basic administrative unit of the academic colleges of the university. Departments report to colleges; colleges report to the Provost. All staff members engaged in teaching, research, and extension hold appointments in at least one department. Department responsibilities to graduate education include faculty appointments, offering of courses, and graduate student support.

### 4.1.2 Graduate Major

A major is an approved academic area of study leading to a graduate degree. (For a complete listing of graduate majors, see [Appendix B](#).) Each major is offered by a group of qualified faculty who are responsible for the curricula, requirements, and standards that constitute a distinct program of training. The responsible faculty may be administratively located in a single department (departmental major) or may be located in several departments (interdepartmental major). At ISU every graduate student must either be enrolled in a major or be officially accepted as a nondegree seeking student. Opportunities also exist for majoring in more than one area of study (co-major, concurrent major or double degree).

### 4.1.3 Interdepartmental Majors and Home Departments

Interdepartmental graduate majors and academic departments are in synergistic relationships. The majors gain from these relationships by placing their students in physical settings in which scholarship can thrive. Departments gain talented students who enrich the academic unit in various ways.

Interdepartmental students contribute to the academic culture of their home departments by being highly qualified, prepared, and motivated to focus on a research subject through a broad lens.

Interdepartmental students who enroll in courses in their home department bolster the student credit hours of the department.

Many interdepartmental students co-major in departmental programs to enhance their credential base. In this manner, interdepartmental programs act as a recruiting channel for departmental majors.

Interdepartmental students frequently have unique experience and training that enhance their effectiveness as teaching assistants for a home department's courses.

Tuition revenue from interdepartmental students flows to the home department of the student.

Clear terms of relationships between interdepartmental majors and home departments will prevent misunderstandings that might harm students and ultimately restrict the university's research mission.

## Admission

Interdepartmental majors review applicants for admission to those majors based on university-wide and program standards. Cooperating departments do not influence the decision of whether to admit applicants to interdepartmental majors, but the departments do have the choice of whether to serve as the academic home for admissible applicants to interdepartmental majors. A department may elect not to serve as the academic home for reasons such as resource limitations, but declining home department status should not be based on prioritizing students based on major or admission standards. By affiliating with an interdepartmental major, the department agrees to defer to the major for decisions on admissibility. Interdepartmental majors may need to decline admission to a well-qualified applicant who seeks to work with a specific faculty member if that professor's department will not serve as the student's home. The choice of a major professor by students who rotate among labs immediately after admission may be based, at least in part, on which potential major professors are able to offer the student a home department.

## Home Department Status

Students admitted to an interdepartmental major may begin their programs with confirmed major professors. In such cases, the department of the professor has agreed to be the home department for the new student. For faculty members with joint appointments among departments whose students pay different tuition rates, the faculty member's primary department must be that faculty member's students' home department. Some students begin a graduate program in an interdepartmental major without a major professor. For example, it is common for new students to have rotation experiences with multiple faculty members before settling on a major professor and permanent home department. In this case, the DOGE of the interdepartmental major may provide a home as the student completes rotations, or each faculty member hosting a rotation may provide a temporary home for the student. During this interim period, tuition is assessed based on the sole or primary department of the interdepartmental DOGE, and the college of the interdepartmental DOGE awards tuition scholarships to qualified students. The eventual choice of a major professor for students who begin a graduate program without one may be based in part on which professors can provide a home department. If a student selects a major professor who holds joint appointments among departments, and if different rates of tuition are charged to students in those departments, the home department must be the primary department of the professor. Students who enter an interdepartmental program without a major professor must seek approval to designate a home department by initiating the form titled "Request to Establish a Home Department for Students Admitted to Interdepartmental Majors," which is available on the Graduate College website at <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/student/forms/>. If a student changes their major professor or a major professor notifies a student that they will no longer serve, the interdepartmental major should notify the home department so that the department may determine whether to terminate home department status. The Graduate College must be informed of such actions.

## Provisions for Students

Home departments agree to provide space, facilities, and equipment to students in interdepartmental majors in a manner consistent with what is provided to other graduate students in the department. Typically, desk space is provided, and access to copy machines, common office supplies, and shared departmental equipment is offered. Depending on departmental policy, computers, printers, and other personal equipment may also be provided. Although what is provided to interdepartmental students may vary among departments, provisions within departments should not differ based on the major a student is pursuing unless specific funds have

been donated for students in certain majors. It can be acceptable for a home department not to provide space and other support to all or some (e.g., those not on an assistantship or fellowship) students if that is the department's policy regardless of a student's major. Academic colleges of major professors award tuition scholarships for graduate students in interdepartmental majors.

## **Requirements of Students**

After admission and establishment in a home department, an interdepartmental student is required to meet the academic requirements of their major, not those of their home department unless those additional requirements are associated with a co-major program of study. Home departments may not impose requirements for coursework, seminars, teaching, internships, etc. beyond those of the major. Any department not wishing to abide by this policy may withdraw its affiliation with an interdepartmental major or may deny requests to serve as the home department for a student in an interdepartmental major. With encouragement from major professors, interdepartmental students should strive to become integrated in the culture of their home department and to build collegial relationships with others from within and outside of their major.

### **4.1.4 Graduate Minor**

Minors are available in many disciplinary and interdepartmental graduate programs. Some programs offer only a minor. In other programs, students may declare either a major or a minor. Programs offering a major are not required to offer a minor. A student may not major and minor in the same discipline for a single degree or across multiple degrees. To illustrate, a student earning a Ph.D. in computer science may not minor in statistics for their Ph.D. program if they are also pursuing an M.S. in statistics

In all cases:

- the student must receive approval to pursue the minor from the offering program;
- to complete the minor, the student must meet the requirements established by the program;
- a minor must be approved by the student's committee and both the major and minor DOGE via the POSC;
- the minor must be listed on all examination reports, and on the Application for Graduation, to appear on a student's transcript after graduation;
- a graduate minor must comprise graduate or undergraduate courses designated as appropriate by the program offering the minor;
- the student must have a minor representative on their committee;
- on that committee, the major professor and the representative from the minor field may not be the same person;
- for students pursuing a master's degree, the minor representative on the POSC committee must evaluate the student's competence in the subject area of the minor during the final oral examination;
- for students pursuing a doctorate, the minor representative on the POSC committee must evaluate the student's competence in the subject area of the minor during the preliminary and final oral examinations; and
- if a doctoral student wishes to add a minor after the student is in candidacy status (preliminary examination passed), their POSC must be revised to declare the minor and to add a minor representative, and the preliminary oral examination must be retaken.

### **4.1.5 Graduate Area of Specialization**

Subdivisions or areas of specialization are defined within some graduate majors. When approved by the Graduate Curriculum and Catalog Committee and declared on a student's program of study, such areas of specialization are shown parenthetically after the major on official transcripts after graduation. Areas of specialization do not appear on the diploma. (For a complete listing of graduate areas of specialization see [Appendix B.](#))

## **4.1.6 Graduate Certificates**

Students may earn graduate certificates in several departments and programs (for a specific list and other information, see [Appendix C](#)). Candidates for a graduate certificate must be recommended for admission to the desired graduate certificate program in the department or program administering the certificate. All courses for a graduate certificate must be acceptable for graduate credit and each graduate certificate must require at least 12 graduate credits. A graduate advisor will be appointed to oversee the certification for each graduate certificate. For departments wishing to establish a certificate program, more information is available in the Curriculum Forms section of the forms page of the Graduate College website.

## **4.2 - Changes in Graduate Program or Status**

### **4.2.1 Transferring from One Major/Degree/Certificate to Another**

Students who have been admitted to a graduate program and to the Graduate College may request to transfer at a later date to another major or degree. Because graduate students are admitted to particular programs, transfers require the approval of both the receiving program and the Graduate College. Students seeking transfer to another major or degree should first discuss their wishes with the new program DOGE (Director of Graduate Education) to determine requirements and interest by the new program. When a student receives a favorable preliminary response from the new program, they should fill out the student portion of the form entitled "Transfer From One Major/Degree/Certificate to Another" and submit this form to their current DOGE. The current DOGE will fill out the Current Program Information adding any comments they believe the new program should consider and forward the form to the proposed new program. This form is available from the Graduate College website at <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/student/forms/>.

The receiving program will generally give the student the same consideration and employ the same admissions standards that are used for original applications for admission and will expect the same application materials (transcripts, letters of recommendation, test scores,etc.). During this process, the new and old programs and the Graduate College are authorized and encouraged to seek and disclose information related to the student's overall fitness for studies in the receiving program. Programs are authorized to inquire into the student's prior conduct at the university, both with the prior department and with the Dean of Students.

Upon departmental action (acceptance or denial), the request to transfer form must be sent to the Graduate College for approval. Programs will receive a copy of the completed form from the Graduate College. Students desiring to transfer from a degree-seeking status to a nondegree-seeking status need to fill out the "Transfer from One Major/Program/Department to Nondegree" form available at <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/student/forms/> and bring it to the Graduate College. Students desiring to transfer from nondegree-seeking status to a degree-seeking status must be admitted by a program through the regular graduate admission process. Students who are in interdepartmental majors should complete the Home Department form to change departments.

## **4.2.2 Curriculum Change from Active Graduate to Active Undergraduate Status**

Individuals who are in good standing in the Graduate College and who wish to transfer to an undergraduate curriculum must contact the graduate classification officer (1137 Pearson Hall). The classification officer will consult with the student and determine the proper course of action.

## **4.2.3 Curriculum Change from Inactive Graduate to Active Undergraduate Status**

Individuals who were admitted to the Graduate College more than one year previous and who do not have active graduate status but who wish to change their status from inactive graduate to active undergraduate, must follow the same procedures required of reentering undergraduate students and must begin the process by filing a completed “Undergraduate Reentry” form with the Office of the Registrar. When considering reinstatement, the undergraduate college may consider the student's overall fitness for continued studies including information about the student's conduct, employment and education since the student's last enrollment. Individuals who do not have active graduate status and who first enrolled less than one year previous should first see the classification officer in the Graduate College.

## **4.3 - Special Graduate Majors and Degree Programs**

### **4.3.1 Co-Major Degree Program**

A co-major is a program of study for a single degree in which the requirements for two separate majors are met. A single degree is granted when the student fulfills the requirements of both majors. The program of study (POS) committee will include co-chairs, each of whom represents one of the co-majors. Both co-chairs must be members of the graduate faculty. The same person, if a faculty member in both majors, will be allowed to serve as major professor for both majors. A preliminary oral examination and research work for the doctoral degree should be related to both majors. Students declaring co-majors must satisfy requirements established by each major as monitored by the representatives on the program of study (POS) committee and the DOGEs of the two majors. A co-major cannot be added after the preliminary oral examination has been taken.

### **4.3.2 Concurrent Degree Programs**

#### **Concurrent Master's Degrees**

By special request, students may complete two degree programs that lead to two concurrently awarded master's degrees by following these requirements:

- Complete and submit a “Two Concurrent Graduate Degrees” form to the Graduate College (1137 Pearson Hall),
- File separate Program of Study Committee (POSC) forms for each degree,
- File separate “Application for Graduation” forms for each degree,
- Complete separate projects or theses for each degree, if applicable
- File separate “Final Oral Exam Request” forms for each degree, if applicable, and
- Pass separate final oral examinations (if applicable) and complete a separate “Graduate Student Approval Form” for each degree.

Two awarded master's degrees require at least 22 hours of non-overlapping graduate credit in each major. If the two degrees are thesis or non-thesis degrees, they require two terminal projects (theses or creative components, respectively). Coursework-only degrees do not require a final project. These two degrees do not have to be awarded during the same term, since requirements for each are completed separately. Graduate students interested in enrolling in a concurrent undergraduate program should contact the Office of Admissions (100 Enrollment Services Center) to obtain admission information (even if previously admitted as an undergraduate). An "Application for a Graduate Student Wishing to Pursue a Concurrent Undergraduate Degree" form can be obtained from the Graduate College website at <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/student/forms/> and circulated for the appropriate signatures. The process is detailed below:

Complete the undergraduate application process. Applications are available at <http://www.admissions.iastate.edu>.

The student must be formally admitted both as a graduate student and as an undergraduate student.

Official enrollment and fee payment will be as a graduate student.

Credits transferred from the graduate permanent record to the undergraduate permanent record are no longer available for use on a graduate program of study.

## **ISU Undergraduate Students in Concurrent Graduate Certificate or Graduate Degree Programs**

Several graduate certificate and degree programs allow qualified ISU juniors and seniors to apply to pursue a bachelor's and graduate credential concurrently. Students in concurrent status must be making good progress toward a bachelor's degree. The minimum requirements for admission to concurrent student status are the same as those required for admission to the Graduate College. A [Concurrent Enrollment for Undergraduate Student Wishing to Pursue a Graduate Certificate or Degree](#) form can be obtained from <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/student/forms/> and circulated for the appropriate signatures. Other aspects of concurrent status include:

Official enrollment and fee payment will be as a graduate student.

The graduate credential will be awarded at the same time or after the undergraduate degree is conferred.

Students may be appointed to graduate research assistantships.

With approval of a student's Program of Study (POS) Committee, up to 6 ISU credits taken while in concurrent status may be applied to a bachelor's degree and a graduate credential that requires up to 41 credits. For master's degree programs that require at least 42 credits, students may instead, with POS approval, count up to 12 such ISU credits.

For students pursuing a concurrent bachelor's degree and graduate certificate, with POS committee approval, up to 3 or 6 credits may be double counted when the certificate requires 15 or 18 credits or more, respectively. No double counting is permitted for certificates that require fewer than 15 credits.

A student in a bachelor's and master's concurrent degree program cannot be on a doctoral track during the concurrent program.

### Transferring Concurrent Credits

Students must adhere to the requirements below:

After each concurrent term, or after the term in which the bachelor's degree is earned, the student must initiate a form called "[Transfer of Courses for Concurrent B.S./Graduate](#)," which

lists all courses to be transferred to the undergraduate permanent record (transcript). This form must be approved by the undergraduate adviser, the undergraduate college dean, and the Dean of the Graduate College (in that order). The transferred courses and grades will also appear on the graduate permanent record but will not be included in the graduate grade point average.

## **Concurrent Bachelor's/Professional Degrees with a Graduate Certificate or Master's Program**

Bachelor's Degree	Bachelor's Major	Certificate/ Master's Degree	Certificate/ Master's Major
B.S.	Accounting	M.ACC.	Accounting
B.A.	Advertising	M.S.	Journalism and Mass Communication
B.S.	Aerospace Engineering	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Aerospace Engineering	M.E.N. / M.S.	Aerospace Engineering
B.S.	Aerospace Engineering	M.E.N. / M.S.	Engineering Mechanics
B.S.	Agricultural Biochemistry	M.S.	Biochemistry
B.S.	Agricultural Engineering	M.S.	Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering
B.S.	Agricultural Engineering	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Agricultural Systems Technology	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Agricultural Systems Technology	M.S.	Industrial and Agricultural Technology
B.S.	Agronomy	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Animal Science	M.B.A.	Business Administration

<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<b>Bachelor's Major</b>	<b>Certificate/Master's Degree</b>	<b>Certificate/ Master's Major</b>
B.S.	Animal Science	M.S.	Animal Breeding and Genetics
B.S.	Animal Science	M.S.	Nutritional Sciences
B.S.	Animal Science	M.S.	Meat Science
B.S.	Animal Science	M.S.	Animal Physiology
B.S.	Animal Science	M.S.	Animal Science
B.S.	Apparel, Merchandising, and Design	M.S.	Apparel, Merchandising, and Design
B.S.	Athletic Training	M.ATR.	Athletic Training
B.S.	Biochemistry	Graduate Certificate / M.S.	Biochemistry
B.S.	Biological Systems Engineering	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Biological Systems Engineering	M.S.	Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering
B.S.	Biophysics	M.S.	Biophysics
B.S.	Chemical Engineering	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Chemical Engineering	M.ENG.	Chemical Engineering
B.A./B.S.	Chemistry	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Chemistry	M.S.	Analytical Chemistry
B.S.	Chemistry	M.S.	Chemistry

<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<b>Bachelor's Major</b>	<b>Certificate/Master's Degree</b>	<b>Certificate/ Master's Major</b>
B.S.	Chemistry	M.S.	Inorganic Chemistry
B.S.	Chemistry	M.S.	Organic Chemistry
B.S.	Chemistry	M.S.	Physical Chemistry
B.S.	Civil Engineering	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Civil Engineering	M.S.	Civil Engineering
B.S.	Computer Engineering	Graduate Certificate / M.ENG. / M.S.	Cybersecurity
B.S.	Computer Engineering	M.ENG. / M.S.	Computer Engineering
B.S.	Computer Engineering	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Computer Science	M.S.	Computer Science
B.S.	Computer Science	M.B.A.	Master of Business Administration
B.S.	Cybersecurity	M.B.A.	Master of Business Administration
B.S.	Cybersecurity	M.ENG. / M.S.	Cybersecurity
B.S.	Pre-Diet and Exercise	M.S.	Diet and Exercise
B.S.	Electrical Engineering	M.ENG. / M.S.	Electrical Engineering
B.S.	Electrical Engineering	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Event Management	M.S.	Hospitality Management
B.S.	Event Management	M.S.	Event Management

<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<b>Bachelor's Major</b>	<b>Certificate/Master's Degree</b>	<b>Certificate/ Master's Major</b>
B.S.	Financial Counseling and Planning	Graduate Certificate	Family Financial Planning
B.S.	Financial Counseling and Planning	M.S.	Human Development and Family Studies
B.S.	Food Science	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Geology	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Geology	M.S.	Geology
B.S.	Hospitality Management	M.S.	Hospitality Management
B.I.D.	Industrial Design	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Industrial Engineering	M.S./M.ENG.	Industrial Engineering
B.S.	Industrial Engineering	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Industrial Technology	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Industrial Technology	M.S.	Industrial and Agricultural Technology
B.F.A.	Interior Design	M.A.	Interior Design
B.A.	Linguistics	M.A.	TESL/Applied Linguistics
B.S.	Journalism	M.S.	Journalism and Mass Communication
B.S.	Materials Engineering	M.ENG / M.S.	Materials Science and Engineering

<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<b>Bachelor's Major</b>	<b>Certificate/Master's Degree</b>	<b>Certificate/ Master's Major</b>
B.S.	Materials Engineering	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Mechanical Engineering	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Mechanical Engineering	M.S.	Mechanical Engineering
B.S.	Meteorology	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Meteorology	M.S.	Meteorology
B.S.	Nutritional Science	M.S.	Nutritional Sciences
B.S.	Public Relations	M.S.	Journalism and Mass Communication
B.A.	Political Science	M.A.	Political Science
B.S.	Psychology	M.S.	Psychology
B.S.	Software Engineering	M.S.	Computer Science
B.S.	Software Engineering	M.ENG. / M.S.	Computer Engineering
B.S.	Software Engineering	M.B.A.	Business Administration
B.S.	Software Engineering	M.ENG. / M.S.	Cyber Security
B.S.	Construction Engineering	M.B.A	Business Administration
B.S.	Technical Communication	M.A.	Rhetoric, Composition, & Professional Communication
B.S.	Agricultural Economics/Economics	M.S.	Agricultural Economics/Economics
B.S.	Software Engineering	M.S.	Information Systems
B.S.	Industrial Engineering	M.E.N.	Engineering Management
B.S.	Industrial Engineering	M.E.N.	Systems Engineering
B.S.	Business Analytics	M.B.S.	Business Analytics

Bachelor's Degree	Bachelor's Major	Certificate/Master's Degree	Certificate/ Master's Major
B.S.	Management Information Systems	M.B.S.	Business Analytics
B.S.	Finance	M.F.N.	Finance
B.S.	Management Information Systems	M.S.	Information Systems
B.S.	Business Analytics	M.S.	Information Systems
B.S.	Software Engineering	M.S.	Artificial Intelligence
B.S.	Computer Science	M.S.	Artificial Intelligence

## Concurrent Application Process

Interested students must adhere to the following process:

Complete the "[Concurrent Enrollment for Undergraduate Student Wishing to Pursue a Graduate Certificate or Degree](#)" form on the Graduate College website.

Take the form to the interested graduate program along with three letters of recommendation, and any other application materials required by the program, as listed on the Program's Admissions Requirement page [here](#).

After the program has made an admissions decision and signed the form, it must be taken **in order** to the other areas (the program DOGE, undergraduate department, undergraduate college, and Graduate College).

The Graduate College will make the final decision if the student is admissible and notify all parties including the Office of Admissions on the outcome of its evaluation.

### Individual Concurrent Program Admission

Undergraduate students seeking admission to concurrent graduate certificates and/or graduate degree programs in fields **other than those listed in the table** must:

submit a detailed written proposal for an individualized program, co-signed by their advisers, to the Graduate College for review and approval.  
complete the concurrent application process above.

The graduate certificate or degree will only be awarded at the same time as, or after, the undergraduate degree is conferred.

### Transferring Concurrent Credits

Students must adhere to the requirements below:

After each concurrent term, the student must initiate a form called "[Transfer of Courses for Concurrent B.S./Graduate](#)," which lists all courses to be transferred to the undergraduate permanent record (transcript). If a student does not have a B.S. or B.A. degree, a graduate degree is not granted until the bachelor's degree is awarded.

This form must be approved by the undergraduate adviser, the undergraduate college dean, and the Dean of the Graduate College (in that order).

If requested, credits will be transferred from the graduate permanent record to the undergraduate permanent record after each term, or the credits will be transferred from the graduate permanent record to the undergraduate permanent record after the term in which

the first degree is earned. In either case, the "[Transfer of Courses for Concurrent B.S./Graduate](#)" form must be submitted to the Graduate College. The courses and grades will also appear on the graduate permanent record but will not be included in the graduate grade point average.

Students in concurrent degree programs may apply, subject to Program of Study committee approval, up to 6 ISU credits used to fulfill the requirements for a bachelor's degree to a master's degree program of study. These double-counted courses must be clearly marked on the "Transfer of Courses for Concurrent B.S./Graduate" form. Students may only double count those graduate courses while they are a concurrent student.

For students pursuing a concurrent undergraduate bachelor's degree and graduate certificate, at least 12 graduate credits cannot be double counted and a maximum of 6 graduate credits can be double counted for both the bachelor's degree and the graduate certificate (when the graduate certificate requires more than 12 credits).

Credits in addition to the 6 credits transferred from the graduate permanent record to the undergraduate permanent record are no longer available for use on the graduate program of study.

