

**The Graduate College Handbook
of Policy and Requirements
for Students, Faculty and Staff**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

GRADUATE COLLEGE

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Chapter I: Graduate Education at Illinois

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A. Introduction

Graduate students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign are enrolled in the Graduate College. The College awards over 600 doctorates and 2,500 master's degrees per year. With oversight responsibilities for the more than 10,000 students pursuing degrees in over 100 masters and doctoral programs in more than a dozen academic colleges, schools, and institutes, the Graduate College works to address a wide range of issues basic to graduate education at Illinois. More information about the Graduate College is online at www.grad.illinois.edu.

This Handbook covers campus, academic, and administrative policies and requirements pertaining to graduate students at the University, and is current as of September 2008. All graduate students must follow Graduate College policies. Individual graduate departments or units may have additional policies specific to students enrolled in their units, and students should become familiar with their departmental handbooks. Please consult the Web sites linked throughout this handbook for additional information.

Students are expected to be aware of and follow the policies and requirements in effect at their term of admission. Departmental and Graduate College policies may change subsequent to the term of admission, but subsequent changes in program and degree requirements may not be imposed on students.

[Print](#)

B. Administration and Governance

The Graduate College of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has jurisdiction over programs leading to post baccalaureate degrees awarded by the Urbana-Champaign campus of the University of Illinois except for the Juris Doctor degree program in the College of Law and the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree program in the College of Veterinary Medicine. The Graduate College is responsible for developing and safeguarding high academic standards and promoting research in all academic disciplines, and operates according to established [bylaws](#).

The Graduate College approves the appointment of graduate faculty members. For more details on graduate faculty membership, see the [Graduate College Policy on Graduate Faculty Membership](#) adopted October 24, 1999. More details on graduate faculty and doctoral committees can be found elsewhere in this handbook ([see chapter VI.D](#)).

The chief executive officer of the Graduate College is the dean. The work of the Graduate College is supported by a number of advisory committees. The [Graduate College Executive Committee](#) (GCEC) is the Graduate College's primary policy-making body. The GCEC consists of eight graduate faculty members elected by the graduate faculty, six graduate faculty members appointed by the chancellor on the recommendation of the dean and current members, and two

graduate student observers. The [Program Subcommittee](#) of the Executive Committee provides preliminary review of program proposals prior to GCEC approval.

The [Committee on Extended Education and External Degrees](#) (CEEED) is responsible for ensuring the quality of all graduate degree programs offered to students off-campus, including programs delivered through electronic distance learning technologies.

The [Fellowship Board](#) consists of fifteen faculty members and two graduate student members. This committee sets campus policy on graduate fellowships and grants and awards approximately \$4 million in student support per year.

The [Administrative Advisory Group](#) consists of twelve departmental administrators whose work complements that of the Graduate College Executive Committee, focusing primarily on the operational aspects of the Graduate College. Members of this committee are nominated by their peers and appointed by the dean of the Graduate College.

The [Career Advisory Committee](#) consists of faculty and staff chosen for their expertise in issues related to career advising and professional development. This committee advises the dean on programs and services that will assist students in these areas.

The [Graduate College Student Advisory Committee](#) fosters and maintains dialog between students and the administration about topics central to advancing graduate education and the experience of graduate students on our campus.

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C. Academic Integrity and Intellectual Property

The Graduate College and the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research work collaboratively to ensure commitment to principles of academic integrity and responsible scholarly conduct. A number of campus policies outline ethical and professional standards applying to faculty, students, and staff, and prescribe procedures to be followed when unethical conduct may have occurred. Students should be familiar with the following resources on academic integrity and professional conduct:

- [Bylaws of the Graduate College](#)
- [Good Ethical Practice: A Handbook for Faculty and Staff at the University of Illinois](#)
- [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#)
- [Institutional Review Board Regulation and Policies](#) for human subjects research
- [Responsible Professional Conduct: Guidelines for Teaching, Research, and Service](#), from the [Academic Human Resources' Staff Handbook](#)
- [The Student Code](#)
- [University of Illinois Policy and Procedures on Academic Integrity in Research and Publication](#)

The term "intellectual property" refers to property that includes patents, copyrights, trade secrets, and trademarks. Any individual using University facilities, equipment, funds, or resources needs to be aware of University policies and procedures related to sponsored research and intellectual property issues, including rights to inventions and copyrightable works developed at the University. Students should also see [chapter IV.B.3](#) for more details about patents and copyrights related to theses. For additional information about intellectual property, consult the [Office of Technology Management](#).

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D. Academic Resources

The Graduate College provides services to students, graduate advisers, and academic units regarding admissions, fellowships and grants, tuition and fee waivers, thesis preparation, underrepresented student support, degree requirements, career services, and student academic concerns including academic standing, grievances, and petitions.

Many campus resources can be found online, and some of those most important for students include:

- [Graduate College Website](#)
- [Class Schedule](#)
- [Course Catalog](#)
- [Graduate College Events & Deadlines](#)
- [Programs of Study](#)
- [The Student Code](#)

Faculty members are a critical resource for students. Departments typically assign a faculty member to new students to provide assistance with early planning of their academic programs. Once students have settled on an area of special research interest, they are generally expected to choose a faculty member from that area to act as their primary adviser. In addition, the department's Director of Graduate Studies, Graduate Program Contact, and Executive Officer are good academic resources.

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E. Terms and Definitions

1. Terminology used throughout this Handbook:

- "department" or "unit" may refer to a program, school, institute, or similar type of academic unit,
- "fellowships" and "fellows" include traineeships and trainees except where specified,
- "students" refers to graduate students,
- "term" and "semester" are used interchangeably, and
- "thesis" may refer to a thesis or a dissertation.

2. **Definitions:** More information related to each of these terms can be found by searching the Graduate Handbook.