The credits transferred from the graduate permanent record to the undergraduate permanent record are no longer available for use on the graduate program of study.

### Veterinary Medicine Students in Concurrent Graduate Degree Programs

Students may be concurrently enrolled in the professional curriculum leading to the D.V.M. degree and in a graduate program leading to the M.S. or doctoral degree after completion of 90 undergraduate semester credits. The graduate program may be in the College of Veterinary Medicine or in another college. Interested students must adhere to the following process:

Complete a "[Concurrent Enrollment for Graduate/Veterinary Medicine Degrees](#)" form, which is a combination application/concurrent form.

Submit the "Concurrent Enrollment Request" form to the Graduate College after appropriate signatures are obtained.

Signed approvals are required from the graduate program, the Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine, and the Dean of the Graduate College. On admittance, the student receives an admission notification from the Office of Admissions.

When a student takes any courses in the professional veterinary curriculum, registration is as a veterinary student, and tuition and fees are assessed according to that status. When only graduate courses are taken (e.g., during summer session), the student should complete a "Change of Curriculum" form in the Graduate College to change to graduate student status with tuition assessed on that basis.

Students are subject to normal rules and procedures of both colleges. Graduate credit is available only for courses identified in the Iowa State University Catalog as carrying graduate credit.

Students may use graduate courses, where applicable, to meet requirements for the professional curriculum, provided they have been approved for that purpose by the college curriculum committee.

If a student does not hold a B.S. or B.A. degree, a graduate degree is not granted until all requirements for the D.V.M. degree are completed. After the concurrent status has been approved, there is no limit on the number of credits that may be earned toward the graduate degree before receiving the D.V.M. degree. A student may pursue graduate studies during summer and vacation

periods and may elect to postpone the fourth year of the professional curriculum for one year to pursue graduate studies and research. This option may be declared during the second or third year of the professional curriculum, but no later than the first day of the spring semester of the third year of the professional curriculum. Approval by the student's POS committee and the Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine is also required.

### Transferring Concurrent Course Credits

To transfer credits in a concurrent program, follow the requirements below:

If the veterinary medicine degree is earned first, the student must initiate a memo or a form called "Transfer of Courses for Concurrent B.S./VM/Graduate" (available on the Graduate College website at <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/student/forms/>) immediately following the term in which the degree is completed, listing the course(s) (including the term and year taken) and grades to be transferred to the graduate permanent record (transcript).

This form must be approved by the associate deans in the College of Veterinary Medicine, the graduate department or program, and the Graduate College (in that order).

If requested, credits will be transferred from the veterinary medicine permanent record to the graduate permanent record after each term, or the credits will be transferred from the veterinary medicine permanent record to the graduate record after the term in which the graduate degree is earned. In either case, the "Transfer of Courses for Concurrent VM/Graduate" form must be submitted to the Graduate College. The courses and grades will also appear on the veterinary medicine permanent record.

If the graduate degree is earned first and the student wishes to transfer credits from the graduate permanent record to the veterinary medicine permanent record, they must initiate a memo or form listing the courses, terms taken, and grades. The same procedure and signature process as outlined above for a transfer from veterinary medicine permanent record to the graduate permanent record must be followed. Credits transferred from the graduate permanent record to the veterinary permanent record are no longer available for use on a graduate program of study.

### Concurrent Doctoral Degrees

Sometimes a student in a doctoral program wishes to add a concurrent master's degree program. If that is the case, the following requirements must be followed:

Complete and submit a "[Concurrent Graduate Degrees](#)" form to the Graduate College (1137 Pearson Hall),

On that form, the doctoral major professor must also approve the request.

File separate POSC forms for each degree.

File separate "[Application for Graduation](#)" forms for each degree.

Complete separate projects or dissertations/theses for each degree.

File separate "Online Preliminary or Final Oral Exam Request" forms for each degree.

Pass **separate** final oral examinations and complete a **separate** "Graduate Student Approval Form" for each degree.

Concurrently awarded doctoral and master's degrees have no non-overlapping graduate credit requirements, since a doctoral degree can use the credits from a master's degree on the doctoral program of study. Two separate projects (dissertation/thesis/creative component) are required. The two degrees do not have to be awarded during the same term since requirements for each are completed separately.

### 4.3.3 Double Degree Programs

A double degree requires fulfillment of the requirements for two graduate majors for which two differently named master's degrees and two diplomas are granted at the same time. For double degrees with a thesis or creative component, the final project (thesis or creative component) must integrate subject area from both majors.

Several named double degree combinations are currently available at ISU:

- Master of Architecture/Master of Business Administration (MAR/MBA)
- Master of Architecture/Master of Community and Regional Planning (MAR/MCP)
- Master of Architecture/ Master of Design in Sustainable Environments (MAR/MDS)
- Master of Architecture/Master of Urban Design (MAR/MUD)
- Master of Community and Regional Planning/ Master of Design in Sustainable Environments (MCP/MDS)
- Master of Community and Regional Planning/Master of Business Administration (MCP/MBA)
- Master of Community and Regional Planning/Master of Urban Design (MCP/MUD)
- Master of Finance/Master of Business Administration (MFN/MBA)
- Master of Finance/Professional Master of Business Administration (MFN/PMBA)
- Master of Fine Arts in Integrated Visual Arts/ Master of Design in Sustainable Environments (MFA/MDS)
- Master of Landscape Architecture/Master of Community and Regional Planning (MLA/MCP)
- Master of Landscape Architecture/ Master of Design in Sustainable Environments (MLA/MDS)
- Master of Landscape Architecture/ Master of Urban Design (MLA/MUD)
- Master of Science in Apparel, Merchandising, and Design/Master of Business Administration (MS/MBA)
- Master of Science in Information Systems/Master of Business Administration (MS/MBA)
- Master of Science in Information Systems/Professional Master of Business Administration (MS/PMBA)
- Master of Science in Statistics/Master of Business Administration (MS/MBA)
- Master of Science in Sustainable Agriculture/Master of Community and Regional Planning (MS/MCP)
- Master of Finance/Master of Real Estate Development (MFN/MRE)
- Master of Business Administration/Master of Accounting (MBA/MAA)
- Professional Master of Business Administration/Master of Accounting (PMBA/MAA)
- Master of Business Administration/Master of Entrepreneurship (MBA/MEP)
- Professional Master of Business Administration/Master of Entrepreneurship (PMBA/MEP)
- Master of Business Administration/Master of Real Estate Development (MBA/MRE)
- Professional Master of Business Administration/Master of Real Estate Development (PMBA/MRE)
- Master of Business Administration/Master of Business Analytics (MBA/MBS)
- Professional Master of Business Administration/Master of Business Analytics (PMBA/MBS)
- Master of Business Administration/Master of Healthcare Analytics and Operations (MBA/MHO)
- Professional Master of Business Administration/Master of Healthcare Analytics and Operations (PMBA/MHO)
- Master of Industrial Design/Master of Science in Human Computer Interaction (MID/MS)

If a student outside one of the named areas is interested in an individually-developed doubledegree program, a written proposal for a double degree to serve those interests, which must include a proposed course plan, should be submitted to the Graduate College for review.

The requirements for all students who are interested in pursuing double degree programs are listed below.

The interested student must obtain the "[Double Graduate Degree Request](#)" form and submit it to the Graduate College for approval.

Only **one** "[Double Graduate Degree Program of Study & Committee](#)" form needs to be submitted for the two degrees.

For double degrees involving a creative component, there must be at least two graduate faculty members on the double degree POS committee. For double degrees involving a thesis, there must be at least three graduate faculty members on the double degree POS committee. Such POS committees for double degrees must include co-major professors from each of the majors.

Although specific degree programs may require more, the program of study must include at least 48 hours of non-overlapping graduate credit (24 for each major) in the two degrees, and no less than 75% of the sum of the credits from each separate degree.

If one or both of the degrees has a thesis or creative component, one final oral examination must be held covering the combined thesis or creative component. One thesis is submitted to satisfy the requirements of both degrees.

If a thesis or non-thesis is combined with a coursework only degree, the thesis/non-thesis project should include information for both degrees.

**One** "[Graduate Student Approval Form](#)" signed by the DOGE from both programs needs to be submitted to the Graduate College.

All forms should clearly indicate that the student is enrolled in a double degree program.

#### **4.3.4 Combined Degree Program at Iowa State University/Drake University Law School**

To provide training in the complementary fields of law and political science with a minimum amount of academic duplication, special arrangements for a combined degree program have been approved with the Drake University Law School. ISU and Drake offer a combined J.D./M.A. in political science. Drake Law School students are permitted to transfer the equivalent of nine semester credits of specified law courses to ISU for credit for the political science program. Because of the difference in grading systems, the Law School grades are transferred as passes, provided the student has achieved a grade of C or better in those courses at Drake. Applicants for the combined program must meet the regular entrance requirements of, and be admitted to, both the Drake Law School and the ISU Graduate College.

#### **4.4 - Graduate Degree Requirements**

##### **4.4.1 Credits Required for Graduate Degrees**

The academic value of each course is stated in semester credits. Each credit is normally earned by attending one 50-minute lecture or recitation per week for the entire semester, or by attending a laboratory or studio session for two or three hours per week. For more specific information on credits see the chapter titled "[Courses, Credits, and Grading](#)."

## Master's Degrees

The number of credits in a major for a master's degree will vary according to the degrees listed below. General credit requirements for all master's degrees include:

- a minimum of 30 graduate credits is required for all master's programs at ISU,
- at least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU (specific master's programs may require more; see descriptions in [Appendix D](#)).
- for the specialization that is considered essential for an advanced degree, approximately two-thirds of the work should be devoted to the major field, but this is not necessarily restricted to one program,
- any transfer of graduate credits from another institution must be recommended in the program of study by the POS committee, and
- graduate credit earned as a graduate student will be approved for transfer only if a B grade or better was earned.
- two master's degrees require 22 non-overlapping graduate credits.

## Doctor of Philosophy

A minimum of 72 graduate credits must be earned for a doctoral degree

- at least 36 graduate credits, including all dissertation research, must be at ISU.
- a minimum of three research credits must be taken toward the dissertation requirement
- there is no specific university requirement regarding the number of credits to be taken inside or outside the major/program.
- for the specialization that is considered essential for an advanced degree, approximately two-thirds of the work should be devoted to the major field, but this is not necessarily restricted to one program,
- any transfer of graduate credits from another institution must be recommended in the program of study by the POS committee, and
- graduate credit earned as a graduate student will be approved for transfer only if a B grade or better was earned.
- two doctoral degrees require 36 non-overlapping graduate credits.

## 4.4.2 Examinations

The graduate student must complete certain prescribed examinations, some of which are required by the program and others by the Graduate College.

### Diagnostic Examination

A program may require a diagnostic examination of a graduate student before arrival at ISU or shortly after arrival on campus. Diagnostic examinations help the program assess the quality and breadth of a student's preparation.

### English Examination

To ensure competence in written English, graduate students whose native language is not English and who did not graduate from a US institution must take English exams. In addition, nonnative speakers of English who will have teaching responsibilities are required to take the Oral English Certification Test (OECT) (see [Graduate English Requirements for Nonnative Speakers of English](#) ).

## Qualifying Examination

If the field of study requires mastery of a certain core curriculum, the program may administer qualifying examinations to ascertain that core material has been mastered. A student who fails a qualifying examination is normally allowed an opportunity to retake it after a specified period of time.

### Preliminary Oral Examination

The Graduate College requires a preliminary oral examination of doctoral degree students; most programs add a written portion to the preliminary oral examination. The doctoral degree preliminary oral examination rigorously tests a graduate student's knowledge of major, minor, and supporting subject areas as well as the student's ability to analyze, organize, and present subject matter relevant to the field. A Preliminary Oral Exam Request must be submitted to the Graduate College at least two weeks before the proposed date of the examination.

The following conditions must be met before the Preliminary Oral Exam Request form is submitted to the Graduate College:

- The student must have full admission status in a doctoral degree granting program,
- The student's POSC must be approved at least three calendar months before the preliminary oral examination,
- The student must have met the [English requirement](#),
- The student should not be on academic probation,
- The student should not exceed the time-to-degree limit (see [Chapter 4](#)),
- The student must have passed the qualifying examination (if required by program),
- The student must be registered for a minimum of one credit, or for Examination Only (GR ST 681B) if no course work is needed, during the term in which the preliminary oral examination is taken.

A preliminary oral examination will not be scheduled for a student on academic probation. Upon successful completion of the preliminary oral examination, the student is admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree. If the graduate student fails all or part of the preliminary oral examination, they may be allowed to retake it. Six months must elapse between the first attempt and the next.

The entire POS committee must be convened for the preliminary oral examination. Any request to change the makeup of the committee needs to be submitted by rerouting the POSC form with the change before the preliminary oral examination is held. The POSC must be approved by all committee members involved in the change and the DOGE before it reaches the Graduate College for approval.

The preliminary oral examination must be passed at least six months before the final oral examination.

The student, in consultation with their committee chair(s), may decide on the examination modality (in person, remote, or hybrid). The student and committee chair(s) should discuss the choice of modality with the committee, and for remote or hybrid meetings, arrange for facilities and equipment to ensure full video and clear communication. Determination of meeting modality must be determined when the student submits the Preliminary Oral Examination Request form. If the chosen modality is not in person, the student must inform the Graduate College of the modality at the time the request form is submitted. Best practices for remote meetings may be on the Graduate

College website.

When one committee member cannot participate at a time that suits other participants, two options are available:

1. Complete the [Request for Committee Substitution](#) at the Preliminary or Final Oral Exam form before the examination to arrange for a temporary, substitute committee member who will serve with voting rights only for the examination that the permanent member cannot participate. This option can be used in cases in which the member's absence is planned, or in cases of emergency/unplanned absences. The substitute must fill the same role (be an inside vs. outside member) as the absent member.
2. The committee member may be replaced permanently on the committee by another member of the graduate faculty who can participate in the examination and commits to fulfilling all other remaining responsibilities of POS committee service. The new member must fill the same role (be an inside vs. outside member) as the member being replaced. To make this replacement, a new POSC should be routed and approved.

The Graduate College is responsible for maintaining a process for the committee members to report the outcome of the examination to the college. The reporting process must require that each committee member attest to their mode of participation, the degree to which full (audio and video) and clear communication was sustained throughout the examination, and to their participation throughout the entire examination. The Graduate College is expected to confer with committees and program DOGEs in cases where at least one committee member reports problems with communication or participation. The college may nullify examinations that do not meet expectations of the college, the DOGE, and all committee members.

The preliminary oral examination must be passed at least six months prior to the final oral examination. In rare circumstances, an exception to the rule is allowed if a written request with extenuating circumstances signed by the major professor(s) and the program's DOGE is approved by the Dean of the Graduate College.

#### Reporting Doctoral Preliminary Oral Examination Results

Immediately following the preliminary oral examination it is the responsibility of the POS committee to decide whether the student will be recommended for admission to candidacy and may continue to work toward the doctoral degree. All POS committee members must be present at the preliminary oral exam, and the major professor must sign the report form. Four options exist:

The student passes and the POS committee recommends to the Graduate College that the student be admitted to candidacy.

The student may continue their studies, but must meet other conditions specified by the POS committee on the "Report of Preliminary Oral Examination" form under "Conditional Pass" before being recommended for admission to candidacy.

The student fails, but is given an opportunity to repeat the examination six months after the first attempt. An explanatory letter must accompany the report form.

The student fails and is not permitted to continue to work toward a doctoral degree at ISU. An explanatory letter must accompany the report form.

In a preliminary oral examination, if one member of the committee votes not to pass the candidate,

the student passes, but each member of the committee must forward to the Dean of the Graduate College in writing a justification for their votes. Upon request these letters will be made available to the committee at the time of the final oral examination. If more than one member of the committee votes not to pass the student, the candidate does not pass the examination. An explanatory letter must accompany the report form.

## Final Oral Examination

Most master's and all doctoral degree candidates must pass final oral examinations. For detailed information, see "[Finishing Up](#)."

### **4.4.3 Graduate English Requirements for Nonnative Speakers of English**

Graduate students whose native language is not English and who do not have a bachelor's or advanced degree from ISU or a U.S. institution, or do not meet the TOEFL or IELTS exemption score range, must take the English Placement Test at the beginning of their first semester of enrollment. This test is administered by the Department of English. It must be taken in addition to TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), which is taken as part of the admissions process. A student who does not pass this examination is assigned to one or more courses in the English 99 and 101 series. This coursework must be completed during the first year of study. Registration holds are placed on the student's account if the student does not register for these classes during the first year of study. (There is a developmental course fee for the English 99 course.)

A graduate student whose native language is not English may be automatically exempted if one of the following is met:

1. Graduate student earned a TOEFL PBT score of 600 or above or a TOEFL iBT score of 100 and above
2. Graduate student earned a score of 7.5 or above on the IELTS Academic test
3. Graduate student scored a 72 or above on the PTE (Pearson Test of English) Academic test
4. Graduate student's primary language\* as reflected in their ISU student records is English and they completed their education in an English-speaking country\*\*
5. Graduate student's primary language is not English, but they received a Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral degree from an English-medium university in an English-speaking country\*\*
6. Graduate student's only enrollment is in a fully online, distance-only program.\*\*\* (Note: Graduate students who take any classes on ISU's campus in Ames as part of their program are not considered distance-only and thus are not exempt).
7. Graduate student has been employed full-time (40 hours per week minimum) for at least two years in organizations that use English as the primary language for both written and spoken forms of communication. To qualify for this exemption, admitted graduate students must provide verifiable evidence (typically a written statement from a supervisor) attesting to the fact that (a) the parts of their work that involve writing and speaking are conducted primarily in English, and (b) the ability to communicate effectively in both written and spoken English is considered a requirement of the position. The exemption will not apply to graduate students who use English:

only occasionally in the workplace (e.g., only when meeting with foreign clients);  
for written workplace communication (reports, emails, etc.) while primarily speaking in languages other than English, or;  
for speaking in the workplace (discussions, presentations, etc.) while primarily writing in languages other than English.

Note: Only students admitted to the Graduate College in Fall 2023 or afterward are eligible for this exemption. Assistantship appointments held as a graduate student are not considered professional experience for this purpose, though full-time postdoctoral appointments are.

## 8. International exchange students\*\*\*\*who do not plan to take classes offered by the Department of English

\*A primary language is defined as the language in which a person is most proficient and/or which was the first language learned and spoken from childhood. \*\*English-speaking countries (e.g., those that recognize English as an official language) include the following:

Anguilla	Guernsey	Saint Lucia
Antigua and Barbuda	Guyana	Saint Martin
Australia	Jamaica	Samoa
Bahamas	Hong Kong	Seychelles
Barbados	Ireland	Sierra Leone
Belize	Kenya	Singapore
Bermuda	Kiribati	Solomon Islands
Botswana	Lesotho	South Africa
British Virgin Islands	Liberia	South Sudan
Burundi	Malawi	St Kitts & Nevis
Cameroon	Micronesia	St Vincent & Grenadines
Canada	Malta	Sudan
Cayman Islands	Mauritius	Tanzania
Curacao	Montserrat	Tonga
Dominica	Namibia	Trinidad & Tobago
Eritrea	New Zealand	Turks & Caicos
Eswatini	Nigeria	Tuvalu
Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)	Pakistan	Uganda
Fiji	Palau	United Kingdom
Gambia	Papua	Vanuatu
Ghana	New Guinea	Zambia
Gibraltar	Philippines	Zimbabwe
Grenada	Rwanda	
	Saint Helena, Ascension, and Tristan da Cunha	

\*\*\*A list of fully online, distance-only programs can be found on the Office of the Registrar website: <https://www.registrar.iastate.edu/mandatory-fees/online-and-distance-education-programs>.

\*\*\*\*Exchange students are those who come to ISU from another country as part of a formal exchange program to spend a semester or academic year attending classes and participating in campus life. They continue to be enrolled full-time and earn credits toward their degree at their home institution.

## Oral English Certification Test

The Oral English Certification Test (OECT) is an academic test required for international teaching assistants (ITAs), i.e. graduate students who fit **both** of these categories:

- international graduate students who are not native speakers of American English (i.e., learned another language first), and
- international graduate students who are appointed to a teaching assistantship.

The OECT is administered before the beginning of fall and spring semesters for first-time test-takers, as well as at the end of these semesters for ITAs re-taking the test. The OECT testing dates can be found on the International Teaching Assistants Program website at <https://cce.grad-college.iastate.edu/speaking/oect-for-itas>. Registration for the OECT can be completed online through the program's website two to three weeks before the testing dates. International Teaching Assistants (ITAs) and faculty with questions about OECT should email [itas@iastate.edu](mailto:itas@iastate.edu) or call 515-294-1958 or 515-294-7996.

A prospective ITA who does not pass OECT is required to successfully complete English 180 coursework and be retested. English 180 is a series of oral communication courses designed to help ITAs improve their English speaking skills by focusing on pronunciation, listening, classroom-communication strategies, question-handling, teaching and lecturing skills, and the culture of U.S. university life (<https://cce.grad-college.iastate.edu/courses/speaking-courses>). Because enrollment is restricted, ITAs cannot register for English 180 courses online through AccessPlus. ITAs must go to the CCE in the Graduate College, 1137 Pearson, upon receiving the OECT scores to obtain permission to enter the course by completing an online schedule change form.

#### **4.4.4 Residency Requirements**

No campus residency requirement exists for the master's degree, but campus residency is desirable for the doctoral degree. Of the 72 graduate credits required for a doctoral degree, at least 36 credits, including all dissertation research credits, must be earned from Iowa State University under the supervision of the student's POS committee. Programs may establish their own residency requirements.

#### **4.4.5 Time-to-Degree Limit**

The Graduate College's time-to-degree limit for all graduate students, both master's and doctoral, is seven years. **Graduate programs may establish more restrictive time-to-degree limits.** For example, at the program's discretion, a student beginning a doctoral degree program at ISU with a master's degree could be expected to complete the program within three or four or five years, while a student beginning a doctoral degree program without the master's degree could be expected to complete the program within five or six or seven years. This is an option that would be enforced at the department level. Requests to extend the seven-year time limit will be considered in situations involving medical or other extenuating circumstances. Cases in which the student leaves ISU during their graduate career and later returns are dealt with individually by the POS committee and the Graduate College.

The inclusion in the program of study/committee (POSC) of coursework that is beyond the time limit ("expired" courses) must be justified in the [Expired Course Petition](#) found on the Graduate College student forms page. This petition must be submitted in conjunction with the POSC form.

# Chapter 5 - Courses, Credits, and Grading

---

## 5.1 - Courses and Credits

### 5.1.1 Graduate Courses

At Iowa State University, graduate courses are taught by members of the graduate faculty and are given numbers in the 500s or 600s. The 500-level courses are for graduate students and qualified undergraduate students. The teaching department or course section's instructor of record is responsible for determining if the undergraduate student is considered qualified based on the skills or preparation necessary for a student to be successful in the course. The 600-level courses are for graduate students only.

### 5.1.2 Undergraduate-Level Courses Taken as a Graduate Student on Program of Study

With POS-committee approval, graduate students will be permitted to use undergraduate classes from both within and outside of their majors on POS forms.

No 100- or 200-level classes may be used, but all 300- and 400-level classes at Iowa State (not undergraduate classes from other institutions) will be eligible.

Students are limited to 9 credits at the undergraduate level, with a limit of 3 credits at the 300 level.

If a 300-level class is used, it must be from outside of the student's major.

Please note:

Graduate students who take undergraduate classes are not required to do extra work or to be exposed to material more advanced than what is taught to undergraduates.

In contrast, dual-listed courses (offered at both the undergraduate and graduate level) are required to expect more of graduate students who enroll at the 500 level.

Individual graduate programs may prohibit the use of undergraduate classes or may make the use of undergraduate classes more restrictive than does the university-wide policy.

### 5.1.3 Audited Courses

Auditing a course means taking it without receiving formal credit. (For more information, see [Chapter 2](#).)

### 5.1.4 Creative Component Credits

Credits for a special report, research project, or other independent work designated as a creative component under the nonthesis master's degree option are assigned under the course number 599. A minimum of two credit hours is required for a creative component. These credits are not calculated in the student's GPA.

## **5.1.5 Dual-Listed Undergraduate and Graduate Courses**

Dual-listed courses permit undergraduate and graduate students to be in the same class, but to receive credit under two different course numbers. The following requirements apply:

Credit in the graduate course is not available to students who have previously received credit in the corresponding undergraduate course.

Both graduates and undergraduates must receive the same amount of credit for the course, but additional work is required of all graduate students taking the course under the graduate-level course number. This extra work may take the form of additional reading, projects, examinations, or other assignments as determined by the instructor.

The instructor must be a member of the graduate faculty or a graduate lecturer.

Each dual-listed course is designated by the words “dual listed with” in the ISU Catalog. The student’s official transcript of credits, both graduate and undergraduate, does not identify dual-listed courses as such.

The number of dual-listed course credits that may be used to meet the requirement for an advanced degree may be limited.

Program procedures for offering dual-listed-courses are included in [Appendix F](#).

## **5.1.6 Repeated Courses**

A designated repeated course is one that is retaken, but no significant change in content has occurred. If a course is repeated, the permanent record will show the grade on the initial attempt as well as grades received on subsequent attempts. However, only the most recent grade will be used in computing a student’s cumulative grade-point average. Normally, seminars, special topics, or courses that have changed substantially in content are not processed as designated repeats.

Courses should be repeated as soon as possible, preferably within three semesters in residence. The Office of the Registrar will process the repeat automatically, unless the department/program name, course number, and/or credits have changed, or unless the course was originally taken under the quarter system. In these specific instances, a “Designation of Repeated Courses” form, available in department offices, must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar.

Normally only one repetition of any single course is permitted; not more than four different courses used for graduate credit may be repeated. Decisions in each case lie within the province of a student’s POS committee and the Dean of the Graduate College. Credit for any course that is repeated can be counted only once on a POS.

## **5.1.7 R-Credit Courses**

No credit is given in these courses. Only S/F grading is allowed for 500/600-level R-credit courses.

## **5.1.8 Research Credits**

Credits for research for the purpose of completing a dissertation or thesis are assigned under the course number 699. These credits are not calculated in the student’s GPA. A minimum of three semester credits is required for a dissertation or thesis.

## **5.1.9 Nondegree Undergraduate (Special) Student Admission Status**

A person classified as a nondegree undergraduate (special) student is considered an undergraduate and may not use courses taken under that status in a graduate degree program. A student who has received the baccalaureate degree must register as a graduate student if they are to receive graduate credit for courses.

### **5.1.10 Special Topics or Independent Study Course Credit**

Credits for independent study with a faculty member by an individual student or for a small group studying a specialized area are assigned under the course number 590.

### **5.1.11 Testing-Out Credits**

Graduate students may receive graduate course credit by special examination (testing out of a course) if they have sufficient preparation in the subject matter and they have the instructor's approval. Application for special examination is made to the program and requires approval by the program director or chair/head of the department offering the course. For an official test out, a fee is paid, successful completion of a special examination is reported as a T, and the course credit is added to the university total.

### **5.1.12 Transfer of Graduate Credits**

Only under certain conditions and only with the approval of a student's POS committee and the Graduate College, can graduate credits with a B grade or better earned as a graduate student at another institution be transferred to ISU (see [Chapter 6](#) for more information).

### **5.1.13 Workshops and Short Course Credit**

Workshops and short courses involving at least 15 class contact hours, but less than eight days of course work may carry no more than one graduate credit.

## **5.2 - Grading**

Grades are the permanent official record of a student's academic performance. Iowa State uses A through F grading for most courses. S, P, and NP grades are given in some courses. The standard four-point scale is used to calculate a grade point average (see table below).

### **5.2.1 Grade Point Average (GPA)**

All courses (even if they are undergraduate courses) taken as a graduate student will be calculated into the graduate GPA. The GPA is determined by dividing the number of grade points earned by the total number of ISU cumulative hours. The grade given when an Incomplete (I) is resolved is figured into the cumulative grade point average, but not into a particular semester's average. Marks of I, S, P, NP, T, and X are not counted in the grade point average; a mark of F (even if taken S/F) is counted in the grade point average. Creative Component/Research (599 and 699) credits are not used in the calculation of the GPA. In the case of repeated courses, only the grade achieved the last time the course is taken is used in computing the grade point average.

### **5.2.2 Grading Research and Creative Component Credits**

Creative Component/Research credits may be awarded an A, B, C, D, I, S, or F. Plus and minus

grades are optional. These credits are not calculated in a student's GPA.

### **5.2.3 Grievances about Grades**

A graduate student, who feels that a course grade has been unjustly assigned, and whose attempts to resolve the matter with the instructor have failed, may appeal through the grievance procedure described in [Chapter 9](#).

### **5.2.4 Pass (P)/Not Pass (NP) Course Credit**

Pass/Not Pass courses are those that a student, with the approval of the major professor, may take for personal enrichment, but not for satisfying prerequisites or deficiencies in the undergraduate background.

P/NP courses may not be used in a POS, nor do P/NP marks contribute to the student's GPA. Full credit for P/NP courses is used in calculating tuition assessment and credit load limitations.

Courses to be taken P/NP should be added on a regular graded basis through the Web-based AccessPlus registration system. To change a course to P/NP, the student must obtain the signature of their major professor in the Pass/Not Pass approval section of the "Request for Schedule Change or Restriction Waiver" form and the signature of the graduate classification officer (Graduate College, 1137 Pearson Hall). The changes must then be processed at the Student Scheduling Office (10 Enrollment Services Center).

### **5.2.5 Satisfactory/Fail (S/F) Grading**

S/F grading is not the same as P/NP grading. S/F grading is by instructor option; all students in a particular course receive S/F grading. P/NP grading is generally a student option. Additionally, a P mark is equivalent to at least a D- grade whereas an S mark is equivalent to at least a B grade at the graduate level. No special registration procedures are required for S/F grading. An S mark in a course taken S/F is not counted in the grade point average, but an F mark in a course taken S/F is counted in the grade point average and is equivalent to an F in a regularly graded (A-F) course. No more than 20 percent of the total credits (excluding dissertation, thesis, or creative component research) in the program of study may be earned on an S/F basis.

S/F grading may be used only for approved courses offered as seminars, symposia, workshops, special topics, and research. Programs must submit requests for S/F grading to the Dean of the Graduate College. The Graduate College Curriculum and Catalog Committee reviews and approves or rejects all S/F courses.

### **5.2.6 Probation and Academic Standing**

If a graduate student does not maintain a cumulative 3.00 grade point average on all course work taken, exclusive of research credit, they may be placed on academic probation by the Dean of the Graduate College. Grades earned by graduate students in undergraduate courses are included in the calculation of the grade point average. Academic probation judgments are made on the basis of grades in course work only.

New, first-term, degree-seeking graduate students who fall below a 3.00 GPA at the end of their first semester at Iowa State University will be given a one term grace period to bring their grades back to a 3.00 GPA. These students will receive a warning letter from the Graduate College.

## Students on probation:

will have a hold placed on future registrations,  
 will not normally receive a Graduate College tuition scholarship, if appointed to an assistantship,  
 will not be admitted to candidacy for a degree if they are a doctoral student,  
 will be required before registration each term to undergo a review of their record and have the program recommend in writing if the Graduate College should permit further registration, and must, before graduation is approved, complete all courses listed on the program of study with a minimum grade of C and have achieved a 3.00 GPA or greater.

## The Grading Notation System

Grades and Marks Used for Graduate Students (+ and - are optional)

<b>Grade/Mark</b>	<b>Points/ Credits</b>	<b>Performance Description/Comments</b>
A	4.00	Superior
A-	3.67	
B+	3.33	
B	3.00	Satisfactory
B-	2.67	
C+	2.33	
C	2.00	Minimum grade acceptable for courses on the POS.
C-	1.67	Not used on the POS.
D+	1.33	Not used on the POS.
D	1.00	Not used on the POS.
D-	.67	Lowest passing grade in courses, not used on POS.
F	0.00	Not satisfactorily completed, not allowed on the POS, but is included in the GPA. Typically must be repeated; only with extenuating circumstances can a student graduate with an F or NP on the permanent record, regardless of whether the course is used on the POS. The Dean of the Graduate College may consider requests from POS committees to allow graduation with an F on the permanent record only if the course is not on the POS, the course is unrelated to the student's scholarly discipline and dissertation/thesis topic, and the cumulative GPA is 3.00 or higher. <b>An F mark in a course taken S/F is counted in the grade point average and is equivalent to an F in a regularly graded (A-F) course.</b>

Grade/Mark	Points/ Credits	Performance Description/Comments
I		<p>If a student is unable to complete the course work by the end of the term for reasons that the instructor thinks are legitimate, a mark of I (Incomplete) may be assigned because a grade has not yet been earned. This must be reported on the "Incomplete-Mark Report" form, which includes the reason for the I and requirements for resolving it. This report should be signed by both the instructor and student.</p> <p>Repeating a course does not resolve an Incomplete. To resolve an Incomplete, the student must fulfill the requirements as described on the "Incomplete-Mark Report" form. After the student has met these requirements, the instructor submits a "Grade Report to the Registrar" to resolve the incomplete. That new grade will appear on a student's record the term that it is submitted. The "I" mark will remain on the student's transcript. A mark of I incurred fall 98 and after will automatically change to a grade of F after one calendar year (whether or not the student was enrolled during the period). I marks in courses numbered 599 or 699 will not automatically change to an F. <b>For students graduating, all incompletes must be resolved prior to completing the Graduate Student Approval Form.</b></p> <p>Only with extenuating circumstances is a student allowed to graduate with an incomplete on the permanent record. The major professor must make a written request to the Dean of the Graduate College explaining those circumstances. The Registrar's Office will remove a student from the graduation list if they receive an incomplete for the term of graduation.</p>
S		Satisfactory completion (figured in total hours earned but not in grade point average).
P		Passing grade under the P/NP system (figured in total hours earned but not in grade point average).
NP		<p>Not passed under the P/NP system (not counted in total hours earned but not in grade point average). Typically must be repeated; only with extenuating circumstances can a student graduate with an F or NP on the permanent record, regardless of whether the course is used on the POS.</p> <p>The Dean of the Graduate College may consider requests from POS committees to allow graduation with an NP on the permanent record only if the course is not on the POS, the course is unrelated to the student's scholarly discipline and dissertation/thesis topic, and the cumulative GPA is 3.00 or higher.</p>
T		Test out with credit obtained by special examination.
X		Course dropped after first week of the semester.

# Chapter 6 - The Graduate Program of Study

---

## 6.1 - POS Committee

New graduate students at ISU may be assigned a temporary academic adviser by the major program in the first semester of the student's residence. This advisor guides the student in selection of a field of study and in development of a graduate program of study until the major professor and POS committee are selected. After the POS committee has been selected, it guides and evaluates the student during the remainder of graduate study. Among the committee's duties are:

- reviewing periodically the progress of the student;
- advising a student during the development of the dissertation, the thesis, or the creative component;
- considering and approving the student's program of study as well as changes in the program of study;
- reading the dissertation, thesis, or creative component; and
- conducting the preliminary oral examination (for doctoral candidates) and the final oral examination (for master's and doctoral candidates).

Individual graduate programs may add other responsibilities for the POS committee.

Early selection of a major professor, appointment of a POS committee, and development of a program of study are very important. It is recommended that the committee be formed as early as the second semester of graduate study. **The student's initial Program of Study and Committee appointment form (POSC) must be approved by the Graduate College at least three calendar months before the preliminary oral examination for doctoral candidates; the three calendar-month timeframe for scheduling a preliminary oral examination begins the day that the Graduate College approves the POSC.** For master's students, the POSC must be approved by the Graduate College by the last day of the semester prior to the term of the final oral examination. For students in approved master's programs with no final oral examination, the POSC form must be approved by the Graduate College no later than the last day of the semester prior to the graduation term. **For the POSC to be approved in any given term, it must be received by the Graduate College by the published deadline for that term.** To select a committee, the student must:

- identify your department's or program's POSC requirements and deadlines (in addition to the Graduate College requirements).
- complete the online Program of Study Committee form, and begin the online approval process. Committee members and the program's Director of Graduate Education (DOGE) must approve it.
- check the status as it moves through the approval process; send emails to faculty who seem slow to respond.
- check to be sure it is approved by the Graduate College.

## 6.2 - POS Committee Makeup

## 6.2.1 The Major Professor

The major professor, who must be a member of the graduate faculty in the student's declared major, serves as chair of the POS committee. (For information about graduate faculty, see [Appendix G](#); for responsibilities of the major professor, see [Chapter 6.4](#))

## 6.2.2 Co-major Professors

A doctoral or master's degree student may have two or more major professors who serve as co-chairs of the POS committee. Co-chairs are required in the following instances:

When a student has a co-major, each of the major fields must be represented by a different major professor, which will require the designation of co-major professors. However, the same person, if a faculty member in both majors, will be allowed to serve as major professor for both majors.

When doctoral or master's work is administered through a program in which the largest share of course credits is taken, but the research is conducted or shared with another program or major and also supervised by a graduate faculty member in that program, both the doctoral or master's supervisor and a member of the graduate faculty from the program in which the degree will be granted can be designated as co-major professors.

An approved committee for a double degree must include co-major professors from each of the programs. Only certain programs have been approved for double degrees (see [Chapter 4](#)).

If an associate member of the graduate faculty is chosen as major professor for a POS committee, a co-major professor who is a full member of the graduate faculty must also be identified.

If a major professor resigns or retires from the university, they may continue to serve, but a co-major professor who is a member of the graduate faculty must also be identified.

In all cases where there are co-major professors, both must sign on all required forms to be submitted to the Graduate College.

## 6.2.3 Members of the Committee

**Members and Associate Graduate Faculty Members.** Any graduate faculty member or associate graduate faculty member (see [Appendix G](#)) may serve as a member of a master's or doctoral POS committee.

**Member(s) from Outside the Student's Field of Emphasis.** The outside graduate faculty member(s) of the POS committee provide relevant specialized knowledge or a different perspective helpful to the planning, execution, and reporting of research, or some aspect of intellectual diversity deemed important by the committee and/or major.

**Member(s) from a Minor.** If a graduate minor has been declared, a graduate faculty member from the minor program or interdepartmental minor must serve on the POS committee. The major professor and the representative from the minor field may not be the same person.

**Retired Faculty.** Retired ISU graduate faculty members may serve as **members only** (not as major professors) on newly formed master's or doctoral committees as long as they are willing to participate actively.

**Resigned Faculty.** Graduate faculty members who have resigned but are currently serving on an approved committee may continue to serve in that capacity. They may not be appointed to any new committee.

*Please note: If a major professor **resigns OR retires** from the university, they may continue to serve, but a co-major professor who is a member of the graduate faculty must also be identified.*

**Non-ISU/Affiliate Associate Graduate Faculty Members:** Professionals who are not employed by Iowa State University but have been officially appointed as associate graduate faculty members can serve as committee members, as a co-major professor, and fill other duties as explicated by their nomination. They cannot serve as a stand-alone major professor. Procedures for nomination to Associate Graduate Faculty status are described in Appendix G. Because such members are not employees of Iowa State University, should a non-ISU associate graduate faculty member's conduct be counterproductive to the student's academic progress, the Dean of the Graduate College has the authority to remove them from the POSC.

**Additional Non-voting Members.** When a non-member of the Graduate Faculty possesses expertise particularly relevant to the student's field of study, they may serve informally on either the master's or the doctoral POS Committee as an additional non-voting member. The non-voting member does not sign the online POSC. Non-voting members are invited but not required to attend all committee functions.

#### **6.2.4 Doctoral POS Committee Makeup**

The POS committee for a doctoral program consists of at least five members of the graduate faculty. It must include at least three members, including the major professor, from within the student's major or program. The committee must include member(s) from different fields of emphasis so as to ensure diversity of perspectives. An associate member of the graduate faculty may participate in the direction of a student's dissertation research as a co-major professor if a full member of the graduate faculty serves as a co-major professor and jointly accepts responsibility for direction of the dissertation. Non-ISU Associate Graduate Faculty Members may comprise no more than 34% of the POS committee of a doctoral student, meaning that up to two committee members may be from outside ISU.

#### **6.2.5 Master's POS Committee Makeup**

Master's with thesis: The master's POS committee for a student completing a thesis consists of at least three members of the graduate faculty. It must include two members, including the major professor, from the major or program. The committee must include member(s) from different fields of emphasis so as to ensure diversity of perspectives. An associate member of the graduate faculty may participate in the direction of a student's master's research as a co-major professor if a full member of the graduate faculty serves as a co-major professor and jointly accepts responsibility for the direction of a program of study. Non-ISU Associate Graduate Faculty Members may comprise no more than 34% of the POS committee of a master's with thesis student, meaning that only one non-ISU member may serve on the committee.

Master's with creative component: The master's POS committee for a student completing a creative component consists of at least one member of the graduate faculty as the major professor. Individual programs should consider whether the minimum number of committee members should be increased for the benefit of the students. The number of committee members in addition to the

major professor will be established and monitored by the major/program/department. The POSC form available through AccessPlus must be submitted.

Master's with coursework only: The master's POS committee for a student completing a coursework only program consists of at least one member of the graduate faculty in the designated major. This is often the DOGE of the coursework only program. The student must submit the online POSC form, but only the single committee member (usually the DOGE) is required.

## 6.2.6 POS Committee Changes

Recommendations for changes in the POS committee for a master's or doctoral degree must have the approval of the student, major professor, DOGE, and all committee members involved in the change (committee members who are on Faculty Professional Development Assignments, retired, or resigned do not have to sign) before seeking approval of the Graduate College. Changes to the POS committee can be made on the online POSC form through AccessPlus. These changes must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College before the preliminary or final oral examination is held.

## 6.2.7 POS Committee Member Replacement in an Emergency

In the case of any emergency occasioned by sudden illness, accident, or other serious and unforeseen ability of a faculty member to attend a meeting of the POS Committee, the program should submit the [Request for Committee Substitution at the Preliminary or Final Oral Exam](#) form as soon as possible either before or directly following the exam. The person substituting for the absent member will submit the request to the Graduate College. The major professor will have to approve the substitution before the Graduate College can approve. In extreme circumstances, the Dean of the Graduate College will approve via telephone an emergency replacement. This emergency procedure can be activated by calling the Dean's office directly at 515-294-4531.

## 6.3 - Developing the Program of Study

The student and the major professor develop the program of study with the consultation and approval of the POS committee. This agreement between the student and the Graduate College should be submitted as early as possible for approval. It is recommended that the committee be formed as early as the second semester of graduate study. **The POSC form must be approved by the Graduate College at least three calendar months before the preliminary oral examination for doctoral candidates; the three calendar-month timeframe for scheduling a preliminary oral examination begins the day that the Graduate College approves the POSC. For master's students, the POSC must be approved by the Graduate College by the last day of the semester prior to the term of the final oral examination. For students in approved master's programs with no final oral examination, the POSC form must be approved by the Graduate College no later than the last day of the semester prior to the graduation term. For the POSC form to be approved in any given term, the form must be approved by the Graduate College by the published deadline for that term.** POSC forms are available online through AccessPlus under the Student tab, Graduate Student Status. Each student's program of study should be designed to correct deficiencies in academic preparation, allow study of subject matter that most interests the student, and avoid repetition in areas where the student is well prepared. The POS committee assures that program requirements are met before approving the POSC form.

The POSC form is approved by the student, committee members, and the DOGE of the major, minor or interdepartmental major/minor, if appropriate, before submitting it to the Graduate College. There the program of study is reviewed for adherence to the standards of the Graduate College and is submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College for approval. When the Graduate College has approved the POSC, the status of POSC approval can be checked in the AccessPlus Student tab. Approving parties are notified by e-mail when a form is ready for their approval.

### **6.3.1 Changes on the Program of Study**

Recommendations for modifications to the program of study for a master's or doctoral degree must have the approval of the student, major professor, all committee members, and the program's DOGE before approval by the Graduate College is sought. Modifications to the POS can be made on the online POSC form available in the Student tab in AccessPlus. A change of degree requires a new POSC form.

### **6.3.2 Courses Taken as an ISU Undergraduate**

Courses at the 400 and 500 levels listed in the ISU Catalog may be used in the plan of study even though they were taken by the student as an undergraduate at ISU.

Up to 9 credits earned as an ISU undergraduate may be used to meet the requirements of the graduate degree.

These credits must be approved by the student's Program of Study Committee and DOGE.

Up to 6 of these credits may be at the 400 level.

Up to 6 of these credits could have been used to meet the undergraduate degree requirements.