- **academic standing** – full, probation status and dismissal status
- **adviser** – a member of the graduate faculty who is formally charged with assisting a student in planning the course of study; this person may or may not also be the student’s director of research
- **cancellation** – a student cancels registration and avoids payment of tuition and fee charges by completing a [Withdrawal/Cancellation form](#) (PDF) and submitting it before 5:00 p.m. on the last business day before the first day of instruction of the term. Cancellation of registration is only permitted if a student has not attended classes and has not used any University services. For more information see [chapter VII.C](#).
- **chair of committee** – faculty member who is responsible for convening an examination committee, conducting the examination, and submitting the result of the examination to the necessary offices. This person may or may not be the student’s adviser or director of research
- **concentration** – an area of specialization within a student’s major that is approved as a program of 24-32 hours, and will show on a student’s transcript when properly completed
- **conferral** – the date on which the University officially records and grants degrees; there are four conferral dates in each academic year
- **degree audit** – a review to certify that a student has met all the requirements for graduation and the degree can be conferred
- **degree-seeking or degree candidate** – a student status in which the student is in the process of obtaining a degree
- **deposit** – the process of submitting to the Graduate College the thesis and other forms necessary to graduate
- **dissertation** – document deposited in the Graduate College as a requirement for the doctoral degree; can also be called a thesis
- **drop** – the act of dropping one or more courses from the student schedule. Deadlines do exist, and missing a deadline can cause a W (withdraw) to appear on the transcript.
- **dual degree** – pursuit of two separate degrees at the same time
- **GPA** – [Graduate and Professional Admissions](#), the unit within the Graduate College that oversees the graduate application process and SEVIS processing for international applicants
- **GSAS** – [Graduate Student Academic Services](#), the unit within the Graduate College that supports graduate academic record services (petitions, registration, end of term processes), and assists students with advising, problem solving, and conflict resolution
- **joint degree** – a campus approved program in which a student pursues two degrees, and some courses fulfill requirements of both programs
- **major** – the approved area of study in which a student receives their degree, for example, Physics, Music, English, Special Education, Finance, etc.; for a complete list, see the [Graduate Programs of Study](#)

- **minor** – an approved area of specialization outside a student’s major area of study consisting of at least 12 hours; approved minors will show on a student’s transcript when requirements have been completed
- **non-degree** – a student status in which the student is not seeking a degree or applying credit toward a future degree
- **petition** – the process a student uses to request an exception to a Graduate College rule, requirement, or deadline
- **off-campus** – refers to courses offered by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign’s Division of Academic Outreach at locations other than the main campus
- **online** – refers to courses offered by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign’s Division of Academic Outreach using instructional technologies
- **Reading Day** – the designated period between the last day of classes and the first day of final examinations
- **residence credit** – credit hours earned at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus or at other designated locations; a certain amount of residence credit hours are required for each degree
- **residency** – home location used to determine application status and tuition assessment rate
- [Registrar, Office of the](#) – the unit that oversees campus registration processes, assesses tuition and fees, certifies degrees, and issues transcripts
- **SEVIS** – [Student and Exchange Visitor Information System](#), the Internet-based program operated by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to track all students and scholars who are in F-1 and J-1 status, along with their spouses and dependents
- **thesis** – document deposited in the Graduate College as a requirement for a graduate degree; for doctoral students, can also be called a dissertation
- **traineeship** – a type of fellowship that is awarded to provide educational training in particular disciplinary areas (see [chapter VIII.B](#) for more information).
- [UI-Integrate Self Service](#) – the interface that students use for registration and records, financial aid, billing, personal information, and to apply for graduation; faculty use this interface for course management and advising services
- **withdrawal** – a student who wishes to drop all courses after the [cancellation deadline](#) whether enrolled for one or more courses, must withdraw from the University for that semester, ([see chapter VII.C for more information](#))
- **withdraw** – W, a permanent transcript notation signifying an approved withdraw without credit from a course, ([see chapter III.A.1 for more information](#))

Chapter II: Student Status and Registration

There are three terms in each academic year: fall, spring, and summer. 400- and 500-level courses are designated as graduate-level courses. Some 600-level courses may be taken for graduate credit rather than professional credit.

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A. Student Status

A student may be admitted to the Graduate College with either full graduate standing or with limited status, as a degree-seeking student or as a non-degree student. The admission status is stated in the Notice of Admission, which is issued by [Graduate and Professional Admissions](#). Students must have full graduate standing and be degree-seeking in order to be awarded a graduate degree.

1. Limited Status:

A student who does not meet one or more of the admission requirements may be approved for admission with limited status. The most common reasons for limited status admission are:

- course deficiencies, as determined by the department, that must be remedied,
- low undergraduate GPA (grade point average below 3.0 on a 4.0 scale), see [chapter III.B.5](#) for more information,
- no comparable bachelors degree, or
- a lack of demonstrated English language proficiency.

Students admitted with limited status must address deficiencies in order to continue beyond the first semester. Additionally, to continue beyond the first semester, students must fulfill all conditions of admission, including providing all required transcripts.

2. Non-degree Status:

There are several types of non-degree students. Non-degree students who wish to take classes in the fall or spring semesters must be recommended for admission by a department and admitted by the Graduate College. Students interested in non-degree summer only enrollment do not have to be recommended for admission by a specific program; only Graduate College admission is required. Exchange students and students taking classes through the [Division of Academic Outreach](#) are often non-degree. There are a number of restrictions and conditions that apply to non-degree status. A non-degree student:

- is not eligible for financial aid administered by the Graduate College, such as fellowships and conference travel awards,
- must reapply for admission and pay the application fee if he or she wishes to become a degree-seeking student,

- is limited to taking fewer than 12 hours per fall or spring semester (fewer than 6 hours in the summer), which means they are not considered to be full-time for most purposes; ([see chapter II.C.3](#)); exceptions are CIC Traveling Scholars and international students participating in special exchange programs for which full-time approval has been obtained from the Graduate College prior to admission, and international students who do not hold student visas,
- may petition to transfer a maximum of 12 hours of credit taken while enrolled as a non-degree student ([see chapter III.C](#)) to a degree program, if subsequently admitted to and enrolled in a degree program, and
- cannot register until the fourth day of instruction for the fall or spring semester, and can only register if space is available. The late registration fee will not be assessed if the student completes his or her registration on or before the tenth day of instruction in a semester.