Grades of B or better are required in the courses that led to these credits.

These credits must have been earned when the student was classified as an undergraduate, not as a nondegree undergraduate (special) student.

Graduate programs may accept 300-level courses taken by the student as an undergraduate at ISU to meet background deficiencies or to demonstrate proficiencies in subject matter necessary for the degree. These courses are not eligible for inclusion on the POSC form but may be articulated for transfer internally. The student would be required to meet the minimum number of credits required for the degree without the inclusion of these undergraduate-level courses.

### **6.3.3 Declared Minors**

Requirements for declared minors are determined by the minor program and the faculty member representing the minor field on the student's POS committee. The minor subject area must be tested at the preliminary oral and final oral examinations for doctoral candidates and at the final oral examination for all other advanced degrees. A minor cannot be added to a program of study after the preliminary or final oral examinations have been taken, nor can a minor be placed on the transcript after graduation, unless it was approved on the POS, listed on all examination reports, and recorded on the "Application for Graduation" form. All courses used for a minor must be listed on the POSC.

### **6.3.4 Expired Courses**

The age of a course used on a POSC is defined as the time between the year the credits were

earned and the year that the student graduates. A course is considered expired when its age is greater than the time limit for the master's or doctoral program. As indicated in [section 4.4.5 of the Graduate College Handbook](#), the Graduate College Time-to-Degree Limit is seven years. Graduate programs may establish more restrictive policies for both time-to-degree limits and expired course limits.

Typically, POSC forms include only age-compliant course credits, no older than seven years. Occasionally, a student and their POSC committee members may believe expired credits should be counted toward degree requirements. Recognizing the wide diversity of graduate programs at Iowa State University, and the fact that students embark on graduate study under many different circumstances and with varying degrees of prior experience and/or education, the Graduate College offers the following procedure for the review of expired courses for possible inclusion on a POSC:

Master's degree students may use any number of credits up to seven years old and up to six credits that were taken between eight and ten years prior to the graduating semester at the discretion of the POS committee and the DOGE. An [Expired Course Petition](#) must be completed to justify the use of these credits beyond their expiration year. Master's students may not use more than six credits of courses on the POSC that are eight to ten years old or any credits that are 11 or more years old without documented extenuating circumstances and petition to the Graduate College.

MFA students may use any number of credits up to ten years old and up to 24 credits that 11 years old or more at the discretion of their POS committee and the DOGE, so long as no more than 10 of those credits are more than 16 years old. An [Expired Course Petition](#) must be completed to justify the use of these credits beyond their expiration year. Credits more than 16 years old must have been earned in the completion of a previous graduate degree. Coursework that does not meet these stipulations may not be used without documented extenuating circumstances and petition to the Graduate College.

Doctoral students may use any number of credits up to ten years old and up to 36 credits that are 11 years old or more at the discretion of their POS committee and the DOGE, so long as no more than 12 of those credits are more than 16 years old. An [Expired Course Petition](#) must be completed to justify the use of these credits beyond their expiration year. Credits more than 16 years old must have been earned in the completion of a previous graduate degree. Coursework that does not meet these stipulations may not be used without documented extenuating circumstances and petition to the Graduate College.

Any expired coursework (coursework more than seven years old) to be used on a POSC must be requested through an [Expired Course Petition](#) at the same time the POSC form is routed. The petition will include:

- a justification for each course explaining why it is still relevant,
- an assurance that the student has kept current with the information covered in the expired course(s), and
- an explanation of how the student will be evaluated on expired course material. Evaluation could include a written examination (a preliminary, qualifying, or comprehensive examination), evidence of satisfactory performance in course(s) for which the expired course(s) are prerequisites, or the completion of an audit in one or more current courses in the areas encompassed by the expired course(s). The object should be to determine whether the material learned in those courses is still timely and adequate. The evaluation method should be specified by the committee at the time the POSC form is submitted.

If the Graduate College approves the use of expired courses, it does so based in part on the

year of expected graduation on the POSC. If a student does not graduate by the term indicated on the POSC, the approved use of expired courses is void, and a new petition must be submitted for approval along with a modified POSC. Students and faculty advisers should plan in advance for the possibility that additional courses will be required due to delays in graduation.

### **6.3.5 Pass/Not Pass (P/NP) Courses**

Students may not list courses taken on a P/NP basis on their POSC form. For more information, see [Chapter 5](#).

### **6.3.6 Repeated Courses**

Repetition of a course is permitted with the approval of the POS committee or temporary academic adviser. For more information on repeating courses, see [Chapter 5](#).

### **6.3.7 Testing Out Credit**

The POS committee determines if testing out credit may be included on the POS. See [Chapter 5](#) for more information on testing out credits.

### **6.3.8 Transfer Credits**

At the discretion of the POS committee, and with the approval of the program and the Graduate College, graduate credits earned as a graduate student at another institution or through a distance education program offered by another institution may be transferred if the grade was B or better. Such courses must have been acceptable toward an advanced degree at that institution and must have been taught by individuals having graduate faculty status at that institution. If a student wishes to transfer credits from graduate courses taken at or through another university as an undergraduate student, it is that student's responsibility to provide verification by letter from that institution that those graduate courses were not used to satisfy undergraduate requirements for a degree. (Grades from courses taken at another institution will **not** be included in ISU grade calculations, nor will the grades display on an ISU transcript.)

A copy of an official transcript must accompany the POSC to transfer credits. The transcript should show that the courses were taken as a graduate student. There should be a clear indication that the courses taken were graduate level courses. The POS committee may ask for other materials, such as a course outline or accreditation of the institution, to evaluate the course. Transfer courses not completed when the POS is submitted must be completed before the term in which the student graduates. A transcript must then be submitted through the online POSC process for review and final approval.

Research credits earned at another institution are generally not transferred. In rare circumstances, the transfer of S or P marks may be accepted for research credits only. It is the responsibility of the POS committee to obtain a letter from the responsible faculty member at the other institution stating that research credits recommended for transfer with S or P marks are considered to be worthy of a B grade or better.

### **6.3.9 Undergraduate Courses to Make Up Academic Deficiencies**

Undergraduate-level courses are sometimes required of graduate students to make up deficiencies

in undergraduate background. They do not appear on the POSC form. Such courses appear on transcripts and are included in the determination of the grade point average. These courses may not be taken on a P/NP basis.

## **6.4 - POS Committee Responsibilities: A Summary**

### **6.4.1 Major Professor (Chair) Responsibilities**

Procedural matters:

Review and sign forms requiring the major professor's approval.

Preside at meetings of the POS committee.

Recommend to the Dean of the Graduate College in writing that:

Provisional admission be changed to full admission after background deficiencies have been corrected with a B grade average or better. If the student is a nonnative English speaker, the graduate English requirement must also be met.

Student be removed from probation or request to be allowed to register for satisfactory academic performance.

Significant changes in the program of study are necessary (must be approved by the student, committee members, and the program's DOGE before submission to the Graduate College).

Waiver of six-month requirement between the preliminary oral and final oral examinations requested (must be approved by student, major professor, and program's DOGE before submission to the Graduate College).

All conditions placed on a preliminary oral or final oral examination may be removed. If the report form is checked that all committee members must sign to remove a condition, then all signatures will be required to remove the condition.

Time extension to complete the degree requested be granted (must also be signed and approved by the program's DOGE before submission to the Graduate College).

Graduation with less than the 3.00 G.P.A. for extenuating circumstances (must also be approved by the program's DOGE before submitting to the Graduate College).

Changes in committee are made and approved by the Graduate College prior to a preliminary or final oral examination (also signed by all members involved in the change and the program's DOGE).

Present doctoral candidates at graduation ceremonies.

Write letters of recommendation for students as appropriate.

Research and dissertation/thesis responsibilities:

Guide the graduate student doing research by conferring regularly to review and evaluate progress.

Guide the student in development of communication skills through assistance in preparing manuscripts for presentation or publication.

Criticize constructively the written draft(s) of a dissertation or thesis before it is circulated to other members of the POS committee.

Work with the student in editing the written draft(s) of the dissertation or thesis.

The major professor's relationship with the student:

Provide needed guidance without hampering creativity.

Be accessible within a reasonable schedule for discussions with the student.

Accept a student only if they have sufficient time to direct the student's program and can reasonably expect to have available facilities and sufficient funding to support the student to the completion of the degree.

Write letters of recommendation for the student and aid with job or position placement as appropriate.

Inform the student of any special leave that may cause inconvenience or delay in the student's research progress or in the arrangement of the preliminary oral or final oral examinations.

Resolution of major professor-student relationship problems:

When irreconcilable problems occur between the major professor and student, it may be advisable to dissolve the relationship. The DOGE is responsible for recommending to the Graduate College that the original POS committee be dissolved and that a new POS committee be formed.

#### **6.4.2 POS Committee Member Responsibilities**

Procedural matters:

Review periodically the progress of the student.

Verify that the program of study meets the major's requirements (and minor's requirements when applicable) and recommends approval to the Graduate College.

Discuss and recommend changes in the student's program to the Graduate College.

Committee/Student Relationships:

Inform the student of any circumstances that might cause inconvenience in arranging periodic meetings or the preliminary oral or final oral examinations.

Write letters of recommendations for students.

Research and dissertation/thesis responsibilities:

Advise the student during development of the dissertation, thesis, or creative component, either individually or in conference with other committee members.

Participate in the preliminary oral examination of a doctoral student and decide whether to recommend that the student be advanced to candidacy for the degree.

Read the dissertation, thesis, or creative component critically and suggest corrections.

Conduct a final oral examination for doctoral candidates and decide whether to recommend granting of the doctoral degree.

Conduct a comprehensive oral examination of a master's student and recommend whether the degree should be granted.

#### **6.4.3 Student Responsibilities**

Procedural matters:

Submit all forms requiring approval in advance of Graduate College deadlines.

Recommend a POS committee by identifying appropriate members to serve on the committee.

After obtaining agreement from the major professor and committee members, complete the

POSC form with assistance from the major professor. Submit it through AccessPlus for approval by the major professor, committee members, DOGE and the Graduate College. Remember, POSC forms must be approved by the Graduate College the semester before the semester of graduation.

Relationship with the major professor:

Meet with the major professor periodically, as often as possible or necessary, to discuss research progress and/or problems and to review dissertation/thesis/creative component. Develop and, if necessary, regularly revise an agenda with the major professor. Submit to the major professor all required forms for signature in a reasonable time frame. Inform the major professor of personal leave and sick leave. Personal leave should be planned so it does not interfere with the student's duties. Be accessible to the major professor periodically and within a reasonable schedule for discussion of various matters and/or assistance in research-related or teaching- assistantship activities. Provide copies of the dissertation or thesis to the major professor in time for adequate review before submission deadlines to the Thesis Office.

Relationship with the POS committee:

Schedule all POS committee meetings for discussion of the research proposal, research progress, and preliminary oral and final oral examinations. Be accessible periodically and within a reasonable schedule for discussion with members of the POS committee. Submit the dissertation, thesis, or creative component to the committee members at least two weeks before the final oral examination.

# Chapter 7 - Finishing Up

---

## 7.1 - Academic Requirements

### 7.1.1 Application for Graduation

Application for graduation should be made by the end of the third week of the semester in which the student expects to receive the degree. To apply for graduation, the student is required to log into their AccessPlus account and submit the electronic Application for Graduation form. Before submitting this form, a student must have submitted and had approved by the Graduate College the electronic Program of Study and Committee (POSC) form. Also the student must have been fully admitted to a program and met the Graduate English requirement (for nonnative English speakers). Graduation will be delayed if the filing deadline for the “Application for Graduation” form is not met. If it becomes apparent that a student cannot graduate during the indicated term, they should withdraw the application through AccessPlus. The student must then submit a new application for the next planned term of graduation. All dissertation/thesis students will be charged a one-time, nonrefundable fee of \$145 by the Graduate College upon submission of the graduation application. This fee will be billed to each dissertation/thesis student’s university bill to cover dissertation/thesis review, processing, and technical assistance.

### 7.1.2 Final Oral Examinations

Thesis and non-thesis master’s students and all doctoral degree candidates must pass final oral examinations. The final oral examination must be held by the final oral examination deadline date for the semester in which the degree is granted. All coursework in the program of study must either be completed or in progress before the final oral examination can be scheduled. This examination is oral; it may also include a written component if specified by the student’s program of study (POS) committee.

Graduate students must register at Iowa State University for a minimum of one credit, or Examination Only (GR ST 681B) if no course work is needed, during the semester in which the final oral examination is taken. International students, even those in their final term, must be registered full-time or previously approved by the International Students and Scholars (ISS) to reduce their course load.

The following conditions must be met before the “Request for Final Oral Examination” form is submitted to the Graduate College:

- The student must have full admission status in a graduate degree program,
- The student's Program of Study and Committee (POSC) form with all coursework completed or in progress must be approved by the Graduate College no later than the semester before the final oral examination,
- The student must meet the [English requirement](#) (for nonnative English speakers),
- The student must not be on probation,
- The student should not exceed the time-to-degree limit (see [Chapter 4](#)),
- The student must have an approved “Report of Preliminary Oral Examination” form (for doctoral candidates only),

The student must have an "Application for Graduation" form submitted, The student must be registered for the term in which final oral examination is taken for a minimum of one credit or for Examination Only (GR ST 681B) if no course work is needed, The student's overall G.P.A. must be at or above a 3.00 This cumulative GPA reflects all courses listed on the graduate transcript, whether undergraduate or graduate level and regardless if listed on the POSC form or not. If the student does not have a 3.00 cumulative GPA, a petition must be filed with and approved by the Graduate College stating extenuating circumstances,

The student must wait a minimum of six months between taking the preliminary oral and final oral examinations (for doctoral candidates only).

The master's final oral examination is conducted after the thesis is finished, if a thesis is required. The thesis and nonthesis final oral examinations are comprehensive, oral, and may include written sections. The doctoral final oral examination, conducted after the dissertation is finished, is oral and often, but not always, limited to a defense of the dissertation. To receive the degree at the end of a given semester, the student must hold the final oral examination before the final oral examination deadline for the semester.

The candidate is responsible for initiating the "Request for Final Oral Examination" form, which must be submitted to the Graduate College at least **three** weeks before the examination. When a final oral examination includes a defense of the dissertation or thesis, the candidate must submit copies of the manuscript to members of the POS committee at least two weeks before the examination. A committee member who does not receive the dissertation or thesis at least two weeks before the final oral examination may cancel the examination.

Oral examinations are the primary ways the university assesses learning by graduate students. These examinations also gauge whether students' accomplishments meet expectations associated with earning advanced degrees. Oral examinations must involve the full engagement of all participants simultaneously, and unobstructed communication among participants is essential. Students and their committees should schedule oral examinations far in advance so that all participants are together on campus for the events whenever possible.

For the final oral examination, the student, in consultation with their committee chair(s), may decide on the examination modality (in person, remote, or hybrid). Similar to the preliminary oral examination guidance, the student and committee chair(s) should discuss the choice of modality with the committee, and for remote or hybrid meetings, arrange for facilities and equipment to ensure full video and clear communication. Determination of meeting modality must be determined when the student submits the Final Oral Examination Request form. If the chosen modality is not in person, the student must inform the Graduate College of the modality at the time the request form is submitted. Best practices for remote meetings may be found on the Graduate College website.

When one committee member cannot participate at a time that suits other participants, two options are available:

1. Complete the Request for Committee Substitution at the Preliminary or Final Oral Exam form before the examination to arrange for a temporary, substitute committee member who will serve with voting rights only for the examination that the permanent member cannot participate. This option can be used in cases in which the member's absence is planned, or in

- cases of emergency/unplanned absences. The substitute must fill the same role (be an inside vs. outside member) as the absent member.
2. The committee member may be replaced permanently on the committee by another member of the graduate faculty who can participate in the examination and commits to fulfilling all other remaining responsibilities of POS committee service. The new member must fill the same role (be an inside vs. outside member) as the member being replaced. To make this replacement, a new POSC should be routed and approved.

The Graduate College is responsible for maintaining a process for the committee members to report the outcome of the examination to the college. The reporting process must require that each committee member attest to their mode of participation, the degree to which full (audio and video) and clear communication was sustained throughout the examination, and to their participation throughout the entire examination. The Graduate College is expected to confer with committees and program DOGEs in cases where at least one committee member reports problems with communication or participation. The college may nullify examinations that do not meet expectations of the college, the DOGE, and all committee members.

#### Reporting Final Oral Examination Results

The “Report of the Final Oral Examination” form must be submitted to the Graduate College immediately after the examination. On this form the POS committee indicates whether the student

has passed the examination and may be granted the degree sought, must meet some conditions before the degree may be granted. These conditions are specified on the report form and will remain in effect until the major professor and/or committee, if specified, submits the [Preliminary or Final Oral Exam Conditions Met](#) form to the Graduate College. This form notifies the Graduate College that conditions have been satisfied and the degree may be granted, has not passed but the exam may be retaken. Two months must elapse before the exam may be retaken (a written explanation should be provided with the report form), or has not passed and the exam may not be retaken at a future date. The degree is denied (a written explanation should be provided with the report form).

In a final oral examination, if one member of the committee votes not to pass the candidate, each member of the committee must forward to the Dean of the Graduate College in writing a justification for their vote. If more than one member of the committee votes not to pass the student, the candidate does not pass the examination.

#### **7.1.3 Terminating a Student after the Master’s Degree**

This is sometimes referred to as a “terminal master’s” degree. Most master’s degrees are scholarly achievements in their own right. There are occasions when the program or the POS committee judges that a student should not go beyond the master’s level. In such cases, on the “Report of Final Oral Examination” form for the master’s degree, the major professor should note in the “Comments” section that this is to be a terminal degree. If requested on this form, a hold will be placed on future registration of that student. This notation does not appear on the student’s transcript.

#### **7.1.4 Registration for Students Not Required to Take Final Oral Examinations**

Graduate students who are not required to take a final oral examination should complete all required coursework on the POS prior to or during the term of graduation. Any transfer credits must be completed the term before the graduation term and follow normal transfer rules. ([Chapter 6](#)).

### **7.1.5 Dissertation or Thesis**

A doctoral dissertation must demonstrate conclusively the ability of the author to conceive, design, conduct, and interpret independent, original, and creative research. It must attempt to describe significant original contributions to the advancement of knowledge and must demonstrate the ability to organize, analyze, and interpret data. In most instances, a dissertation includes a statement of purpose, a review of pertinent literature, a presentation of methodology and results obtained, and a critical interpretation of conclusions in relation to the findings of others. When appropriate, it involves a defense of objectives, design, and analytical procedures. Dissertation research should be worthy of publication and should appear in appropriate professional journals or in book form.

A master's thesis is a scholarly composition that demonstrates the ability of the author to do independent and creative work. It explores in some depth a problem or issue related to the major field of study. Although considerable variations in format and style are acceptable, precise expression, logical construction, and meticulous attention to detail are essential. A thesis is required in all fields in which a master's degree is awarded, except where specific provision is made for a nonthesis degree program. A minimum of three research credits is required on every program of study for a thesis master's degree.

Since satisfactory completion of the dissertation or thesis can constitute one of the most gratifying experiences in graduate study, the document should reflect the highest standards of scholarship, serving as a measure of quality for the student, major professor, the program, and Iowa State University.

Responsibility for writing and editing of the dissertation or thesis rests with the student, under the supervision of the major professor, and not with the Graduate College. The Graduate College does not permit joint authorship of dissertations or theses. It is the responsibility of the major professor to supervise the preparation of preliminary and final drafts of the dissertation or thesis, so as to assure the highest level of quality when the student presents the dissertation or thesis to the committee for final approval. Please refer to the Graduate College Dissertation/Thesis website (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/current/thesis/>) for requirements, fees, and other pertinent information.

### **7.1.6 Creative Component**

Most nonthesis students must present substantial evidence of individual accomplishment (e.g., a special report, capstone course, integrated field experience, annotated bibliography, research project, design, or other creative endeavor). A minimum of two credits of such independent work is required on those programs of study (POS). Some programs require more credits; these are specified in the Iowa State University Catalog. The element of creative independent study must be explicitly identified on the POS. The format of the creative component is determined in cooperation with the POS committee. As with a thesis, a creative component should be submitted to members of the POS committee two weeks before the final oral examination.

### **7.1.7 Coursework Only Graduate Programs**

Some programs have professional master's programs that are approved as coursework only programs. These programs do not require a creative component or a thesis and will not have a final oral examination. For more information on creating one of these programs, refer to the guidelines available in [Appendix E](#).

### **7.1.8 Graduate Student Approval Form for Graduation**

The Graduate College requires final approval from the student's program with submission of a "[Graduate Student Approval Form](#)," signed by the major professor(s) and the DOGE(s), including co-major DOGE if applicable, after the student has passed the final oral examination and completed any necessary changes on the dissertation/thesis requested by the committee. A paper dissertation/thesis signature page is not required.

The form is electronically routed to the major professor or program to give to the student after the final oral exam request is received and approved by the Graduate College.

The Graduate Student Approval Form must be completely routed and approved by the published deadline each term.

After the Graduate Student Approval Form has been electronically signed, a dissertation/thesis student must upload their final dissertation/thesis to ProQuest. A non-thesis student must submit their creative component to the ISU Digital Repository.

Once the signed Graduate Student Approval Form has been received by the Graduate College, a student's dissertation, thesis, or creative component will be reviewed for final approval.

Final clearance of academic requirements will be made when current term grades have been submitted and evaluated by the Graduate College.

All incompletes from previous terms must be completed by the deadline for completion of the Graduate Student Approval Form. An incomplete, non-report, or failing grade that a student receives for the term of graduation will result in removal from that term's graduation list. The student will need to complete a new Application for Graduation and Graduate Student Approval Form for the new term of graduation.

If a conditional pass was recommended at the final oral examination, the major professor and the committee members, if so specified, must notify the Graduate College that the conditions have been met by submitting the [Preliminary or Final Oral Exam Conditions Met Memo](#) no later than the due date for the Graduate Student Approval Form for the term of graduation.

### **7.2 - Financial Obligations for Graduation**

Students who have outstanding financial obligations with the university are not permitted to receive a diploma until such obligations have been settled. This policy applies to U.S. and international students, to students who are sponsored by an agency outside the university, and to those who pay their own tuition and fees. Among the offices that place holds on graduation for financial reasons are the Loans Receivable Office, Accounts Receivable Office, Business Office/Contract Registration, and the International Education Services/Coordinated Billing System for Sponsored Students.

Every attempt is made to notify students (whose names appear on the preliminary graduation list prepared by the Office of the Registrar during the sixth or seventh week of the semester) that they must arrange for fee payment before graduation. When a student's education is financed through a

contract with a sponsoring agency, ISU honors this contract by allowing the student to charge tuition and fees to the sponsor's account and then bills the sponsor. In cases where the sponsor is one semester in arrears in making payments to the university, the student is notified and asked to assist in obtaining payment. Warning is given at this time both to the student and sponsor that the student may be prevented from further study and/or receipt of a diploma if tuition and fees are not paid by a specified date. If the sponsor does not respond by that deadline, the student's degree is withheld until payment is received (although the diploma and transcript bear the originally anticipated date of graduation, if payment is made within six months of graduation).

When sponsored students enroll at ISU, they are required to sign a statement of understanding regarding their responsibilities. Since the student is receiving the benefit of an education and degree, the student—not ISU—is the principal contractor with the sponsoring agency. If the sponsor fails to meet its financial commitment, the student is held liable for payment before a diploma will be awarded.

## **7.3 - Graduation Ceremony Arrangements**

Participation in the graduation ceremony requires the appropriate cap and gown, which can be purchased or rented at the University Bookstore. For doctoral graduates, ISU provides the doctoral hood at the ceremony, which must be returned either on stage after the ceremony or to the Graduation Requirements Office (210 Enrollment Services Center, 515-294-9372) the following Monday. All doctoral students must either rent or purchase from the University Bookstore custom doctoral regalia for the ceremony. Doctoral students are responsible for making arrangement with their major professor to present them at the graduation ceremony.

## **7.4 - Diplomas**

Approximately one month before graduation, the Graduation Requirements Office emails graduating students at their in-session email address requesting information about attending the Graduate ceremony and providing future addresses. Diplomas are mailed by the Graduation Requirements Office (210 Enrollment Services Center, 515-294-9372) to all students approximately three weeks after graduation. Postage must be paid by the student for overseas mailings.

## **7.5 - Certification of Degree**

If a student has not yet received a diploma but needs evidence of the completion of degree requirements, the Office of the Registrar can provide a letter of certification. This letter of certification should be requested in the Graduate College upon completion of the Graduate Student Approval Form and at least two days before the letter is needed.

## **7.6 - Registration Hold for Graduates**

When a student receives a graduate degree, a hold on future registration will automatically be placed on that student's record unless they have already been approved to pursue a concurrent degree or certificate. In order for this hold to be released so that the student may continue to register for courses, one of the following forms must be completed and sent to the Graduate College: A "[Transfer From One Major/Program/Department To Another](#)" if the student is continuing in a different master's or doctoral program; a "[Master's Student on PhD Track in Same Department](#)

" form if a student wishes to continue taking classes, or a "[Transfer From One Major/Program/Department to Nondegree](#)" form if a student wishes to continue taking classes but is not currently pursuing another degree (only a total of 9 semester hours taken as an undeclared nondegree student may be later transferred to a graduate degree program at ISU).

# Chapter 8 - Opportunities and Services Provided by the Graduate College

---

## 8.1 - Advising and Mentoring Opportunities for Graduate Students

### 8.1.1 All Students

Students are encouraged to make an appointment with an Assistant Dean to discuss issues or problems that may arise concerning their graduate student experience at ISU.

### 8.1.2 Underrepresented Students

The Graduate College offers financial assistance and educational support through cooperative ventures with all graduate programs involved in the recruitment and retention of underrepresented students. Through direct connections, the Graduate College makes an effort to address the needs of students from the time they accept the offer of admission through to the completion of their degree.

The Annual George A. Jackson Research Symposium, an event planned for graduate students by graduate students, is fully supported by the Graduate College. Each year, students gather to present their scholarship orally and in poster format to their peers, faculty, staff, and administrators. More information available at <https://george-jackson.grad-college.iastate.edu>.

The Graduate College fully supports the mission of the Black Graduate Student Association and the Latina/o Graduate Student Association as they work to enrich the university community for their members.

### 8.1.3 Nondegree-seeking Graduate Students

Iowa State provides the opportunity for qualified students to take graduate courses without being admitted to a specific degree program. Graduate College staff serves the role of faculty advisor for such students. Students are encouraged to discuss their future educational plans with Graduate College staff. When non-degree seeking students have academic difficulty, the students must present an acceptable plan for improving their grades to the Graduate College before they will be allowed to register for additional courses.

### 8.1.4 Future College Teachers

The Preparing Future Faculty Program provides advice, mentoring, credentialing and invaluable experience for students who plan to enter a career involving college teaching. For more information on the program, see the website for the [Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching](#).

## 8.2 - English Skills Improvement

### 8.2.1 Non-Native English-speaking Students

Non-native English speakers who do not have a bachelor's degree or advanced degree from ISU or a US institution, or who do not meet the exemption TOEFL or IELTS score level are required to take the English Placement test their first semester at Iowa State. For more information, see [Graduate English Requirements for Nonnative Speakers of English](#).

#### Native English-speaking Students

Iowa State does not test native English speakers for English skills. Use of the English language is expected to improve for all students as they progress toward their degrees. Students are expected to seek out opportunities for oral and written presentations and, if needed, to take formal coursework in these areas.

### 8.3 - Graduate and Professional Student Senate

The Graduate College works closely with the Graduate and Professional Student Senate. A member of the Graduate College staff serves as advisor to the Senate, and the Graduate College provides funds to augment student travel awards made by the Senate.

The Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) is a representative body that provides a formal channel for the expression of graduate student concerns and disperses significant funds derived from the graduate student activity fee. GPSS convenes at 7 p.m. in the Memorial Union on the last Monday of each month. Meetings are open to observers. Based on the enrollment figures for the previous fall semester, each program offering graduate study may elect one senator for each fraction of fifty graduate students enrolled, to a maximum of five senators.

All graduate students are encouraged to contact the GPSS about any problems relating to their studies at Iowa State. The GPSS has an office in G44 Memorial Union (515-294-8725), which is equipped to take phone calls twenty-four hours a day. It provides the following services for graduate and professional students:

Grant supplements available to graduate and professional students for research and travel to professional meetings through the Graduate College Professional Advancement Grant Program.

Grants to graduate student organizations.

Publication of a graduate student newsletter.

Sponsorship of graduate student social activities.

Joint sponsorship with the Graduate College of orientation programs for new graduate students and new teaching assistants at Iowa State.

Sponsorship with the Graduate College of the Graduate Achievement Program, which recognizes outstanding research and teaching by graduate students.

Information exchange with graduate student organizations across the nation through affiliation with the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students (NAGPS).

The GPSS website, <http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/gpss>, provides much useful information.

#### 8.3.1 Professional Advancement Grants

Limited funds from GPSS are available for supporting graduate students with their professional travel. Travel PAGs are divided into two categories depending on the student's involvement at the meeting: **Presenters** and **Non-Presenters (attending only)**.

For additional information on funding requirements and for the complete application process,

browse the GPSS website at <http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/gpss/>. Student travel requests (PAG forms) must reach the Graduate College (1137 Pearson Hall) at least two weeks prior to departure. One travel request per graduate student will be funded per fiscal year (July 1 to June 30).

## **8.4 - Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies**

Iowa State University offers an interdisciplinary master's program that appeals to students who need greater than normal flexibility in the design of their master's education. The [Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies Program](#) (IGS) offers a nontraditional alternative to conventional graduate programs. Rather than focusing on a single discipline or field of study, IGS emphasizes synthesis through interdisciplinary learning, centered on issues and concerns identified by individual students.

Within their areas of specialization, students enrolling in IGS take courses in three different graduate subject areas. Each subject area contributes a minimum of nine credits toward the total; research contributes another three to five credits toward the total 35 credits required for the degree. For further information contact the program's chair in the Graduate College at 294-4531.

Students in IGS may also select a 36-credit area of specialization in Community Development. The Community Development area of specialization, offered in collaboration with six other universities in the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance (IDEA), is offered exclusively through courses on the Web. For information about this specialization, please call the Great Plains IDEA coordinator at 294-6250.

## **8.5 - Mediation of Student Grievances**

When students and postdoctoral fellows become involved in disputes with their mentors and/or departments that cannot be resolved at the departmental level, the Graduate College will serve as informal or formal mediator depending on the particular circumstances. See Chapter 9 for detailed information.

## **8.6 - Non-departmental Home for Postdoctoral Fellows**

At Iowa State, postdoctoral training is considered part of the educational mission of the university. The Graduate College serves as non-departmental home for all postdoctoral fellows. The Graduate College is the lead unit for establishing postdoctoral benefits and provides a place for postdoctorals to come when employment and mentoring problems arise that cannot be resolved within the home department.

## **8.7 - Oversight of Interdepartmental Graduate Programs**

The Graduate College provides oversight and assistance to interdepartmental graduate programs, and serves as the administrative home for certain programs. For those programs administered by the Graduate College the Dean of the Graduate College serves the same role as the department chair for departmentally administered programs. The Graduate College promotes interdepartmental education, monitors the programs, and provides resources when possible.

# Chapter 9 - Graduate Student Rights & Responsibilities

---

## 9.1 - Introduction

Iowa State University is committed to the excellence of graduate education and seeks to provide and sustain an environment conducive to the sharing, extending, and critical examination of knowledge. Graduate students play an integral role in the capacity of the University to fulfill both its research and teaching mission. By their accomplishments and future promise, graduate students represent one of the University's best investments in producing a distinguished history and rich legacy. A graduate student experience marked by fairness and equitable treatment is the first step in forging a lifelong commitment to the University.

In turn, graduate students are expected to demonstrate a commitment to their academic endeavors, to make steady progress toward academic milestones and goals, and to demonstrate ethical practices at all times. In addition to the provisions of this handbook, all graduate students are governed and protected by:

the Board of Regents' Uniform Rules of Personal Conduct,  
the [Student Code of Conduct](#) that contain the Student Conduct Code and student judicial process,  
University regulations in the "[Student Life](#)" section of the Policy Library,  
for students on appointment, the "[Personnel, Conduct & Human Relations](#)" section of the Policy Library, department procedures, and the terms of sponsored research agreements that fund their assistantships or other employment,  
academic policies in the University Catalog,  
departmental/program rules and policies,  
grievance procedures described in this chapter,  
the University's [Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Stalking, and Intimate Partner Violence Involving Students Policy](#), and  
the University's [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#).

This Chapter does not replace these standards, nor does it constrain the procedures or sanctions provided by these policies.

Graduate students on assistantship appointment also are governed by the policies applicable to instruction, research, and the conduct of University business as found in the [Policy Library](#).

## 9.2 - Environment for Student Success

The Graduate College encourages students to take advantage of opportunities for professional development during their graduate studies, and the college expects all engaged in graduate education to adhere to the University's [Principles of Community](#).

As teaching, research, and administrative assistants, graduate students occupy an impressionable and susceptible position on campus. Graduate students rely on faculty and advisors to guide them

to meet realistic expectations. Except for justifiable circumstances, funding and tuition scholarships should not be denied to an assistantship appointee mid-contract. Graduate assistants who have performed well but cannot be reappointed due to budget shortfalls should be informed in a timely manner to allow the student to seek alternative funding.

As developing professionals, graduate students expect fair treatment and constructive feedback from faculty and advisors with an understanding that graduate students may one day be peers. Graduate students should expect reasonable confidentiality in their communications with faculty and advisors. Graduate student performance and behavior should only be discussed for professional purposes in a collegial manner, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA).

Graduate students should feel free to engage in an exchange of ideas, self-expression, and the challenging of beliefs and customs without concern that they may be treated or spoken to in an unprofessional manner. As members of the University community, graduate students have the right to express their own views, but must also take responsibility for respecting the same rights of others and acting in accordance with the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and other applicable policies.

Incoming graduate students shall be provided graduate program degree requirements. When requirements subsequently change, a student may choose between meeting the requirements in place when they matriculated or adhering to the updated requirements, as approved by the student's Program of Study (POS) committee.

Graduate students on assistantships are expected to be provided a safe and clean space to conduct their duties.

Like all researchers, graduate students who sufficiently contribute to research activities have the right to be credited at an appropriate level (co-authorship, acknowledgement, etc.) on related publications and presentations, consistent with the ethical standards in their fields of study and University guidelines on authorship.

Graduate assistants have the right to request a change in assistantship appointment supervisor. These requests should be reserved for extreme situations, and the student is expected to make every reasonable effort to resolve the issue(s) with the supervisor in a professional manner. If the student does not feel comfortable discussing the situation directly with the supervisor, the student should contact the program director of graduate education (DOGE) and/or department chair. If a request is made, the program DOGE and/or department chair is expected to make a reasonable effort to find an alternative assignment. If no solution is available at the department/program level, the next consideration should be made at the Graduate College. However, the graduate student should be aware that funding and alternative assignments are not guaranteed. A change to the supervisor for an assistantship does not affect the composition of the POS committee.

## **9.3 - Resources and Best Practices to Promote Graduate Student Success**

The success of a graduate student often depends on the effectiveness of faculty advisors/mentors and a strong, professional student-faculty relationship. The Graduate College promotes student success via tools and services for both students and faculty that are updated frequently and publicized.

### **9.3.1 Resources for Graduate Students to Succeed**

Primary tools and resources include:

required orientation for new members of the graduate faculty,  
onboarding of new graduate students,  
checklist of discussion topics for newly-partnered students and major professors,  
annual evaluations of doctoral (required) and master's (encouraged) students,  
templates for student individual development plans,  
guides, articles, and workshops on advising graduate students,  
services for students and faculty at Iowa State University's Ombuds Office,  
communication and career services.

### **9.3.2 Best Practices for Graduate Assistant Supervisors**

Supervisors of graduate assistants should consider the following practices that are intended to contribute to productive assistantship experiences.

Create fair and equitable educational environments with information about the benefits, terms, and conditions of the appointment clearly communicated at the outset of the appointment;  
Clearly define and articulate the nature and scope of tasks associated with the assistantship appointment;  
Monitor demands on the student's time commitments and their availability to meet tasks related to an assistantship appointment;  
Define tasks that are consistent with the student's academic success;  
In partnership with the International Students and Scholars Office, assist in verifying that a student's immigration status allows for an assistantship appointment;  
Provide accurate information regarding projected financial support for the duration of the graduate student's education and training upon entry into an academic program. Should this support change at any time during the course of study, graduate students should be informed in writing in a timely manner;  
Provide a safe, clean, and appropriate office and/or laboratory space commensurate with the responsibilities of the student;  
Provide thorough training to ensure success as research, teaching, and/or administrative assistants.

Assistantship appointments are defined in [Chapter 3, Subsection 3.2 of the Graduate College Handbook](#). For half-time appointments, the university guideline is that 20 hours per week should be spent on assistantship duties, with slight variability depending on whether it is a research, teaching, or administrative appointment. It is understood that these hours include only duties necessary for completion of research, teaching, and/or administrative appointment responsibilities, excluding research time leading to a thesis or dissertation.

Supervisors are encouraged to provide written performance reviews for graduate research, teaching, and administrative assistants on a regular basis and in a fair, transparent, and confidential manner, especially when requested by the graduate student. Results of performance reviews should be shared with the graduate student, who should be given the opportunity and guidance to redress claims and/or remedy deficiencies in performance of assistantship duties.

Graduate assistants should be allowed to attend seminars, workshops, and conferences to support their professional development unless participation will interfere with meeting expectations related

to assistantships.

## 9.4 - Specific Policies and Laws of Interest to Graduate Students

The following policies and laws apply to graduate students or assistants:

**Student Code of Conduct.** All students, including graduate students, are subject to the [Student Code of Conduct](#) that contain the Code of Conduct. Behaviors not permitted include: academic misconduct, abuse of controlled substances, assault or threat of assault, bribery, contempt, disruption of the rights of others, violation of fire or safety regulations, endangerment, gambling, harassment, hazing, misuse of computers, false identification, misuse of keys, sexual abuse, theft, threat of harm, unlawful entry, possession of weapons, and violation of law.

**Academic Misconduct.** Instances of suspected academic misconduct in research should be reported to the Office of the Vice President for Research. Applicable rules and procedures appear in Section 7.2 of the [Faculty Handbook](#). For issues regarding conduct of research, graduate students are held to the same standards as faculty. Instances of graduate students suspected of academic misconduct not involving research should be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs in the Dean of Students Office. See the [Student Code of Conduct](#) for applicable rules and procedures.

**Discrimination and Harassment Policy.** The University's policies on discrimination and harassment apply to graduate students. See the University's [Policy Library](#). Issues and concerns of discrimination and harassment should be reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity.

**Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Stalking, and Intimate Partner Violence Involving Students.** The University's policies and procedures on sexual misconduct apply to graduate students. See the University's [Policy Library](#). Issues and concerns relating to sexual misconduct should be reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity.

**Conflicts of Interest.** Several provisions of law and policy related to conflicts of interest apply to graduate students (see the [Policy Library, Personnel, Conduct & Human Relations Section; Faculty Handbook](#), Section 7.2, 8.2). As required by federal regulations, the University has adopted a conflict of interest policy affecting employees who have outside business commitments. Graduate assistants, especially those on research appointments, with significant private business arrangements must comply with this policy. University facilities should not be used for private commercial purposes without approval.

**Statement on Professional Ethics.** Graduate students are expected to comply with the Faculty Statement on Professional Ethics (see [Faculty Handbook](#), Section 7.2).

**Compliance with Research Standards.** Graduate students conducting research must comply with the University's procedures for human subjects review, animal care and use, use of radioactive materials, prior approval of certain recombinant DNA experiments, and various safety requirements (see [Faculty Handbook](#), Section 8.3).

**Ownership of Intellectual Property and Data.** Iowa State University subscribes to the general principle that the intellectual property created by a student is generally owned by that student. However, student work often owes much to faculty initiative. In addition, the provisions of sponsored research grants that fund research appointments may affect the ownership of intellectual property. Students must be aware of these restrictions on ownership of intellectual property as provided by [University policies on patents and copyrights](#). Graduate students will be given an opportunity to use data resulting from sponsored research grants; however, that opportunity is subject to the University's obligations with respect to those grants. The University has a general obligation to publish the results of scientific investigation.

Consequently, the student's right to control data collected under sponsorship is not exclusive. Unless prior approval for a temporary embargo is secured from the Graduate College, theses and dissertations are made publically available upon their final approval by the Graduate College.

**Tutoring.** A graduate teaching assistant may not tutor a course that they are teaching. In addition, graduate students must check with their department or graduate major before entering into a tutoring agreement to learn whether additional regulations exist.

**International Travel.** All graduate and professional students traveling internationally and using funds administered by Iowa State University to pay for any portion of the trip are required to register for the university-provided CISI (Cultural Insurance Services International) international travel insurance.

## 9.5 - Student Grievance Procedures

Several formal avenues of appeal are available to graduate students depending on the nature of the grievance. Outlined in this section are procedures designed to handle grievances concerning grades and instruction and for grievances related to scholarly and professional competence. Other appeal routes are available within the student disciplinary process and for inappropriate termination of assistantship appointments. All procedures start at the department or program level and lead through a series of steps to higher appeal channels. If a student's complaint relates to a general policy, they may also bring the matter to the attention of the GPSS either by contacting a senator or the GPSS president. Students also have the right to contact the Dean of the Graduate College about the grievance.

The following grievance procedures may not be used when students are afforded due process hearings or appeals as provided by University policy. For example, these grievance processes are not available for failure to meet clearly stated academic requirements, for violations of the [Student Code of Conduct](#) handled by the Student Conduct Administrator, or where a research misconduct proceeding has been initiated by the Research Integrity Officer. A student may withdraw from any student-initiated grievance procedures outlined below by writing a signed and dated letter to the Dean of the Graduate College.

### 9.5.1 Grievances about Grades and Instruction

If a graduate student contends that a faculty member, in their academic capacity as a course instructor, has behaved unfairly or unprofessionally, a grievance may be reviewed through the procedure described below. This procedure may not be invoked more than one year following completion of the course. An appeal of a course grade must be initiated by midterm of the semester following the student's completion of the course.

If the dispute or perceived violation does not directly involve the graduate student's major professor, the graduate student is encouraged to contact their major professor.

The graduate student may contact the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) by contacting the senator representing the student's academic unit or the GPSS president. The GPSS will represent the best interests of the student and may serve as a liaison between the student and the appropriate University administration and offices.

The graduate student may contact Student Assistance staff within the Dean of Student's Office.

Students may contact the Dean of the Graduate College to pursue informal dispute resolution.

Graduate students are encouraged to contact the Ombuds Office for unbiased and neutral assessment for informal resolution of a dispute.

Concerns of discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual misconduct do not fall within these procedures, and instead should be reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity as soon as possible.

Before initiating a formal appeal, the student may wish to discuss the situation informally with a staff member of the Dean of Students Office for advice on how to deal most effectively with the problem.

Academic grievances should be resolved, if at all possible, with the individual instructor involved. If a resolution cannot be reached, the student should discuss the grievance with the instructor's department chair and submit it in writing to them. The department chair will discuss the grievance with the instructor involved and/or refer it to a department grievance committee. The department chair should respond in writing to the student within five class days.

If a resolution of the grievance cannot be made with the department chair, the student may appeal in writing to the dean of the instructor's college. In cases involving Graduate College policy or procedure, the appeal should be made to the Dean of the Graduate College. The dean will hear the explanations of the department chair and instructor and should respond in writing within ten class days of receipt of the written notice of appeal.

If the grievance cannot be resolved with the dean, the student may forward a written appeal to the Provost, who will convene a quorum of the Committee to Review Student Grievances to hear the appeal within ten class days. Within five class days following the hearing, the Provost will make a decision regarding the grievance and transmit this decision to the student, dean, department chair, and instructor involved. An appeal of the decision of the Provost may be made to the President of the University.

The time limit specified at each level may be extended by mutual agreement of all parties concerned.

## **9.5.2 Grievances Related to Scholarly and Professional Competence**

Judgment of professional competence as demonstrated in qualifying, preliminary and final oral examinations, and other clearly stated program requirements concerning competence in the field of study is the responsibility of the academic program and POS committee.