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B. Registration

Students must enroll during their term of admission. If enrollment in that term is not possible, students should contact their graduate program to request their admission term be changed. Students are expected to be enrolled for spring and fall semesters throughout their graduate program, and students must be enrolled in a program for at least 12 hours in one term in order to graduate from the program ([see chapter IV.A.2](#) for more information). Fellowship recipients must be enrolled during the terms of their appointments ([see chapter VIII.B.1](#) for details). Students with assistantships for spring or fall must be enrolled during the term in which they are appointed. See [chapter VIII.A](#) for information about summer appointments and assistantship policies.

International students cannot drop below full-time unless they have prior approval from [International Student and Scholar Services](#), and they should see the explanation of full-time status in this handbook ([see chapter II.C.3](#)) and the policy on a [Full-Time Course of Study for Graduate Students](#) for more information.

Students can register online using the [UI-Integrate Self-Service](#) registration system until the tenth day of instruction. All students are strongly encouraged to register by the tenth day for many reasons including implications for financial aid and insurance coverage.

International students must register by the tenth day of instruction to comply with SEVIS requirements.

Students are responsible for their own registration and for ensuring the accuracy of their schedules. Students can check their registration online and print their schedules as needed. Students who find errors in their schedules should immediately correct these errors. Corrections must be completed before the [deadline for adding or dropping a course](#).

Complete registration information including a link to online registration, a registration checklist, and registration help can be found at the [Office of the Registrar](#). In particular, the section on

registration procedures includes information on time tickets (the earliest date and time a student can enroll for a future semester), eligibility to register, [holds \(II.B.3\)](#), enrollment requirements and prerequisites, “authorization only” courses, [credit-no credit \(II.B.8\)](#), [canceling registration \(VII.C\)](#), and [withdrawal \(VII.C\)](#) (including refund deadlines).

1. **Deadlines:**

The deadlines for students to add and drop classes vary depending on the length of the class (e.g. full semester or part of term) and the term. See the [Graduate College Academic Calendar](#) for exact dates.

Add Deadlines

After the tenth day of instruction in the fall and spring semesters and until the end of the sixth week of instruction, students wishing to **add** full semester classes may do so at the Graduate College through the Graduate Student Academic Services (GSAS) unit. The forms needed vary depending on registration status and the date the change is requested.

Students registering for their first class after the tenth day must complete a [Late Registration form](#).

Students adding a course after the tenth day must complete a [Late Course Change form](#) to add any full semester courses. If a class carries departmental restrictions, departmental approval must be indicated on the Late Course Change form.

After the sixth week of instruction, Late Course Change forms will be **required** to add any full semester classes, and Late Registration forms will be **required** to register. These forms must be stamped by the enrolling department(s) to indicate approval to add courses. Forms must be submitted to GSAS for completion of the request.

After 5:00 p.m. on Reading Day, students must use a [Graduate Student Petition](#) to add a class for that semester.

Drop Deadlines

In the fall and spring semesters, students can use UI-Integrate Self-Service to drop full semester classes until the end of the eighth week of instruction. After the eighth week and until the end of the twelfth week of instruction, students wishing to drop full semester classes may do so through GSAS, without receiving a grade of W. After the twelfth week, students wishing to drop a class will need to complete the Late Course Change form with academic departmental approval, and will **receive a grade of W** for the class. After 5:00 p.m. on Reading Day, students must use a [Graduate Student Petition](#) to request to drop a class for that semester.

2. **Leaves from Graduate Programs:**

Many graduate programs have policies governing leaves. A student who has a need to

interrupt his or her graduate program should make arrangements with the department and adviser prior to departure. Because of SEVIS regulations, policies concerning leaves for international students are different from policies for domestic students.

A **domestic** student who has not registered for any three consecutive terms (including summer) must submit a [Graduate Student Petition](#) requesting re-entry. A student holding educational loans should consult the lender before choosing not to enroll for a fall or spring semester.

International students who plan not to enroll for a spring or fall semester or plan to leave campus are **required** to meet with staff from [International Student and Scholar Services](#). International students must [petition](#) for re-entry after one missed semester (not including summer), and will need to work with the staff from International Student and Scholar Services as well as with their department.

3. **Holds:**

Holds can be placed on a student's record for several reasons. Most commonly these, include departmental deficiencies, immunization requirements, disciplinary reasons, financial encumbrance to the University, lack of academic progress, failure to submit transcripts, or low GPA. Holds may prohibit the student from making changes to their registration, from receiving a transcript, or from graduating. Holds will appear in the Registration section of a student's [UI-Integrate profile](#).

4. ***In Absentia* Registration:**

In absentia registration is designed for students who wish or need to remain registered, but plan to be studying or doing research for at least one semester at least 50 miles away from campus. There is no decrease in tuition rates when a student is registered *in absentia*, and tuition assessment will be based on the student's college and curriculum of enrollment, their residency status, and the number of hours for which the student is registered.

In absentia registration, however, recognizes that such students do not access the full range of campus services and resources while away. Therefore students registered *in absentia* [are only assessed the general fee](#). Payment of the general fee provides students with access to their university e-mail and access to library services. Because students are not assessed other fees they are not eligible for services associated with those fees. For example, if students registered *in absentia* wish to have health insurance they must make alternative arrangements. For a list of [what services each fee includes](#) and [for the cost of each fee](#), refer to the Office of the Registrar.

A student must submit a [petition](#) to GSAS to request *in absentia* registration. An approved petition allows a student to register *in absentia*, but the student must complete the registration using the [UI-Integrate system](#). Students may register *in absentia* for any number of credit hours.

5. **Zero Registration:**

Graduate students who have completed all degree requirements except the thesis or

dissertation may consider registering for zero hours of research credit, regardless of whether or not the student has a tuition and fee waiver. It is important for such students to consider the implications of not being a full-time student ([see chapter II.C.3 for more information](#)).

6. [Graduate College \(GC\) 599](#) (PDF):

GC 599 is a registration option for advanced doctoral students who do not have tuition waivers but must maintain full-time enrollment to defer student loans. To be eligible to register for GC 599, a student must:

- have a guaranteed student loan that would require immediate repayment if the student were not registered for the minimum credit required by the lender to defer the loan,
- have passed the preliminary examination prior to the term in which he or she wishes to register for GC 599,
- have completed all Graduate College and departmental requirements for the degree except for completing the dissertation, defending, and depositing,
- not have any financial assistance that would cover tuition and fees, and
- complete and submit the appropriate [form](#) to the Graduate College.

Students who are required to complete a mandatory internship as part of their degree requirements may also register for GC 599 provided they comply with the all but the third bullet point listed above.

Students enrolled in GC 599 for zero credit are assessed Range IV tuition plus the General fee. Payment of the general fee provides students with access to their university e-mail and access to library services. Because students are not assessed other fees they are not eligible for services associated with those fees. For example, if students registered in GC 599 wish to have health insurance they must make alternative arrangements. For a list of [what services each fee includes](#) and [for the cost of each fee](#), refer to the Office of the Registrar.

7. **Audit:**

An auditor is only a listener in the classes attended; he or she is not a participant in any part of the exercises. Auditors are not permitted in studio, laboratory, or activity courses. An audited course will appear on the student's transcript with a grade of AU. Audited hours do not count toward assessed hours. An audited course does not count toward the registration requirement for fellows. A course, once audited, may not be repeated for graduate credit.

Students wishing to audit a class must make the request using an [Auditor's Permit](#). The student should take the Auditor's Permit form to the first class meeting and ask the instructor to sign, indicating approval. The form should then be submitted to the Graduate College for approval. Approval from both the instructor and the Graduate College is required. Students who are registered for less than 12 hours, not including the audited course, who do not have a tuition waiver will be charged a \$15 audit fee. An audited course does not count toward the registration requirement for fellows.

8. Credit-No Credit:

Credit-no credit is a permanent notation on the academic record that may be requested by a student with the adviser's approval. Grades for study abroad and transfer credit are also designated on the transcript as credit-no credit.

Students on limited status admission or probation are not allowed to register for credit-no credit course work until the limited status or probation has been removed. Students are advised to check the [Class Schedule](#) to be sure that the course desired is not limited to letter grading only, which means the course cannot be taken for credit-no-credit.

In any one semester, a student may take no more than 4 semester hours on a credit-no credit basis. Over the entire degree program, a student must earn at least 2 hours of graded (A-D) course work for each hour of credit-no credit course work.

The [form to request credit-no credit](#) notation must be completed and submitted to GSAS before the deadline published in the [Graduate College Academic Calendar](#). After the request is approved and processed, the letter grade reported by the instructor will change to the credit-no-credit notation as follows. A grade of C- or better will be converted to CR (credit), and a letter grade of D+ or lower or a grade of ABS will be converted to NC (no credit).

A student may amend a credit-no credit request and return to a regular grade mode by filing a second credit-no-credit form and submitting it by the published deadline as indicated in the [Graduate College Academic Calendar](#). Additional information about credit-no credit can be found in the [Student Code](#).

9. Off-campus and Online Courses:

Graduate courses are offered by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign at various sites throughout the state as well as through online and guided individual study instructional delivery methods. For degree-seeking candidates, credit earned in off-campus and online courses is counted toward an advanced degree and counted as credit earned in residence (see [chapter IV.A.4](#)) in the same way as credit earned in on-campus courses. Non-degree seeking students should refer to [chapter III.C](#) for information about transfer of credit. Information about these courses is available from the [Division of Academic Outreach](#) in the Office of Continuing Education. Courses taken as a CIC Traveling Scholar are not considered off-campus. CIC Traveling Scholars should see chapters on [transfer of credit \(III.C\)](#) and [residence credit \(IV.A.4\)](#).

10. Enrollment Verification:

Students often need to verify that they are enrolled. The University of Illinois has authorized the National Student Clearinghouse to provide [enrollment verification information online](#).

[Print](#)

C. Course Loads

1. **Maximum Enrollment:**

The maximum amount of credit in which a graduate student may enroll without special overload approval from the Graduate College is 20 hours in fall and spring terms and 12 hours in the summer term. To request approval to register above the established maximum, a student must submit a [Graduate Student Petition](#). Students in non-degree status have other restrictions, see chapter [II.A.2](#) for more information.

2. **Minimum Enrollment:**

The Graduate College places no restriction on the minimum amount of credit for which a student may register. However, some departments have established a minimum amount of credit. Students should keep in mind that enrollment below a full-time course of study may jeopardize progress toward a degree, financial aid, fellowship, loan deferment, or the visa status of an international student (see Full-time Enrollment below).

3. **Full-time Enrollment:**

There is no standard definition of a [full-time course of study](#). The Graduate College does not require that students be enrolled full-time. However, graduate students may be required to maintain “full-time enrollment” for other reasons including departmental requirements, certification related to student loans or other financial aid, fellowship and traineeship appointments (see chapter [VIII.B.1](#)), certain types of non-University insurance policies, or tax requirements.