If a student contends that their scholarly or professional competence has not been evaluated fairly, they should first discuss the complaint with the person or persons most directly involved in the matter: a faculty member, major professor, POS committee, DOGE, or department chair. If these discussions are unsuccessful and further adjudication is desired, the student may submit the grievance, which must be in writing, to the appropriate program grievance committee. If no such committee exists, the DOGE (or department chair when appropriate) will appoint one. The committee should respond in writing within fifteen (15) class days. If the grievance occurs within the last 15 class days of the term, the committee should respond expeditiously, within 15 class days or no later than the beginning of the next term.

The following procedures apply:

Each program offering graduate study must form a grievance committee (of at least four

members) composed of equal numbers of representatives from the program graduate faculty and graduate students. The grievance committee may be a standing committee or may be an ad hoc committee, depending upon the program.

The DOGE (or department chair) may serve as a nonvoting chairperson of the grievance committee.

Written records of the committee shall include the complaint itself, the disposition of the complaint, and any other information the committee deems pertinent. Written records of the program grievance committee are available for study by the student filing the complaint and those making decisions at higher levels in the event of further appeal.

The program grievance committee deliberates in private except in instances where parties contend the issue under consideration is of general interest and importance. In those cases, the committee may hold public meetings with the consent of both parties involved in the complaint.

The graduate student (or chosen representative or advisor) and the other party (or chosen representative or advisor) have the right to present their cases orally to the grievance committee.

The committee shall provide a written recommendation regarding the grievance to the DOGE (or department chair) of the student's major and to the student.

The DOGE (or department chair) will then provide a written response from the graduate program to the student.

A graduate student unsatisfied with program action may appeal in writing to the Dean of the Graduate College within 15 calendar days. Upon receipt of the written appeal, the Dean forms a grievance appeal committee to review both substantive and procedural issues of the matter. The committee is constituted as follows:

One voting member selected by the Dean of the Graduate College from among the faculty membership of the Graduate Council.

One voting member selected by the relevant college dean.

One voting member selected by the Executive Committee of the Graduate and Professional Student Senate.

The committee may, in addition, request the participation of one nonvoting member selected by the relevant graduate program from among those faculty members who had not participated in the original program grievance procedures. The role of this nonvoting member is to provide consultation to the committee or student on matters of professional competence. The Dean of the Graduate College will respond to the student within 10 calendar days, and the committee will attempt to reach a final determination within 30 calendar days. It is understood, however, that this deadline is sometimes impossible to meet because of a need to interview key persons who are not available within the 30-day time frame. In such cases, every reasonable effort will be made to expedite the review, and the plaintiff shall be informed of the delay in writing.

Provisions of program grievance committees regarding the keeping of written records, opening of proceedings, and oral presentations also apply to the grievance appeal committee. Each student presenting an appeal is expected to participate actively and responsively in the grievance process at this and each level of the procedure. The grievance appeal committee submits its recommendation regarding the appeal to the Dean of the Graduate College for action. Graduate student(s) still unsatisfied with the disposition of the grievance—on matters of procedure only—may appeal in writing to the Provost and, if necessary, to the President of the University.

## 9.6 - Maintaining Academic Standing

Active enrollment status is achieved by admission either to a graduate program or to non-degree-seeking status and admission to the Graduate College. If active status is lost, then the individual is transferred to an inactive status.

Students lose active status due to any of the circumstances described below.

- Lack of registration for two consecutive years or for four continuous semesters (excluding summer),
- Resignation or withdrawal from a graduate program,
- Dismissal from a graduate program for lack of progress,
- Dismissal for failure to maintain academic standing,
- Dismissal as an outcome of the student judicial process,
- Failure of the final oral exam or the preliminary exam with no opportunity to retake,
- Failure to complete remaining degree requirements in a timely manner after a final oral examination.

The Graduate College may change a student to inactive status directly for any of these reasons, or the DOGE and the major professor, if there is one, may submit a written request that provides justification to the Graduate College. Appeals and grievances for this action should follow those outlined in the Graduate College Handbook.

Graduate students not in active graduate status cannot register for courses. Reinstatement to active status requires approval of a graduate program or formal acceptance to non-degree seeking status. Either action also requires approval of the Graduate College. Reinstatement requires submission of a "[Reinstatement to Active Status](#)" form and the written approval of a graduate program and the Graduate College. When considering reinstatement, both the program and the Graduate College may consider the student's overall fitness for continued studies, including information about the student's conduct, employment, and education since the student's last enrollment. A student who is denied reinstatement may request that the denial be reviewed by the Provost. Transferring from one program to another does not affect active status but must be approved by the receiving program and the Graduate College. If reinstatement involves a change of program, the [procedure for transferring to another graduate program](#) also applies.

If a graduate student does not maintain a cumulative 3.0 grade point average (GPA) on all coursework taken (including undergraduate courses), exclusive of research credit, they may be placed on academic probation by the Dean of the Graduate College. Probationary status for more than two years is grounds for dismissal for failure to maintain academic standing. A new, degree-seeking graduate student with less than a 3.0 GPA at the end of the first semester at Iowa State University will be given a one-term grace period to improve the GPA to at least 3.0. These students will receive a warning letter from the Graduate College. While on academic probation a student will not be admitted to candidacy for a degree, and if appointed to a graduate assistantship, the student may be denied a tuition scholarship by their academic college.

To ensure that registration does not take place without a review by faculty in the program, the Graduate College places a hold on future registrations by a student on probation. Before a student on probation registers for each term, there must be a review of their record, and the DOGE or major professor must recommend whether the Graduate College should permit further registration.

Before graduation is approved by the Graduate College, the student must complete all courses listed on the program of study with a minimum grade of C and have achieved a cumulative 3.0 GPA or greater in all courses taken as a graduate student, including undergraduate courses and courses not on the program of study.

## **9.7 - Dismissal for Failure to Maintain Academic Standing**

Under certain circumstances it may be necessary to dismiss a graduate student from an academic program. If a student is unable to transfer to another program, this will lead to the loss of active graduate status. One or more of the following are grounds for dismissal for failure to maintain academic standing.

- Failure to maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average,
- Failure to pass any required examinations (this includes qualifying, preliminary, or final oral) within the time frame designated by the relevant academic program,
- Failure to complete any required coursework, including 599 and 699 credits, within the time frame designated by the relevant academic program,
- Failure to demonstrate scholarly and professional competence,
- Failure to comply with the ethical standards of the profession for students engaged in programs leading to professional licensure,
- Academic probationary status for two or more years,
- Failure to identify a major professor in the time frame specified by the major program or the Graduate College,
- Failure to comply with graduate student responsibilities or requirements discussed in this handbook or in the relevant program's student handbook,
- A finding by a Research Misconduct Investigatory Committee constituted under the University's [Research Misconduct Policy](#),
- Failure to meet the specific requirements of the program of study as established and published by the academic department,
- Failure to meet behavioral expectations of the Student Conduct Code.

### **Procedure for Dismissal:**

Informal conference. If fitness of a graduate student to remain in the relevant academic program is questioned, an informal conference shall be held between the appropriate departmental or program officials (including the major professor or academic advisor) and the graduate student to attempt to resolve the matter.

Informal Conference with the Dean of the Graduate College is optional. If the situation cannot be resolved at the informal conference, either party may bring the problem to the attention of the Dean of the Graduate College. In attempting to resolve the matter, the Dean of the Graduate College will review the case, meet with the parties concerned, and attempt to identify alternatives to dismissal.

In cases where the steps outlined above do not lead to a resolution or acceptable improvement, the DOGE of the academic program shall notify the student in writing of dismissal. This notification shall include a clear statement of the reasons for dismissal and the effective date of the dismissal.

### **Appeal Procedure:**

If dismissal occurs as a result of institutional action, such as dismissal by the Student Conduct Administrator, or the Dean of the Graduate College after a finding of Research Misconduct, the appeal procedures of the specific policy shall apply and the graduate student shall not be able to invoke the appeal procedures below.

If dismissal is based on failure to demonstrate scholarly or professional competence, the graduate student may appeal to their program grievance committee. The procedure is described in the section of this handbook entitled "[Grievances Related to Scholarly and Professional Competence.](#)"

If the dismissal is for reasons other than scholarly or professional competence, the student may appeal in writing directly to the Dean of the Graduate College. Depending on the circumstances, the dean may rule directly or may establish an ad hoc Graduate College appeals committee, composed of equal numbers of students and faculty members serving on the Graduate Council (see [Appendix A](#)). The ad hoc appeals committee submits its recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate College for action.

## **9.8 - Expectations for Assistantship Appointments**

Every graduate assistantship appointment has associated with it a clearly stated expectation of educational duties to be performed. The supervisor has responsibility to see that this obligation is met. A supervisor's judgment that work is unsatisfactory can lead to termination of the appointment following due process as outlined below. Sometimes the duties of a student's assistantship are closely tied to a thesis or dissertation project. In such cases, the distinction between a supervisor and mentor is difficult to make. Students typically are expected to work long hours on their own research/scholarship.

When disputes arise concerning assistantship duties, performance, or working conditions, the student and supervisor will meet and attempt to resolve the issues. Understandings must be formalized in writing. If the parties cannot resolve the disputes, they should bring the matter first to the program director (DOGE) and next to the chair of the department through which the appointment is made. If the DOGE and department chair are unsuccessful in resolving the disputes, the issue may be brought to the Dean of the Graduate College as outlined below.

Graduate assistantship appointments are made for a term not to exceed one fiscal year, although graduate programs may convey an intent for longer-term commitments. Terms of each appointment are formalized in a [Letter of Intent \(LOI\)](#). Satisfactory performance of the assistantship and academic work will normally make a student eligible for reappointment. However, departments/programs have the authority not to reappoint. Departments/programs have an obligation to provide a written notification as early as possible if a reappointment is not to be made. A student who is not reappointed may ask for review by the Graduate College after having discussed the matter with the appointing department chair. Failure to reappoint is not considered termination and therefore is not subject to the policies given below. Assistantship support for more than seven years is strongly discouraged, and departments or programs may set limits on the number of semesters or years that a student is eligible for assistantship support.

Departments retain the right to reassign graduate assistants to other duties so long as there is no loss of pay or shortening of the term of the original appointment. Due consideration should be given to the effect of reassignment on a graduate assistant's progress as a student.

## **9.9 - Termination of Assistantship Appointments**

A graduate assistantship appointment may be terminated for either of two reasons: 1) for cause, or 2) loss of funding. The guidelines and process addressing termination given here apply only to graduate assistantship appointments that have been formalized by an LOI and do not apply to statements of intent for longer-term commitments.

#### Grounds for Early Termination for Cause Include:

Failure to maintain minimum registration as a student (see [Chapter 2](#)),  
Neglect of duty or incompetence,  
Persistent refusal to follow reasonable advice and counsel of the faculty supervisor in carrying out assistantship obligations,  
Failure to maintain academic standing,  
Failure to comply with assistantship responsibilities as set forth in this handbook, departmental/program rules and regulations governing assistantships, or the terms of sponsored research agreements that fund the assistantship,  
A finding by a Research Misconduct Investigatory Committee constituted under the [University's Research Misconduct Policy](#),  
Personal conduct seriously prejudicial to the University, including violation of the Regents' Uniform Rules of Personal Conduct, state or federal law, [Student Code of Conduct](#), and General University Regulations discussed in the "Student Life" section of the [Policy Library](#)

Procedure for Termination due to Cause (removal from the payroll cannot be accomplished until the termination procedure has been completed, but interim remedial measures short of removal from the payroll may be implemented on an interim basis):

*Informal Conference.* The first step in attempting to resolve the problem is an informal meeting between the graduate assistant and their immediate supervisor to discuss the performance concerns.

*Formal Conference.* If performance concerns persist, a formal conference shall be held between the graduate assistant, the immediate supervisor, and the DOGE or designated appointee for the purpose of resolving the matter to the mutual satisfaction of all parties. A summary of this meeting should be provided in writing to all parties.

*Formal Ruling.* When a mutually satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the department chair of the appointing department or designee shall investigate the issues and provide their decision in writing regarding the matter. The graduate assistant must receive at least thirty calendar days' notice if the appointment is to be terminated.

#### Appeal Procedure:

If a graduate assistant wishes to challenge the decision of the department/program chair, the termination may be appealed in writing to the Dean of the Graduate College within five calendar days of notification of the results of the chair's decision (see the allowable grounds for appeal in section 9.11). The Graduate Dean may rule directly or may establish an ad hoc Graduate College Appeals Committee, composed of equal numbers of students and faculty members of the Graduate Council. The ad hoc judiciary must establish whether proper procedure was followed and whether the claims of the department/program have merit. The ad hoc appeals committee submits its recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate College for action.

A graduate research assistant whose appointment is terminated for cause, or who is reassigned,

should consult with their major professor regarding use of research data gathered prior to termination or reassignment. Active graduate status is not affected by changes in assistantship appointment.

#### Early Termination due to Loss of Funding:

Graduate assistants may appeal early termination for reason of loss of funding to the Dean of the Graduate College if they believe loss of funding was used as a pretext for improper termination of the appointment. Review by the Dean of the Graduate College may include a presentation of written arguments and documentation from the graduate assistant and the department. The Dean of the Graduate College shall give a reasonable time to submit such information and may rule solely on the written arguments and documentation.

If funding has been withdrawn by the sponsor of research from which the graduate assistant is being paid, the assistant shall receive at least thirty calendar days' prior notice of termination. The department shall make a good-faith effort to find alternate funding to maintain a graduate assistant appointment.

### **9.10 - Inability to Perform Duties**

Accidents or unanticipated extenuating circumstances may prevent a graduate student from performing assistantship duties. When this is a short-term situation and there is documentation that the student will be able to return to duties in a reasonable amount of time, financial assistance can be requested from academic colleges and/or the Graduate College. The intent would be to allow for temporary replacement help without reducing the assistant's stipend and benefit support. If this is a long-term situation, a different procedure for withdrawal should be followed as outlined in [Chapter 2](#).

### **9.11 - Discipline of Graduate Assistants Other than by Termination**

Departments/programs may issue reprimands, warnings, or suspensions to graduate assistants for lesser violations of the same grounds for which dismissal may be initiated. Such actions may be grieved as a matter related to scholarly and professional competence using specified procedures described in this handbook.

### **9.12 - Behavioral Expectations**

The University strives to provide a safe, harassment-free environment for study and for work. The [Violence-Free University Policy](#) applies to graduate students. Students who exhibit violent or threatening behavior, or a student who harasses others, is in violation of this policy and/or the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and may be subject to disciplinary action. A student may be placed on interim suspension when it is determined that they present a significant danger to safety or property. Dismissal from the University may result following the required review per policy. Students are also subject to medical withdrawal in accordance with the University Initiated [Withdrawal Policy](#) found in the Catalog.

When a student seeks to transfer between programs, or seeks to be reinstated to active status, the Graduate College has the right to seek and disclose information related to violent, threatening, or disruptive behavior in determining whether to accept or approve the transfer, admission, or reinstatement of a student.



# Chapter 10 - Postdoctoral Appointments

---

## 10.1 - Definition

The term “Postdoctoral Scholar” is used to identify those individuals who have received their doctoral degree or equivalent doctorate (e.g. M.D., DVM, DO) and who have opted to pursue further research and/or scholarly training in preparation for a full-time independent career in academia and/or research typically, but not exclusively, in the sciences.

## 10.2 - Appointment

This appointment is viewed as a temporary position, typically of two or three years duration, with the primary purpose of engaging the Postdoctoral Scholar in substantial research or scholarship under the supervision of a faculty mentor and publication of the results of their scholarship during the time of the appointment.

The majority of the appointment is to be focused on research and scholarship. In some circumstances, the Postdoctoral Scholar appointee may also teach. In all cases more than half the appointment must be devoted to scholarship and in no case may teaching responsibilities exceed  $\frac{3}{4}$  the annual teaching responsibility of an assistant professor in that department.

The Postdoctoral Scholar is recognized as an ISU Job Family of Post Doc/Trainee, who is appointed at least half-time and is considered to be in preparation for an independent career. For this reason, the Postdoctoral Scholar condition of appointment is intermediate between that of graduate assistants and faculty or professional and scientific employees.

The Graduate College allows a maximum of five years in this type of appointment. Extension of the appointment for more than five years is extremely rare and is allowed only for the most extraordinary circumstances. Requests to extend a postdoctoral appointment beyond five years must be made at least six months prior to the end of the fifth year and preferably sooner.

The salary/stipend level at which a postdoctoral scholar is compensated should recognize the fact that the individual has earned a doctoral degree, as well as salary/stipend levels within the discipline of the scholar. The Graduate College sets a minimum salary/stipend level, but does not set a maximum level. Salary/stipend increases are typically only permitted at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1).

Postdoctoral Scholar describes a variety of appointment positions: Postdoctoral Fellow, Postdoctoral Research Associate, and Postdoctoral Trainee.

## 10.3 - Performance Management

At the beginning of the appointment of a Postdoctoral Scholar, the Principal Investigator (PI)/Supervisor shall establish clear expectations in writing ([template](#)), at a minimum, for: (a) reporting duties (frequency, level of detail, format, etc.); (b) level of performance; and (c) professional conduct. The Postdoctoral Scholar is thereafter responsible for meeting (or exceeding)

these expectations. The PI/Supervisor is responsible for following up and providing feedback on a regular basis with the Postdoctoral Scholar to ensure they are meeting expectations.

A practical first step is for the PI/Supervisor to work with a new Postdoctoral Scholar to establish an Individual Development Plan (IDP) within the first three months of the appointment. The [Individual Development Plan](#) is an interactive, web-based tool that serves as a constructive means of communication between the PI and Postdoctoral Scholar, and it also provides a planning process that identifies both professional development needs and career objectives for the Postdoctoral Scholar. Reviewing the IDP on an annual basis – during an Annual Review – is a good practice.

A written, annual review is required for all Postdoctoral Scholars who are continuing beyond the initial one-year appointment. The Graduate College provides an [annual review template](#) for this purpose.

If a Postdoctoral Scholar is unsatisfactorily performing their duties, the PI/Supervisor shall promptly attempt to address these issues via informal coaching and mentoring. The PI/Supervisor shall document such efforts.

If informal coaching and mentoring does not improve the performance, the PI/Supervisor shall develop an Action Plan. The Action Plan shall include: (a) a detailed description of all relevant performance deficiencies and prior attempts to address the performance deficiencies; (b) specific steps and improvements which the Postdoctoral Scholar must satisfy; (c) a defined timeline in which the steps and improvements must be satisfactorily made; and (d) a list of University resources (e.g., CELT, online training, EAP, etc.) which may be helpful to the Postdoctoral Scholar.

A copy of the completed Action Plan shall be sent to the respective Department Chair and to the Graduate College Dean. The PI/Supervisor shall meet with the Postdoctoral Scholar to present/discuss the Action Plan. Regular meetings between the PI/Supervisor and Postdoctoral Scholar are expected during the period of the Action Plan. The PI/Supervisor is responsible for documenting progress (or lack thereof) during the period of the Action Plan.

If the Action Plan is not successful after a period of sixty (60) days, a written Notice of Unsatisfactory Performance may be given to the Postdoctoral Scholar and the dismissal process may begin (see below for the required procedure for Notice of Dismissal).

## 10.4 - Dismissal

### 10.4.1. Dismissal due to Unsatisfactory Performance

If a PI/Supervisor determines dismissal of the Postdoctoral Scholar is appropriate due to performance deficiencies and after the minimum sixty (60) days Action Plan period, the PI/Supervisor shall first consult with the Department Chair and then contact the Dean of the Graduate College for review/approval of the request prior to issuing a Notice of Dismissal.

A Notice of Dismissal shall be given with a minimum of one month's notice, unless the Postdoctoral Scholar's continued presence on campus poses potential harm to the University as determined based upon a review by the Graduate College Dean. The Department Chair, and Graduate College Dean shall be copied on the Notice of Dismissal.

At the time of a dismissal, the Postdoctoral Scholar will turn in all ISU keys and property. The Postdoctoral Scholar has an obligation to leave with the PI/Supervisor all notebooks and data in a condition that will allow continuation of the project.

The Postdoctoral Scholar has the right to appeal the dismissal (see below for Appeals Process).

#### **10.4.2. Dismissal due to Misconduct**

The PI/Supervisor shall immediately report to their Department Chair any and all allegations pertaining to misconduct alleged to have been committed by a Postdoctoral Scholar.

The PI/Supervisor also has the responsibility to immediately report allegations pertaining to possible [research misconduct](#), criminal activity, unlawful harassment or discrimination, or sexual misconduct alleged to have been committed by a Postdoctoral Scholar to the appropriate office, such as the Equal Opportunity Office for any allegations regarding unlawful harassment or discrimination, or sexual misconduct.

A Postdoctoral Scholar who has committed misconduct may be dismissed by the PI/Supervisor upon a formal investigation and with approval of the Graduate College Dean. The PI/Supervisor shall notify the Department Chair and contact the Graduate College to begin the process as soon as the alleged misconduct is reported or becomes known. As used herein, misconduct may include, but is not limited to, research misconduct, acts of violence or threats of violence, harassing or discriminatory conduct, sexual harassment, theft, conviction of criminal acts, plagiarism, and other behavior or conduct of a serious nature. After the alleged misconduct is investigated and a request for dismissal is approved, the PI/Supervisor shall provide a written Notice of Dismissal to the Postdoctoral Scholar (with a copy provided to the Department Chair, the College Dean, and the Graduate College Dean).

At the time of a dismissal, the Postdoctoral Scholar will turn in all ISU keys and property. The Postdoctoral Scholar has an obligation to leave with the PI/Supervisor all notebooks and data in a condition that will allow continuation of the project.

The Postdoctoral Scholar has the right to appeal the dismissal (see below for Appeals Process).

#### **10.4.3. Dismissal due to Loss of Funding**

If funding has been withdrawn by the sponsor of research from which the postdoctoral scholar is being paid, the postdoc shall receive at least thirty calendar days' prior notice of termination if they are domestic and at least sixty calendar days' prior notice of termination if they are international.

The department shall make a good-faith effort to find alternate funding to maintain a postdoctoral scholar appointment.

Postdoctoral scholars may appeal early termination for reason of loss of funding to the Dean of the Graduate College if they believe loss of funding was used as a pretext for improper termination of the appointment. Review by the Dean of the Graduate College may include a presentation of written arguments and documentation from the postdoctoral scholar and the department. The Dean of the Graduate College shall give a reasonable time to submit such information and may rule solely on the written arguments and documentation.