International students on an F-1 or J-1 visa are required to maintain full-time enrollment for purposes of Student Exchange and Visitor Information System (SEVIS) reporting. For purposes of load, each required or recommended ESL course taken as a result of the English as a Second Language Placement Test (EPT) will count as the equivalent of 4 graduate hours, even if the course credit is recorded as zero hours of credit toward the degree. **International students** with questions about full-time enrollment should contact the [Office of International Student and Scholar Services](#).

Simultaneous enrollment at another institution may not be added to hours enrolled at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in order to determine full-time status. For the Graduate College, enrollment in off-campus or online courses offered through the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign counts toward full-time enrollment.

Students with questions about registration load and loan deferment should consult their lenders (school, bank, or loan agency). Students may also contact the [Office of Student Financial Aid](#), or finaid@illinois.edu, for advice or referral to the appropriate office or agency. Verification of full-time enrollment may be ordered [online](#) or from the [Office of the Registrar's Transcript Section](#).

Chapter III: Academic Record

Beginning in Fall 2004, graduate credit at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is measured using semester hours, and the numbering of graduate level courses changed from 300- and 400- level courses to 400- and 500-level courses.

[Print](#)

A. Grading System

See [article 3-102](#) and [article 3-104](#) of the Student Code for more information on course grades.

1. Course Grades:

Grades and the points used in the computation of grade point averages are as follows:

A+	4.00
A	4.00
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00
C-	1.67

D+	1.33
D	1.00
D-	0.67
F	0.00
F by rule	0.00
ABS	0.00

2.

A grade of F may be assigned to courses dropped for academic irregularities.

F-by-rule is automatically assigned when a grade of Incomplete has not been replaced by a letter grade by 5:00 p.m. on Reading Day of the next semester in which the student is registered. Incomplete grades earned in the spring semester will not be converted to F-by-rule until the end of the following fall semester, whether or not the student registers for the summer term.

The grade of ABS may be assigned when the student is absent from the final examination without an acceptable excuse. A grade of ABS counts as a failure and is not acceptable for degree credit.

In addition to assigned grades that are included in the computation of Grade Point Average (GPA), the following notations may be used, but are not included in computation of GPA:

AU	No Points
CR-NC	No Points
DFR	No Points
I	No Points
NR	No Points
NV	No Points
S/U	No Points
W	No Points

3.

4. AU – Audit. A permanent notation that indicates attendance as a visitor only. Information about auditing a course is located in [chapter II.B.7](#).

CR-NC – Credit earned-No Credit earned ([see chapter II.B.8](#)).

DFR – Grade temporarily deferred. To be used only in those thesis, research, and special problems courses extending over more than one semester that are taken by graduate students as preparation for the thesis, and in other approved courses that extend over more than one semester. The symbol DFR in courses other than thesis (499/599) must be converted to a permanent grade no later than 5:00 p.m. on Reading Day of the next semester in which the student is registered. If no grade change is submitted within that period, the DFR will be converted as follows: for graded courses to an F, for S/U courses to a U, and for C/NC courses to an NC. The DFR symbol for thesis courses (499/599) stands indefinitely until a Supplemental Grade Report Form is submitted by the adviser at the completion (successful or unsuccessful) of the thesis. See [chapter IV.A.6](#) for more information on thesis research credit.

I – Incomplete. Approved extension of time to complete the final examination or other requirements of the course. (Entitles the student to an examination later without fee, or to additional time to complete other requirements of the course. The final grade must be reported on the Supplemental Grade Report Form.) The instructor may authorize such extension of time for a graduate student regardless of the level of the course. A grade of Incomplete must be replaced by a letter grade no later than 5:00 p.m. of Reading Day of the next semester in which the student is registered or it automatically becomes an F grade. If the student does not enroll the following semester in a graded course, the incomplete grade becomes an F-by-rule after one year. Incomplete grades earned in the spring semester will not be converted to F-by-rule until the end of the following fall semester, whether or not the student registers for the summer term. Requests for extensions of time to complete the course requirements are made by [petition](#) to the Graduate College. A student will not be certified for a degree with an Incomplete grade in the academic record.

NR – Not reported. This temporary notation is automatically entered if an

instructor does not report a grade by the deadline.

NV – Not valid. This temporary notation is used when an instructor reports a grade in a mode that has not been approved for use with that course.

S/U – Satisfactory-Unsatisfactory. A permanent notation used as a final grade only in courses (generally thesis research or seminar courses) approved for this grade mode.

W – Withdraw. A permanent notation signifying an approved withdraw without credit, ([see chapter VII.C for more information](#))

5.

6. **Minimum Grades and Credit for Repeated Courses:**

The Graduate College has no minimum grade policy, but a department or program may set a minimum grade to be earned in order for a course to count as credit toward the degree. If a graduate student receives a grade below C, the student should check with his or her adviser or department to see if the department requires that the course be repeated to achieve a certain minimum grade.

A student may choose to repeat a course. When a graduate student repeats a course, the grade for the course when first taken is the grade that is used in computation of the GPA. The accumulated hours for the first attempt count toward a degree, unless the course is failed. If a student fails a course and then repeats it, the F is used to calculate the student's GPA, and the accumulated hours toward the degree are earned when the student successfully repeats the course. The grade for the repeated course is not used in the calculation of GPA.

[Print](#)

B. Academic Standing

Graduate students must maintain satisfactory progress in all aspects of their degree programs in order to continue as students. The Graduate College monitors cumulative graduate grade point average, and the graduate programs monitor all other aspects of academic progress. There are three categories of Academic Standing: Good Standing, Probation and Dismissal.

1. **Grade Point Average (GPA) Computation:**

The GPA component of academic status is calculated at a predetermined date at the end of each semester. Even though grades may be changed in the official record after this date, the academic status for that term is NOT changed. At the point of calculation, graduate students must have a GPA at or above their department's minimum to be in good standing. See [chapter III.A.1](#) for more information about grade points used in computations.

2. **Minimum GPA:**

Campus policy requires a student to maintain a minimum cumulative graduate GPA of 2.75 in order to continue in an advanced degree program, and to have a cumulative graduate GPA of at least 2.75 to graduate. [Many departments, however, require a](#)

[minimum of 3.0 or higher](#). For departments with higher minima, the Graduate College enforces the department's minimum. Students enrolled in joint degree programs must meet the minimum GPA requirements of both degree programs in order to maintain satisfactory academic progress and to graduate.

3. **Good Standing:**

Good academic standing requires more than an acceptable GPA. Graduate students must make satisfactory progress in all aspects of their program in order to continue as students. Additional factors that a program may use to assess academic progress include, but are not limited to, performance in course work, satisfactory and timely completion of all milestones as determined by the program, satisfactory progress in research, and performance on qualifying, preliminary, and other examinations. Failure to meet these requirements can result in the program recommending to the Graduate College that the student be placed on probation or dismissed from the Graduate College. Good standing can also be referred to as full graduate standing, which is the normal status of graduate students with no [holds \(II.B.3\)](#) or [limited status \(II.A.1\)](#) at the University.

4. **Probation:**

A student who has a cumulative graduate GPA below the degree program's minimum at the end of any semester of enrollment will be placed on probation. Once a student has been placed on probation, the student must raise the cumulative GPA to his/her program's minimum by the end of the next term of enrollment, or face dismissal from the Graduate College. Please refer to the complete [Graduate College Probation Policy](#) for more information.

5. **Limited Status Due to Low GPA:**

Students who are admitted to the Graduate College on limited status because of no comparable bachelor's degree or low undergraduate GPA are admitted on probation ([see chapter II.A.1](#) for more information). If these students do not meet the minimum GPA for their program in the first semester of graduate work, they will receive a notice of dismissal from the Graduate College ([see chapter III.B.6](#)).

6. **Dismissal:**

A graduate student placed on probation who fails to improve the GPA to the required level by the end of the next term of enrollment will receive a notice of dismissal from the Graduate College. This action prohibits the student from registering and drops any courses for which the student has pre-registered. If a student is dismissed from the Graduate College because of a low cumulative graduate GPA, the [graduate student petition](#) process may be used to request reinstatement. The Graduate College will consider petitions containing strong program support and strong justification based on other factors pertinent to the program's determination of satisfactory academic progress.

[Print](#)

C. Transfer of Credit

Credit may not be transferred to count toward Stage II or Stage III of a doctoral program ([see chapter VI.C](#)). The only credit that will be considered for transfer is credit:

- that has not previously been applied toward a degree,
- that is graded graduate level course work from an accredited institution,

- in which the student has achieved a grade of B or better, and
- that would not be more than five years old for a master's degree, or Certificate of Advanced Study, or seven years old for a doctoral degree at the time of degree conferral.

There are two types of credit that a graduate student may wish to transfer. Students may wish to transfer credit from one graduate degree program to another graduate degree program within the Graduate College at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Alternatively, graduate students may wish to transfer credit completed outside the Graduate College. Different rules apply for each type.

Generally, a maximum of 12 semester hours of graduate work completed **outside** the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign **Graduate College** may be counted toward a graduate degree. Work completed outside the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Graduate College that can be transferred includes these four types:

1. graduate level work taken as an undergraduate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, but not used toward a degree,
2. graduate level work taken through Guided Individual Study at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign,
3. graduate level work taken at another accredited institution, but not used toward a degree,
4. graduate level work done while enrolled as a non-degree student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Students who have earned up to 12 hours of graduate credit while enrolled as a non-degree student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign may petition those hours and up to 12 hours of graduate credit taken at another institution.

To request transfer of credit from outside the Graduate College, a student should submit a [Graduate Student Petition](#), accompanied by official transcripts if these are not already available in the student's file, and validation by specialists in the area of the course work in the student's department that the course work is both applicable and of an appropriate level of difficulty. These petitions may be submitted after the student receives their notice of admission. A student must have successfully completed at least 8 semester hours of graded graduate work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign before submitting a request for transfer of credit, **except when the request is for graduate course work taken at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign while enrolled as a non-degree student.**

Most transfer credit will be reflected on the transcript without course titles and grades. The exceptions are:

- graduate credit transferred from the University of Illinois at Chicago or from the University of Illinois at Springfield,
- graduate credit earned through the [CIC Traveling Scholar Program](#),
- credit earned in the Illinois College of Medicine that is approved for application to the student's graduate program for students in the Medical Scholars Program, and
- graduate credit earned through an Urbana-Champaign off-campus course or program.

Distinct from credit transferred from outside, credit may be transferred from one graduate program at this University to another graduate program at this University as long as it was not applied toward another degree. The Graduate College requires that both departments involved approve of the transfer of work from one program to the other; and that the courses will only be applied to one degree program.

To request a transfer of credit from one program to another within the Graduate College, a student should submit a [Graduate Student Petition](#) clearly specifying the above requirements.

For these petitions, there is no limit on the number of hours that a student may request be transferred. Credit taken while in the [CIC Traveling Scholar Program](#) is considered to be within the Graduate College.

Chapter IV: Graduate Degree and Graduation Requirements

Students are expected to be aware of and follow the policies and requirements in effect at their term of admission. Departmental and Graduate College policies may change subsequent to the term of admission, but subsequent changes in program requirements may not be imposed on students. Additional specific information on master's degree requirements ([see chapter V](#)), and doctoral degree requirements ([see chapter VI](#)) can be found in this handbook.

[Print](#)

A. Graduate Degree Requirements

1. **Departmental Expectations:**

Requirements for specific graduate degrees and certificates are listed in the appropriate sections of the [Programs of Study](#), and in departmental handbooks. All departments should distribute a handbook or statement to their graduate students listing the requirements for the graduate degree programs to which they are admitted.