### **10.5 - Appeals Process for Postdoctoral Scholar Dismissal**

A Postdoctoral Scholar who has been dismissed based on either Unsatisfactory Performance or Misconduct has the right to appeal the dismissal via the formal grievances option outlined in the Graduate College Handbook.

If no appeal is submitted within ten (10) business days, the Postdoctoral Scholar waives the right to appeal, and the dismissal will be processed by the PI/Supervisor's employing unit.

## 10.6 - Postdoctoral Scholars Dispute/Complaint Resolution

This policy assures Postdoctoral Scholars a prompt and impartial review and consideration of disputes and/or complaints that may arise in the work environment while recognizing the University's interests.

Certain types of concerns/complaints are to be addressed through separate, existing policies. This policy does not apply to sexual violence or sexual harassment issues. Sexual violence should be immediately referred to ISU Police. Sexual misconduct involving harassment should be referred to the Office of Equal Opportunity. See policy references below.

### 10.6.1 Informal Complaint Options

A Postdoctoral Scholar who has a work-related dispute or complaint should first attempt informal resolution by discussing the matter with the individual involved, if the Postdoctoral Scholar is comfortable doing so. If the concerns or complaints relate to a general policy or contractual issue, rather than an individual, the Postdoctoral Scholar should bring the matter to the attention of the Dean of the Graduate College.

If these approaches are not viable options or they are not successful, the Postdoctoral Scholar is encouraged to visit the [Ombuds Office](#). The Ombuds Office is a professional, confidential, independent, and neutral resource available to informally work through work-place challenges. Ombuds Office contact information: 37 Physics Hall, (515) 294-0268, [ombuds@iastate.edu](mailto:ombuds@iastate.edu).

### 10.6.2 Formal Grievance Option

If a resolution cannot be reached through the informal options outlined above, the Postdoctoral Scholar may file a formal grievance.

Grievances must be filed in a timely manner. All grievances must be filed within ten (10) business days after occurrence of the event that is the cause of the concern, or, if informal resolution has been attempted, within ten (10) business days after use of the informal grievance option described above has concluded.

A grievance must be filed in good faith and not be of a frivolous or repeated nature. A Postdoctoral Scholar may withdraw their grievance at any point during the process. Grievances that have been withdrawn may not be refiled.

**Step 1: File with Appropriate Person or Committee.** All grievances related to scholarly and professional issues in the workplace must start at the department, appointing unit or program level. The Postdoctoral Scholar must first contact the Department Chair / unit director, or if the department has a department grievance committee, the grievance should be referred to the committee's chair. If the Department Chair / unit director is directly involved in the issue in question, then the grievance should be discussed with the Dean of the Graduate College, who shall review the matter or create an ad-hoc committee to review.

**Step 2: Prepare Written Grievance.** To file a grievance, the Postdoctoral Scholar shall provide a written statement with supporting documentation attached. This written grievance statement should

be concise and clearly state the relevant background facts and the primary issues/concerns/complaint, including the related policies in question; identify the key people involved and possible witnesses; and state requested outcomes/remedies. The supporting documentation should include emails, departmental procedures, University policies, letters, and other such documentation.

**Step 3: Grievance Review and Decision.** The person or committee who receives the written grievance statement (reviewing party) will review the materials submitted. The reviewing party shall respond in writing to the Postdoctoral Scholar within ten (10) business days, unless, in the opinion of the reviewing party, that is insufficient time to appropriately investigate and consider the substance of the grievance. If additional time is needed, the reviewing party shall contact the Postdoctoral Scholar to provide a new date by which the decision shall be made and so inform the Graduate Dean. Once the review of the grievance is complete, the reviewing party shall meet with the Postdoctoral Scholar and provide a written decision.

### 10.6.3 Appeals

**Limited Grounds for Appeal.** Grounds for an appeal are limited to: 1) a violation of University rules, regulations or policies or a state or federal law pertaining to the Postdoctoral Scholar's relationship with the University that adversely affected the Postdoctoral Scholar; or 2) a specific act by the University that was arbitrary or capricious and adversely affected the Postdoctoral Scholar. Non-renewal of an appointment upon expiration of the term and termination of an appointment due to loss of funding are not appealable unless such acts fall within the above-described limitations.

**Appeal to the Graduate College Dean.** Either party may appeal the decision of the reviewing party to the Dean of the Graduate College. Such appeals must be filed within ten (10) business days of meeting with the reviewing party. (If the Dean has already made a determination as provided under Step 3 above, the postdoctoral scholar may advance directly to "Appeal to the Provost" below.) The Dean shall respond in writing within thirty (30) business days of receiving the appeal, unless, in the opinion of the Graduate College Dean, that is insufficient time to appropriately investigate and consider the substance of the appeal. If additional time is needed, the Dean shall contact the parties (i.e., the Postdoctoral Scholar and the reviewing party) to provide a new date by which the decision shall be made.

The Dean of the Graduate College will make a decision and inform all parties involved, including the Postdoctoral Scholar, Department Chair, and the faculty PI/Supervisor.

**Appeal to the Provost.** Decisions of the Graduate College may be appealed by either party to the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost (Provost). Such appeals must be filed within ten (10) business days of the Graduate College Dean issuing their decision. The Provost shall respond in writing within thirty (30) business days of receiving the appeal, unless, in the opinion of the Provost, that is insufficient time to appropriately investigate and consider the substance of the appeal. If additional time is needed, the Provost shall contact the parties to provide a new date by which the decision shall be made.

The Provost will make a decision and inform all parties involved, including the Postdoctoral Scholar, Department Chair, Dean, and the faculty PI/Supervisor.

**Appeal to the President.** Decisions of the Provost may be appealed by either party to the Office of the President. Such appeals must be filed within ten (10) business days of the Provost issuing their decision. The President shall respond in writing within thirty (30) business days of receiving the appeal, unless, in the opinion of the President, that is insufficient time to appropriately

investigate and consider the substance of the appeal. If additional time is needed, the President shall contact the parties to provide a new date by which the decision shall be made.

The President will make the final institutional decision and inform all parties involved, including the Postdoctoral Scholar, Provost, Graduate College Dean, Department Chair, and faculty PI/Supervisor.

**Further Appeal.** Any further appeal may be made to the Board of Regents as provided per the Regents Policy Manual.

#### **10.6.4 Complaints Involving Unlawful Discrimination and Harassment**

Iowa State University takes all claims of discrimination and harassment seriously. Concerns or complaints of this nature are addressed through a separate, existing policy. (See the Discrimination and Harassment Policy.)

If a Postdoctoral Scholar feels that they have been discriminated against or harassed based on their protected class status (see Discrimination and Harassment Policy), the Postdoctoral Scholar should directly contact the University's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO).

OEO has an internal complaint resolution process. OEO can investigate allegations of discrimination and harassment following its own formal or informal process. For more information about these options or for additional information regarding what may constitute unlawful discrimination or harassment, contact OEO.

OEO is located at 3410 Beardshear Hall; phone: (515) 294-7612, email: [eooffice@iastate.edu](mailto:eooffice@iastate.edu), or visit OEO's webpage.

#### **10.6.5 Non-Retaliation**

Retaliation against persons who file complaints is strictly prohibited (see Non-Retaliation Against Persons Reporting Misconduct Policy).

#### **10.6.6 Confidentiality**

The grievance/appeals process, findings and outcomes are to be held in strict confidence. All individuals involved in the process shall make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of the process. Grievance/appeal information shall be kept in a confidential file in the Graduate College, and it will be accessible only to those individuals engaged in the complaint process and appropriate administrators with an official need to know.

#### **Resources and References**

[Non-Retaliation Against Persons Reporting Misconduct](#)

[Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#)

[Violence Free University Policy](#)

[Research Misconduct Policy](#)

[Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Assault, and Sexual Harassment Involving Student Policy](#)

[Office of Equal Opportunity](#)

[Ombuds Office](#)

[Employee & Family Resources \(EAP\)](#)

[Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching \(CELT\)](#)



# Appendix A - The Graduate College

The Graduate College and graduate faculty at Iowa State University are responsible for the quality of graduate education, for administering students' graduate programs, and for promoting research support from various governmental, industrial, and private agencies.

## A.1 Administration and Advisory Groups

### A.1.1 The Graduate College

Administrators and staff in the Graduate College (1137 Pearson Hall) oversee implementation of policies and procedures developed by representatives of the graduate faculty who serve on the Graduate Council.

### A.1.2 Graduate Faculty

The graduate faculty in various programs handle admission and classification of graduate students, establish requirements for advanced degrees, and have charge of instruction and research at the graduate level. Graduate faculty members also teach graduate courses, serve on program of study (POS) committees, and direct work of master's and doctoral students. All graduate courses are taught by graduate faculty members or graduate lecturers. For more information on graduate faculty membership, see [Appendix G](#).

### A.1.3 Directors of Graduate Education (DOGE)

Directors of Graduate Education (DOGEs) coordinate and oversee administration of graduate degree programs. The DOGE must be a member of the graduate faculty. The DOGE ensures that graduate students meet the academic requirements of the program. Responsibilities include approval of POSC forms and graduation applications. The DOGE acts as a liaison between the Graduate College and the graduate program, represents the program at periodic meetings called by the Graduate College or the home college of the major to discuss graduate education and research issues, and reports to the program faculty regarding these meetings. The DOGE may have additional duties, including:

- mediating disputes between graduate students and advisors,
- acting as a temporary advisor for graduate students without a major professor,
- leading discussions of issues important to the major,
- participating in recruitment and retention initiatives, and
- collaborating with the Graduate College on data collection regarding graduate education and outcomes.

Graduate programs may assign other duties to the DOGE. A position description for the DOGE, including the duration of service and method of selection, should be incorporated in program governance documents.

Graduate certificate programs have a designated Director of Certificate Studies (DOCS). Duties of a DOCS are similar to those of a DOGE. A position description for the DOCS should be incorporated in program governance documents.

## A.1.4 Graduate Council

The Graduate Council is a representative body consisting of fifteen elected members of the graduate faculty and four elected graduate student members. The Graduate Council serves as the executive committee of the graduate faculty and sets policy that concerns the direction and process of graduate education at Iowa State University. Meeting monthly during the academic year, the council provides a mechanism for interaction among graduate students, graduate faculty members, and the administration of the Graduate College. Meetings are open to any interested members of the graduate faculty, staff, or student body.

### Duties of the Council

1. To serve as the executive committee of the graduate faculty.
2. To initiate and implement new Graduate School policies, to revise existing policies, and to act upon any questions affecting those policies.
3. To establish and publish rules governing graduate programs, including the revision and updating of the Graduate College Handbook in accord with policy changes approved by the Graduate Council and changes in Graduate Office administrative procedures.
4. To submit recommendations to the Faculty Senate regarding proposals for adopting, altering, or abolishing courses and curricula involving graduate credit.
5. To evaluate and review new graduate programs and to evaluate revisions in existing programs, including interdepartmental programs.
6. To approve, modify, or reverse actions taken by its standing committees.
7. To foster the relationship between graduate education and scholarly research.
8. To assist and advise the dean.
9. To participate in grievance procedures and disciplinary matters at the request of the Dean of the Graduate College.
10. To review and approve nominations for graduate faculty membership.
11. To recommend to the Graduate Dean the award of fellowships and graduate scholarships.
12. To review and approve candidates for graduate degrees.

Some of the work of the Graduate Council is carried out by two standing committees: Graduate Curriculum and Catalog Committee and the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee. Members of these committees are appointed by the Graduate Council and are not restricted to concurrent members of the Graduate Council. The Graduate Curriculum and Catalog Committee consists of representatives from each college; nominations for membership are made by each college dean.

## A.1.5 Departmental and Program Graduate Committees

Many of the programs offering graduate degrees have standing committees that deal with policy matters related to graduate education, e.g., curriculum, departmental requirements, evaluation procedures, professional standards, and the placement of graduates. A combination of faculty and student members is encouraged so that student input is available to the graduate committee along with faculty experience and expertise. Subcommittees of a departmental graduate committee may also hear student grievances according to procedures outlined in [Chapter 9](#).

## A.2 Graduate College Committees

### A.2.1 Graduate Associate Faculty Membership Committee

Non-tenure track faculty members may be nominated to associate graduate faculty membership by the department chair or by other members of the graduate faculty (see [Appendix G](#)). The Graduate Faculty Membership Committee (GFMC), composed of members of the Graduate Council, and the Graduate College administration review nominations for associate memberships of two to five years.

## A.2.2 Graduate Curriculum and Catalog Committee

Members of this committee represent each of the eight academic colleges at ISU. A chair is appointed to preside at meetings and serve on the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee (FSCC). There may be more than one committee member from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in order to represent the wide diversity among the curricula of that college. Each college dean suggests several graduate faculty members as candidates from whom the Dean of the Graduate College appoints committee members and a chair each year. The Dean of the Graduate College (or their designee) also serves as an ex-officio member of the committee. The committee reviews all material dealing with Graduate College curricula: the ISU Catalog; experimental courses; and proposed new majors, minors, areas of specialization, degree programs, and interdepartmental programs. It reports its recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate College and the Graduate Council. The committee also participates in the post-audit review of graduate programs or majors five years after their approval by the State Board of Regents.

## **Appendix B - Majors, Minors, Degrees, and Areas of Specialization**

### **B.1 Graduate Program Information**

Click on [program information](#) to browse available graduate majors and degree types.

# Appendix C - Graduate Certificate Programs

## C.1 What is a Graduate Certificate?

A graduate certificate provides a mechanism for bestowing formal recognition of focused graduate study in a specialized area that is less comprehensive than required for a master's degree. At Iowa State University, a graduate certificate may be earned either before, after, or concurrently with the master's or doctoral degree. As such, the standards of admission and the standards to which a certificate student is held are equivalent to those expected of a master's student.

Candidates for a graduate certificate must be admitted to the desired graduate certificate program in the Graduate College. All courses for a graduate certificate must be acceptable for graduate credit and each graduate certificate must require at least 12 graduate credits. A graduate faculty supervisor will be appointed to oversee the certification for each student.

If a person who receives a graduate certificate decides to continue for a graduate degree, the person needs to seek approval from that degree program. Credits earned for the graduate certificate may also be used to meet degree requirements for the graduate degree if approved by the Program of Study Committee.

## C.2 Academic Procedures for Graduate Certificates

### Application

An undergraduate student wishing to pursue a concurrent Graduate Certificate must submit the [Concurrent Application Form](#).

A new student must apply for admission to the certificate program using the [Application for Admission](#).

A graduate student wishing to pursue a Certificate in addition to a Graduate Degree must submit the [corresponding form](#).

At the time of admission to a graduate program, known certificate-seeking students will be designated as "Certificate" or "CRT" for the Degree entry on the Graduate Admission Evaluation form.

Students pursuing **only** a graduate certificate may **not** be awarded a graduate assistantship.

### Supervision and Program of Study

Each certificate program has a Director of Certificate Studies (DOCS) – the equivalent of the DOGE for a graduate major.

Certificate students do not have a POS committee, but do have a supervising professor that can be the same as the Director of Certificate Studies. The supervising professor must be a member of the graduate faculty and of the program.

To receive a certificate, students must submit the [Online Certificate POS](#) for approval.

The regular Graduate College course rules apply to certificates:

- A student must have a graduate GPA of 3.00 or better and no course with a grade below a C may be applied to the POS.
- Any transfer credits used must have B or better grades, have been taken as a graduate student for graduate credit, and be from an accredited university. Individual programs will determine the maximum transfer credits they will allow for the certificate.

Transfer courses must be completed prior to submitting the POS and a transcript submitted to the Graduate College for review.

Time limits for graduate certificate programs follow the same 7-year time limit that master's programs employ.

## Completion

Students must submit a completion form within two years after completing the final required course in the certificate program of study

To withdraw from a graduate certificate program, email your Director of Certificate that you are no longer actively pursuing the certificate

When a student has completed all requirements, the program will submit a [Certificate Completion Form](#) signed by the DOCS to the Graduate College. The Graduate College will then certify that all requirements have been completed satisfactorily and inform the Registrar and the Graduation Office.

The Registrar will add a notation to the permanent record (transcript) indicating that a Graduate Certificate in \_\_\_\_\_ was granted on a specified date and issue a printed ISU graduate certificate.

The Registrar will provide a certificate document to each student after courses have been satisfactorily completed.

Following completion of the certificate program, a hold will be placed on future registration unless a student has been approved to pursue a graduate degree.

## C.3 Establishing a Certificate Program

The first step in establishing a new graduate certificate is the preparation of a proposal by qualified group of faculty (a Word version of the proposal below is also available on the Graduate College website at <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/faculty-and-staff/forms/>). If the proposed program will be focused in an existing department, program or college, the proposal should be routed through the corresponding curriculum committees. College curriculum committees will forward the appropriately amended proposal to the Graduate College Catalog and Curriculum Committee. Proposals for interdisciplinary programs should also be routed through the cooperating departmental and college committee before being submitted to the Graduate College Catalog and Curriculum Committee.

### Required Background Information

1. Name of the proposed graduate certificate.
2. Name of the departments and/or programs involved.
3. Name of contact person.
4. Need for the graduate certificate.
5. Objective of the graduate certificate.
6. General description of the graduate certificate.
7. Graduate certificate requirements including:
  1. Admissions standards and prerequisites for the certificate program.
  2. Courses and seminars
8. General description of the resources currently available and future resource needs:
  1. A list of supporting faculty members including a brief description of their expertise relating to the graduate certificate.
  2. The effects of any new courses on faculty workload.

Other resources required for the program including graduate assistants, laboratories and other facilities, supplies, etc.

9. Relationship of the proposed graduate certificate to the strategic plans of the department, college and the university.
10. Plan for periodic review of the certificate program.

## C.4 Programs Offering Graduate Certificates

Certifications can be found on the [programs page](#).

# Appendix D - Master's Programs at Iowa State University

The number of credits in a major for a master's degree will vary according to the degrees offered. General credit requirements for all master's degrees include:

- a minimum of 30 graduate credits is required for all master's programs at ISU;
- at least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU;
- any transfer of graduate credits from another institution must be recommended in the program of study by the POS committee; and
- graduate credit earned as a graduate student will be approved for transfer only if a B grade or better was earned. A transcript must accompany the POS form.

## D.1 Master of Arts or Master of Science—Thesis

At least 30 credits of acceptable graduate work must be completed, not less than 22 of which must be earned from ISU. Students are expected to research and write a thesis that demonstrates independent and creative work. A minimum of 3 semester credits is required for thesis research.

## D.2 Master of Arts or Master of Science—Nonthesis

In certain programs a nonthesis degree program is offered. (For more information on requirements, contact the individual program or department.) This option requires the satisfactory completion of at least 30 graduate credit hours of acceptable work (not including research credit), not less than 22 of which must be earned from ISU, and satisfactory completion of a comprehensive final oral examination. In addition, every nonthesis master's program must present substantial evidence of individual accomplishment (e.g., a special report, capstone course, integrated field experience, annotated bibliography, or other creative endeavor). A minimum of two semester hours of such independent work (referred to as the creative component) is required on every program of study for a nonthesis master's degree and is applied toward the credit-hour requirement. This element of creative independent study must be explicitly identified on the program of study. Detailed requirements may vary with fields. Reference should be made to the program descriptions in the ISU Catalog.

## D.3 Master of Accounting

The Department of Accounting offers a 30 graduate credit Master of Accounting graduate degree. The program requires 15 credits of graduate accounting courses, at least 9 credits of non-accounting graduate electives, a communications course, an international course from an approved list, and an optional creative component. At least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU. The degree is appropriate for any student wanting to pursue a variety of accounting careers. Additionally, the program is designed to help interested candidates meet the 150-hour education requirement for the CPA certification in Iowa. Graduate students who are not required to take a final oral examination should complete all required coursework on the POS prior to or during the term of graduation. Any transfer credits must be completed the term before the graduation term and follow normal transfer rules.

## D.4 Master of Architecture

The Department of Architecture offers a program leading to the Master of Architecture, a professional degree. This degree is available as a thesis, non-thesis, or coursework-only option.

The M.ARCH. I (100-credit) option is designed for individuals with an undergraduate degree other than architecture. Students explore a full range of architectural subjects through seminars and an intensive sequence of design studios.

The M.ARCH. I (60-credit) option is for individuals with a pre-professional undergraduate major in architecture.

At least 22 graduate credits must be earned at Iowa State University for either the 60- or 100-credit option. Final oral examinations are required for the thesis and non-thesis (creative component) options; final oral examinations are not required for the coursework-only option.

## D.5 Master of Arts in Teaching

This is a degree leading to teacher licensure. A range of graduate credits are required depending on the program offering the degree. The student must also demonstrate an ability to perform independent study through the completion of a creative component. At least 22 graduate credit hours must be earned at ISU.

## D.6 Master of Business Administration

The College of Business offers a 48 graduate credit-hour program leading to a coursework-only Master of Business Administration degree. At least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU. Students may select courses in the traditional business disciplines or choose areas of specialization in Accounting, Business Analytics, Finance, Information Systems, Leadership, Marketing, Supply Chain Management, and Technology and Innovation Management. Graduate students who are not required to take a final oral examination should complete all required coursework on the POS prior to or during the term of graduation. Any transfer credits must be completed the term before the graduation term and follow normal transfer rules.

## D.7 Master of Business Analytics

The Master of Business Analytics is a 30-credit, interdisciplinary graduate program that addresses the challenges of dealing with data analytics and business intelligence in the “Big Data” environment. At least 22 credits must be taken at Iowa State University. The Master of Business Analytics is a unique, blended program offering both online and face-to-face education. Students begin the 21 month program in the summer with a one-week, on campus business analytics overview course. Students revisit the campus at the midway point, and at the end of the program. The remainder of the coursework is delivered online. The program draws from several of Iowa State’s leading educational fields in science and technology including Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Statistics, and Industrial and Manufacturing Systems Engineering. This interdisciplinary program offers businesses the opportunity to develop managers who will master analytics in ways that lead to increased profits for their company.

## D.8 Master of Community and Regional Planning

The Master of Community and Regional Planning degree requires a minimum of 48 graduate semester credit hours. At least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU. This degree is available as a thesis or nonthesis option.

## D.9 Master of Design in Sustainable Environments

Students in the Master of Design in Sustainable Environments will utilize design strategies, systems, and materials for environmental and product design. Students will study ways of envisioning, making and remaking art, landscapes, communities, building, and objects of everyday use that conserve resources, ameliorate ecological problems, and promote social, political, and economic justice. This is a 3-semester, 35 graduate credit course of study that offers opportunities for students to work in interdisciplinary teams on a variety of faculty-directed projects that may include funded basic and applied research, community-based design work, and theoretical investigations. The program addresses issues of sustainable design at multiple scales, engaging both systems and artifacts. At least 22 graduate credits must be taken at ISU. This is a coursework only program of study.