2. **Registration:**

In order to receive a graduate degree a student must be registered for at least 12 hours in the program for at least one term, which could be spring, summer or fall. To be counted toward the graduate degree, hours must be at the 400-level or greater.

3. **Changing Departments or Programs:**

Graduate College policy allows students to transfer from one academic program to another, provided that both departments agree to the transfer. Students wishing to transfer, either as a permanent transfer, or in order to obtain a degree from both programs (joint or dual degree programs), should use the [petition](#) process to request the transfer. With transfer by petition, students are not required to complete a new application, pay an application fee or provide copies of transcripts already on file.

Departments, however, may request additional information such as a new statement of purpose or new letters of reference. Likewise, departments with special application requirements may request that these requirements be completed. When filing for a transfer by petition, the anticipated department must comment on the transfer by clearly indicating whether or not they accept the student, and the date when they wish the acceptance to be valid. When all signatures are obtained, the petition is forwarded to the Graduate Student Academic Services unit for consideration. See chapter [IV.A.2](#) for minimum credit hours needed in a program.

International students with F-1 or J-1 visas who transfer from one program to another are required to obtain new immigration documents from International Student and Scholar Services.

4. **Residence Credit:**

University of Illinois rules prescribe that a certain amount of credit hours for each degree received from this campus be taken as residence credit. Credit hours earned on the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign campus are considered residence credit. Residence credit also includes:

- graduate credit transferred from the University of Illinois at Chicago or from the University of Illinois at Springfield,
- graduate credit earned through the CIC Traveling Scholar Program,
- credit earned in the College of Medicine that is approved for application to the student's graduate program for students in the Medical Scholars Program, and
- graduate credit earned through an Urbana-Champaign off-campus course or program.

Residence requirements are outlined in [Rule 3-801 of the Student Code](#).

5. **Proficiency Examinations:**

Graduate students may satisfy specific requirements through proficiency examinations; however, in such cases, credit cannot be earned toward the required hours for the graduate degree. Students should check with their department for details about proficiency examinations.

6. **Research Credit and 599:**

A student cannot deposit a thesis without record of registration in research credit courses. Likewise, students with a record of registration in research credit will be required to deposit a thesis to complete their degree. Most departments use the course designation "599" to indicate research registration for both master's and doctoral students. Graduate students should register for research credit during semesters when they are working on the thesis.

Departments may set criteria that determine at what point in the program students may begin registering for research credit (599). Registration in research credit must always be done with the approval of the student's adviser.

The grade of DFR (deferred) is reported for research credit until the thesis has been completed, successfully defended if required, and deposited in the Graduate College. When a thesis is successfully defended and deposited, the DFR grades will be changed to S (satisfactory). If the student fails the final defense, the grade becomes U (unsatisfactory), and the thesis cannot be deposited.

If research credit is taken but thesis work is not completed, the 599 registration cannot be removed from the record. If the work will not be completed, the student must successfully [petition](#) for grades to permanently remain as deferred (DFR) in order to receive a degree. Students will not be certified for a degree with any grades of DFR in their academic record unless a [petition](#) has been approved.

7. **Second Degree in a Similar Area:**

An individual should not receive another degree for work that is substantially similar to the work used to complete a previous degree. Therefore, the Graduate College will generally not allow the awarding of a second graduate degree in an area in which a graduate degree at an equivalent level (master's, doctoral) has already been earned. This rule applies to cases where the first degree is from the University or from another domestic or international institution. Exceptions may be allowed in cases where it is clear that the student's degree programs differ significantly. The [petition](#) process should be used for such requests.

8. **Graduate Minors**

A graduate minor is an approved program in a secondary area of study that relates closely to a student's chosen major and may be included on an academic transcript. A list of [campus-approved graduate minors](#) is [available online](#). As noted in the [Policy for Graduate Minors](#), students majoring in an area of study may not pursue a minor in the same area.

Each program has different procedures for applying to and completing their minor, and students should contact the minor department for details. Students who wish to add or drop a graduate minor from their academic record must submit a graduate petition to make the change to their academic program. An academic program change alters the requirements needed for graduation, and therefore changes should be done carefully and in consultation with the graduate program adviser.

It is expected that work toward a minor will not overlap and be counted toward major requirements, but it is at the discretion of the major department to determine which, if any, of the courses used to fulfill the minor will also be used to fulfill the major graduate degree.

Minor(s) will not be added retroactively to a student record after the major degree is conferred, and even though a minor may be included in a student's academic record, it will not show on a transcript until the degree has been conferred. A student's approved enrollment period will not be extended for the purpose of completing a minor, unless an extension is also requested and approved by petition. (See chapters [V.E](#) and [VI.E](#) for more information about time limits.)

If a student successfully petitions to receive a minor, and then wishes to change to a new program before receiving a degree, the new program must note on the petition that they will accept the minor in their degree program and note if any of the courses used to fulfill the minor will also be used to fulfill the new major graduate degree. If the petition is not approved, the minor will be removed from the record when the petition to change programs is approved.

9. **Graduate Concentrations:**

A graduate concentration constitutes a coherent program of study requiring considerable depth of knowledge. A concentration may refer to a subfield within a discipline, or to an interdepartmental and/or interdisciplinary area of knowledge. As indicated in the [Policy](#)

[for Graduate Concentrations](#), approved concentrations may be included on academic transcripts. Some concentrations (major-based) are only open to a student majoring in the offering department. Other concentrations (floating) are open to students in a broad range of majors. A few majors require a concentration, but most do not. Approved Graduate Concentrations and their related majors are [listed online](#).

Students who wish to add or drop a graduate concentration from their academic record must submit a graduate petition to request the change to their academic program and to what appears on the transcript. A change in concentration is a program change, and will alter the requirements needed for graduation, and therefore changes should be done carefully and in consultation with the graduate program adviser. Approvals are required from the major department and adviser and the unit overseeing the concentration.