## D.10 Master of Education

For the Master of Education degree, a range of 30 to 40 graduate credits are required. At least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU. The student demonstrates an ability to perform independent study through the completion of a creative component or a field-based activity.

## D.11 Master of Engineering

The academic standards and the general level of attainment are the same for the Master of Engineering and Master of Science degrees. Master of Engineering programs are offered to meet the needs for professionally-oriented programs on campus and for off-campus professionally-oriented programs at locations with adequate library and laboratory facilities. An appropriate number of credit hours in design, laboratory work, computation, or independent study is required as evidence of individual accomplishment. A minimum of 30 graduate credits is required; at least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU.

Graduate students who are not required to take a final oral examination should complete all required coursework on the POS prior to or during the term of graduation. Any transfer credits must be completed the term before the graduation term and follow normal transfer rules.

## D.12 Master of Family and Consumer Sciences

The College of Human Sciences offers the nonthesis Master of Family and Consumer Sciences degree. Students in this degree program select one of the following specializations: Dietetics, Family Financial Planning, Gerontology, or Youth Development. The Master of Family and Consumer Sciences degree will prepare students to meet the requirements of their current professional roles or progress in their careers. The degree requires 36 credits; at least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU. Students must complete a final oral examination to graduate.

## D.13 Master of Finance

The Master of Finance requires a minimum of 40 credits of graduate coursework, with an additional 6 credits of introductory accounting and finance being required if the student lacks previous coursework in accounting and finance. This is a coursework only program with no thesis or creative component required. At least 22 credits must be earned at ISU. The Master of Finance will prepare students for careers in advanced financial data analysis, credit analysis, risk management, and similar specialized areas. The curriculum will also be helpful to those wishing to pursue professional certifications such as the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) and Financial Risk Manager (FRM) designations. These designations are earned by passing a series of exams offered through the CFA Institute and GARP (Global Association of Risk Professionals), respectively.

## D.14 Master of Fine Arts

For this degree a minimum of 54-64 graduate credits is required, including the completion of a thesis-exhibition or a thesis. At least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU.

## D.15 Master of Industrial Design

This degree is open to students and professionals from any discipline. However, the difference among the students with various backgrounds will be the number of credits required for graduation. The program is designed to be a 63-credit program for students with industrial design backgrounds (BFA, BID, and BA in industrial design). The program is designed to offer the most relevant mix of skills and experience, including directed research programs, internships, international travel and industry-sponsored coursework. Those who do not have an undergraduate degree or background in industrial design may need to complete additional graduate-level courses to earn the Master of Industrial Design. Specific requirements will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

## D.16 Master of Landscape Architecture

The Master of Landscape Architecture degree requires a minimum of 79 graduate credits and the satisfactory completion of a thesis, creative component, or coursework only program. At least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU.

## D.17 Master of Urban Design

The Master in Urban Design program (MUD) is an advanced, interdisciplinary program of study for graduate students with previous degrees in architecture, landscape architecture, and city planning or the equivalent in professional design experience. This is a 3-semester (summer, fall, spring), 30 graduate credit workshop course of study, where students engage directly in a community of inquiry, learning, and practice to examine contemporary challenges facing urbanized regions. At least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU. This is a coursework only program of study.

## D.18 Master of Human Computer Interaction

The Master of Human Computer Interaction (MHC) degree will give students a deep knowledge of interaction technology, behavioral and social science, and human-centered design to develop

useful and useable technology. The program requires a minimum of 30 credits. At least 22 must be taken at Iowa State University. It is a coursework only program.

## **D.19 Master of Professional Practice in Dietetics**

The Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition offers a Master of Professional Practice in Dietetics (MPP) for 30 credits, which is a coursework only program -- no thesis or creative component is required. The primary audience for the program will be students completing the Dietetic Internship (DI) Graduate Certificate. Graduate credits awarded in the Graduate Certificate will be applied towards the master's degree. The Commission on Dietetics Registration, the credentialing agency for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, announced a master's degree will be required to take the national registration exam to become a Registered Dietitian (RD) beginning in 2024.

## **D.20 Master of Athletic Training**

The Department of Kinesiology offers a 24-month, 58-credit professional master's degree in Athletic Training. The overall academic goal is to prepare students for successful completion of the Board of Certification (BOC) examination and to enter the athletic training profession as skilled and prepared clinicians. Students will be taught essential athletic training didactic knowledge and clinical skills based on the Athletic Training Education Competencies established by CAATE. This is a coursework only program of study.

## **D.21 Master of Real Estate Development**

The College of Design and College of Business offers a 21-month, 33-credit master's degree in Real Estate Development in a blended format of online and in-person courses graduate training in real estate market analysis, business finance, fundamentals of the built environment and urban planning with an emphasis on current trends and innovations. The program engages with industry to facilitate a novel curriculum, guest speakers, and capstone project, and encourages a working relationship between ISU MRE faculty and alumni in the real estate development and investment industries. The target students is a working professional with 5 to 7 years of work experience in a real estate related field.

## **D.22 Master of Community Development**

The Community and Regional Planning department offers a 24-month program that includes 30 credit hours of cohort-based learning. It provides students with graduate training in community development theory, community data analysis, community engagement, community development methods, program development, and evaluation. The program is a coursework-only degree. It is geared toward working professionals seeking graduate training, most of who are currently employed in the public service sectors.

## **D.22 Master of Entrepreneurship**

The Management and Entrepreneurship department offers a 30-credit hour program that can be completed in as little as one year. In this program, students will develop the primary entrepreneurial skills needed to identify and evaluate market opportunities and formulate and implement successful

strategies for moving a business idea forward. They will do this through innovative pedagogical methods in the classroom, multiple experiential learning opportunities, and networking within ISU's extensive entrepreneurial environment. The curriculum for this proposed degree is designed to be somewhat flexible, to account for students' varying interests, background, and plans.

## **D.23 Master of Healthcare Analytics and Operations**

The Information Systems and Business Analytics and the Supply Chain Management departments offer a 30-credit hour program to be delivered primarily online to working professionals in healthcare domains. Students graduating from the program will be able to analyze healthcare operations, supply chains, and data to develop and present plans of action leading to better outcomes for various stakeholders in the healthcare industry. Healthcare operations, supply chains, and data possess many unique properties which require specialized knowledge to optimize managerial outcomes.

# Appendix E - Professional Master's Coursework Only Guidelines

## (Guidelines passed Graduate Council April 16, 2009)

Professional master's programs are growing in demand nationwide in response, in part, to employers' demands for students with more academic background in discipline-specific course work. Admissions requirements, credit limits, transfer policies, and time to degree requirements are the same as other master's programs. Specific exceptions to regular master's degree requirements are detailed below.

## E.1 Proposed General Features of the Professional Master's Programs (coursework-only)

These apply to new proposals for professional master's programs. Existing professional master's programs may be legaced in.

**Name of the Program:** The name of the degree must be clearly distinguishable from the Master of Science or Master of Arts degree. This means avoiding the word "science" or "arts" in the name of the degree. Exceptions may be appropriate for departments that wish to award a Master of Computer Science or Master of Animal Science degree.

**Coursework:** Minimum of 30 graduate credit hours of coursework. At least 22 graduate credits must be taken at ISU. Research credits or creative component credits do not count toward the credit total because this is a coursework only degree.

*Note: This is the same credit requirement for a MS or MA degree. The difference is that there are no research credits.*

**GPA Minimum:** Same as for Master of Science or Master of Arts

**Program of Study Committee:** Directed by the DOGE or their graduate faculty designee. No committee requirement as this is a non-research/non-creative component option. However, individual programs/majors have the option of establishing a POS committee if they desire.

**Capstone Experience:** Not required

**External Oversight:** Any programs with accrediting bodies external to ISU would be subject to any requirements that are over and above the ISU minimum.

*Note: Students with minors and co-majors, in addition to a professional master's degree, will have additional requirements and/or signatures. For more information, contact the Graduate College.*

## Appendix F - Dual-Listed Courses

Dual-listed courses permit undergraduate and graduate students to be in the same class but to receive credit under two different course numbers. Once a course is approved for dual-listing, the course must be offered to both undergraduate and graduate students in the same section. The course description is the same for undergraduate and graduate.

Departments must request permission to offer 400-level courses in conjunction with 500-level courses. The request is made to the Graduate Curriculum and Catalog Committee (GCC) through the [Course Inventory Management System](#). The [dual-list form](#) must be filled out in its entirety and uploaded to the course management system. If the 400- or 500-level course (or both) will be experimental courses, that will need to be noted in the system as well. In reviewing proposals for dual-listed courses, the GCCC is looking for evidence that there are differentiated expectations for students who take the 400-level course and students who take the 500-level course. They are also reviewing to ensure the content of the course is a suitable level for graduate and undergraduate students.

# Appendix G - Graduate Faculty Membership & Associate Membership

## G.1 Graduate Faculty Full Membership

### Eligibility

Membership on the graduate faculty is granted to an individual who holds a tenure track appointment with the academic rank of assistant professor or above at Iowa State University.

Eligibility to serve as a member of the graduate faculty is concomitant with the recording of a tenure-track faculty member's hire in the Provost's Office. Tenure track faculty members are expected to participate in an orientation sponsored by the Graduate College and are added to the roster of graduate faculty promptly thereafter.

The graduate faculty also includes the president, the provost, vice provosts and associate provosts, the Dean of the Graduate College, deans and associate deans of the other colleges, the dean of library services, and the directors and associate directors of research institutes.

Individuals pursuing a graduate degree at Iowa State University are not eligible for Graduate Faculty membership.

Associate Faculty members may be eligible for full Graduate Faculty membership under specific circumstances defined below. (See Appendix G.1.1)

### Rights and Responsibilities

A full member of the graduate faculty can teach at the graduate level (currently indicated as 500 and 600 level courses). For graduate faculty membership in other majors (including interdepartmental majors), faculty members need to apply for appointment using the approach established by the other programs' governance document. A full member of the graduate faculty may be the chair of a program of study committee (and therefore serve as the major supervisor of the student) for the degree level (doctoral or master's level) up to and including the highest degree level they achieved. A full member with a master's level degree can co-chair a doctoral committee as long as the other co-chair is a full member with a doctoral level degree. A full member of the graduate faculty can serve as a member on any program of study committee. A full member of the graduate faculty is eligible to serve as Director of Graduate Education for Master's and Doctoral Programs and Director of Certificate Studies in Graduate Certificate programs.

### G.1.1. Term Faculty Requesting Full Graduate Faculty Membership

#### Eligibility

An Associate Graduate Faculty member who has a term faculty appointment and who has served as such for a period of approximately five or more years may, in rare circumstances, be eligible for nomination as a full member of the Graduate Faculty. Such a candidate will have an outstanding history of graduate student advising, research, and be an active participant in their program's curriculum. Such an application must have the full support of the departmental chair, the DOGE,

and the program's graduate faculty members.

### **Procedure for Membership**

All of the processes to be followed for a nomination will be those for a regular renewal, with the exception of the following. First, a nomination letter should contain a much greater level of justification. In effect, the nomination for Full Membership status, if approved, would confer the privileges of a tenured research faculty with respect to graduate education, and the letter should demonstrate a perspective mindful of that privilege and detail significant past accomplishments in the applicant's history within the graduate program considering them for full membership. Second, the nomination must also include a letter of support from the nominating unit's Promotion and Tenure Committee, or an equivalent thereof. Third, after review of the application by the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee, if the nomination for Full membership is satisfactory to the committee, the nomination will be subject to consideration and a full vote of the Graduate Council, by regular Council procedures. Both or either the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee or the Graduate Council may request additional supplements, edits, or other changes to the nomination as they deem necessary to ensure rigor of the nomination process.

## **G.2. Graduate Faculty Associate Membership**

### **Eligibility**

Any full member of the graduate faculty may nominate a non-tenure track faculty member for graduate faculty associate membership. Non-ISU employees may also be nominated for associate graduate faculty membership so that they may serve as members of a POSC or teach graduate courses (see Associate Membership Nomination Form). Associate members of the graduate faculty must have demonstrated competence for pursuing creative work by completing a research doctorate or the highest degree appropriate to the discipline from an accredited or internationally recognized institution. See section 6.2.3 for guidance on committee composition and membership.

In rare circumstances, individuals without the defined degree requirement may be eligible for graduate faculty associate membership when they have a demonstrated record of impactful creative work to establish equivalent tested experience (See Appendix G.5).

Individuals pursuing a graduate degree at Iowa State University, and postdoctoral associates at Iowa State or elsewhere, are not eligible for graduate faculty associate membership.

### **Procedure for Membership**

Nominations for graduate faculty associate membership may be made for consideration by the Graduate College at any time of the year. Every nomination consists of the form Nomination for Graduate Faculty Associate Membership (available under the group header "Nomination for Graduate Faculty" on the Graduate College website at <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/faculty-and-staff/forms/>), a current curriculum vita of the nominee documenting evidence of the required equivalent degree, and a letter of support for the nominee from the director of graduate education of the major. This letter should detail how the candidate's expertise will be of benefit so that the justification for the requested activities is clear, explain how the candidate is expected to contribute to the program and in what capacity, and highlight past contributions for the candidate with respect to graduate education, if applicable. A vote of graduate faculty in the major is required (ISU faculty only). The DOGE is responsible for ensuring that all members of the graduate faculty in the major (rosters are available from the Graduate College) are invited to vote to support or not support the

nomination by secret ballot. A simple majority of those who cast a ballot will be considered affirmative. The nomination form will include the results of this vote (affirmative or not affirmative, no numbers). A nomination for associate membership can be declined by the nominee.

Following the above steps, the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee (appointed by the Graduate Council) will review applications for graduate faculty associate membership and make a recommendation to the Graduate College for a final decision. Following approval, faculty members are encouraged to participate in an orientation sponsored by the Graduate College.

Associate membership is granted for a five-year term, but will terminate at the end of the faculty rank appointment. After completion of a 5-year term, associate members are eligible for a 10-year associate member appointment. The process is identical to the first appointment, with the addition of a review of activities related to graduate education in the previous term appointment.

## Rights and Responsibilities

Associate membership is granted for specific activities that should be requested explicitly. Possible activities are teaching graduate (500 and 600 level) courses, serving on program of study committees of master's and doctoral students, and other activities that are relevant to the program for which the faculty member has been nominated. For ISU employees, these activities must be consistent with the faculty member's Position Responsibility Statement. Depending on the highest degree held by an associate member, they may co-chair a master's or doctoral program of study committee if a full member of the graduate faculty serves as a co-chair. To serve as co-chair, an associate graduate faculty member must comply with ISU's Conflict of Interest and Commitment Policy, Procedures, and applicable management plan. A member of the graduate faculty whose highest degree is a master's may not co-chair doctoral committees. An associate member may individually chair a POS committee for master's programs not requiring a thesis. An associate member of the graduate faculty is eligible to serve as Director of Graduate Education of only coursework-only master's programs and Director of Certificate Studies in graduate certificate programs. Non-ISU associate graduate faculty members cannot individually chair a POS committee, nor may they serve as DOGE.

## G.3 Nonmembers of the Graduate Faculty

### G.3.1 Graduate Lecturer

#### Eligibility

A graduate lecturer must hold current faculty status at Iowa State University and have obtained at least a master's degree. In rare circumstances, individuals without the defined degree requirement may be eligible for Graduate Lecturer appointment when they have a demonstrated record of impactful creative work to establish equivalent experience (See Appendix G.5).

Individuals pursuing a graduate degree at Iowa State University are not eligible for Graduate Lecturer status in that same area of study.

#### Procedure for Appointment

A request for a staff member to be designated a graduate lecturer should be initiated by the department chair and submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College after approval by the respective college dean. These requests should be supported by evidence of the individual's

academic qualifications (i.e., curriculum vitae), the name(s) of the graduate course(s) to be taught, and a justification for the request.

The Dean of the Graduate College may appoint a graduate lecturer for a period of up to five years. Requests for reappointment should be directed to the Graduate College. Appropriate evidence of continuing need should accompany these requests, along with course(s) to be taught, and justification for the request. Requests are reviewed and approved by the Dean of the Graduate College. Graduate lectureship is not intended as a mechanism for staffing graduate courses for prolonged periods of time.

## **Responsibilities**

Although not a member of the graduate faculty, a graduate lecturer is permitted to teach specified courses at the graduate level. Since a graduate lecturer does not supervise students working toward advanced degrees, they cannot serve as an official member of a POS Committee.

# **G.4 Degree Equivalence (Doctoral or Master's)**

## **G.4.1 Ph.D. Degrees**

The research doctorate is the highest earned academic degree. A Ph.D. degree is always awarded for independent research at a professional level in either academic disciplines or professional fields. Regardless of the entry point, doctoral studies involve several stages of academic work. These may include the completion of preliminary course, seminar, and laboratory studies and/or the passing of a battery of written/oral examinations. The doctoral student selects an academic adviser and a subject for the dissertation, is assigned a dissertation committee, and designs their research (some educators call the doctoral thesis a dissertation to distinguish it from lesser theses). The dissertation committee consists usually of 3-5 faculty members in the student's research field, including the adviser.

## **G.4.2 Independent research**

Conducting the research and writing the dissertation usually require one to several years depending upon the topic selected and the research work necessary to prepare the dissertation. In defending their dissertation, the doctoral candidate must establish mastery of the subject matter, explain and justify their research findings, and answer all questions put by the committee. A successful defense is required before the doctoral degree is granted.

## **G.4.3 Degrees equivalent to the Ph.D.**

It is recognized that there are some other doctoral titles that enjoy the same status and represent variants of the Ph.D. in certain fields. All of them have similar content requirements. The term used by the U.S. Department of Education is Doctor's degree-research/scholarship and defined as a Ph.D. or other doctor's degree that requires advanced work beyond the master's level, including the preparation and defense of a dissertation based on original research, or the planning and execution of an original project demonstrating substantial artistic or scholarly achievement. Some examples of this type of degree may include Ed.D., D.M.A., D.B.A., D.Sc., D.A., or D.M, and others, as designated by the awarding institution. Potential applicants for term graduate faculty status are invited to consult the following web-pages for useful references on degrees that will be considered equivalent to the Ph.D.:

List of research doctorate titles awarded in the United States that enjoy the same status and represent variants of the Ph.D. within certain fields are listed by the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF). <https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2017/nsf17306/data/taba1.pdf>

2. The list of research doctorate titles awarded in the European Union that enjoy the same status and represent variants of the Ph.D. within certain fields are listed by the "Examinations, qualifications and titles - Second edition, Volume 1, European glossary on education": [http://bookshop.europa.eu/is-bin/INTERSHOP.enfinity/WFS/EU-Bookshop-Site/en\\_GB-/EUR/ViewPublication-Start?PublicationKey=EC3212292](http://bookshop.europa.eu/is-bin/INTERSHOP.enfinity/WFS/EU-Bookshop-Site/en_GB-/EUR/ViewPublication-Start?PublicationKey=EC3212292) (table in Part II of .pdf document) catalogue number: EC-32-12-292-EN-N
3. Applicants with research doctoral degrees from other countries should document that they have conducted graduate research and had equivalent training as discussed above i.e. independent research, completion of preliminary course, seminar, and laboratory studies and/or the passing of a battery of written/oral examinations, and defense of a dissertation to a committee of faculty members in the student's research field.

#### **G.4.4 Doctor's degrees: Professional Practice**

The classification "doctor's degree - professional practice" has been used for "[a] doctor's degree that is conferred upon completion of a program providing the knowledge and skills for the recognition, credential, or license required for professional practice." These are professional degrees in various fields of professional practice and not graduate research degrees. Several degree titles in such fields include the term "Doctor", but they are neither research doctorates nor equivalent to the Ph.D. Some examples of U.S. professional degrees are listed.

- Chiropractic (D.C., D.C.M.)
- Dentistry (D.D.S., D.M.D.)
- Law (LL.B., J.D.)
- Medicine (M.B., M.D.)
- Optometry (O.D.)
- Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.)
- Pharmacy (Pharm.D.)
- Podiatry (D.P.M., D.P., Pod.D.)
- Theology (M.Div, M.H.L., B.D., Ordination)
- Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M., V.M.D.)

#### **G.4.5 Research Master's**

A research master's student should have a substantial component of research work that resulted in a thesis or dissertation (i.e., > 1 /3 of required credits awarded for research work). The terms Master of Science and Master of Arts are commonly used to denote a research master's degree, but can also be used to describe a professional master's degree. Similarly, Master of "Field of Study" may also be a research master's degree. If clarification is needed, it is suggested that the thesis topic or publication titles be submitted for clarification as evidence of the research component of the master's training.

#### **G.4.6 Professional Master's**

Many master's degrees are professional master's degrees (PSM) which are generally a science plus (+) curricula. PSM programs often consist of two years of coursework along with a professional experiential component that includes business, communications, and/or regulatory

affairs. Close cooperation with employers, as well as an internship in a business or public sector enterprise, is often included in the program. Over 1000 PSM programs are available. Examples of degree names are below. However, the terms Master of Science and Master of Arts can be used to refer to a research or professional master's degree. Similarly, Master of "Field of Study" may also be a research master's degree.

Master of Professional Studies (M.P.S.)

Master of Public Health (M.P.H)

MBS (Master of Business and Science)

MPS (Master of Professional Science)

Master of Field of Study (e.g. Master of Bioscience, Master of Biotechnology)

## G.5 Equivalent experience

Confirming equivalent experience for the appointment requires "tested experience in that it includes a breadth and depth of experience outside the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member would be teaching" (from page 4 in the HLC report entitled "Using Tested Experience as a Basis for Determining Minimally Qualified Faculty," Higher Learning Commission, March 2016). Tested experience used as equivalence for the credentials should be established for specific disciplines. A record of impactful leadership in developing research, scholarship, and achievement consistent with the program should be required.

### Examples of tested experience

Directed a research program and generated creative and scholarly works that were favorably reviewed by peers in the major area/discipline (books, art, journal articles, patents).

Developed curricula in successful graduate programs.

Hold a demonstrated record of directing students in graduate programs.

## **Appendix H - Graduate Program Learning Goals**

**Coming soon**