It is expected that work toward a concentration will completely overlap and be counted toward major requirements, but if the major and concentration units are not the same, it is at the discretion of the major department to determine which of the courses used to fulfill the concentration will not also be used to fulfill the major graduate degree.

Concentration(s) will not be added retroactively to a student record after the major degree is conferred. A student's approved enrollment period will not be extended for the purpose of completing a concentration, unless an extension is also requested and approved by petition. (See chapters [V.E](#) and [VI.E](#) for more information about time limits.)

If a student successfully petitions to receive a concentration, and then wishes to change to a new program before receiving the degree, the new program must note on the petition whether they will accept the concentration in their degree program and note which of the courses used to fulfill the concentration will also be used to fulfill the new major graduate degree. If the petition is not approved, the concentration will be removed from the record when the petition to change programs is approved.

10. Certificate of Advanced Study (CAS):

Some academic units, such as the Graduate School of Library and Information Science and some departments in the College of Education, offer Certificates of Advanced Study for students who are interested in additional professional training beyond the master's degree but are not planning to obtain the doctoral degree. These programs usually require completion of at least 32 semester hours of course work beyond the master's degree. Information concerning specific Advanced Certificate programs is available from departmental offices.

A candidate for a Certificate of Advanced Study is expected to complete all degree requirements within five years of first registering in the Graduate College. Therefore, a Certificate of Advanced Study candidate with course work that is more than five years old at the time of degree or certificate conferral must [petition](#) the Graduate College asking that the course work be accepted for the degree or certificate. The petition must include an explanation from the department regarding how the student's knowledge in the areas covered by the old course work meets current standards. This justification is needed

for degree certification and the petition should be filed during the term the student is placed on the degree list.

11. Joint Degree Programs:

A joint degree program is a University approved program in which students pursue two specifically identified graduate degrees simultaneously, and both degrees must be conferred simultaneously. In a joint degree program the total time for the two degrees is decreased by a predetermined maximum through the acceptance of required courses in one program as electives in the other. Joint degree programs commonly involve one graduate degree and one professional degree. A list of approved joint degree programs can be found in the [Programs of Study](#).

A student interested in pursuing joint degrees should consult both departments, as they must be admitted separately to each program as a joint degree candidate. A student in a joint degree program must register in each program for a minimum of 12 hours for at least one term (see [chapter IV.A.3](#) for information about changing programs), and must complete the minimum requirements for each degree. Joint degree students may be enrolled in either program when they defend.

Bachelor's/Master's Programs:

Approved joint programs(link to new list) include programs that [combine a bachelor's and a master's degree](#) in the same field. Like other joint degree programs, both the bachelor's and the master's degrees are generally awarded at the end of the program. Because of this, these students are admitted to the Graduate College before they have earned a bachelor's degree. In some cases, students must fulfill the minimum total hours required for the bachelor's and master's degrees, and in others, students may double count some coursework, but in either situation, the time to completion for both degrees is reduced by efficiencies of scheduling and the ability to take both graduate and undergraduate work in the senior year. See the [undergraduate college's Program of Study](#) for details about a specific program.

List of approved joint degree programs:

Accountancy
Industrial Engineering
Mechanical Engineering
Computer Science
Materials Science & Engineering

12. Dual Degree Programs:

A dual degree program is defined as one in which a student pursues two post-baccalaureate degrees simultaneously. In dual degree programs, students must complete all requirements for each degree, without overlap. With the approval of both departments, students would have the opportunity to integrate their studies rather than completing the degrees in series. A student pursuing two post-baccalaureate degrees simultaneously must be registered in each program for a minimum of 12 hours for at least one term (see chapter [IV.A.3](#) for information about changing programs), in order to obtain both degrees. Dual degree students may be enrolled in either program when they defend.

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B. Graduation Requirements

1. Degree Conferral (Graduation Date):

Master's degrees are conferred in May, August, October, and December. Doctoral degrees are conferred in May, October, and December. In order to receive a degree, a student must apply to be on the degree list for the appropriate graduation date. Until the tenth day of classes in a given semester, students may use the UI-Integrate Self-Service system to apply to be on the degree list. After the tenth day, students should complete an [Application for Degree form](#) and submit it to their graduate department office. Deadlines for applying to be on the list for each graduation date are noted on the [Thesis Office Deadlines Web page](#).

A student may not receive a degree with a grade of I, NR, or DFR in any course except thesis research, on their graduate record without an approved [petition](#).

2. Certification of Degree:

A student who has fulfilled all of the degree requirements before the next conferral date may need certification for employment or to meet visa requirements. To request a degree certification letter, the student should use the [Request for Certification of Degree Letter form](#). A student who has not deposited the thesis with the Graduate College (when deposit is required), who owes money to the University, or who is enrolled in any course other than research credit cannot receive a degree certification.

3. Theses:

A thesis is an original, significant contribution to the scholarly literature of an academic discipline. All University of Illinois graduate students whose programs require the completion of a thesis or dissertation must deposit their manuscript in the Graduate College.

Deposit:

The Graduate College does not require students to be registered at the time of deposit, but some departments may, so students should consult with their department before depositing. A thesis will not be accepted for deposit until all required materials have been submitted and all corrections requested by the Graduate College Thesis Office have been made. Deposit must be made by the appropriate master's or doctoral [deposit deadlines](#) set for each term. There are no exceptions. Upon deposit, the thesis becomes part of the student's academic record. No changes may be made to a thesis or dissertation after it has been deposited at the Graduate College.

Formatting:

The Graduate College will only accept theses and dissertations that meet the formatting requirements set forth in the [Graduate College Thesis Handbook](#). Many departments have additional, discipline specific format requirements, and the Graduate College requires that all students secure format approval from their department prior to format review in the Graduate College Thesis Office.

Dissemination:

Theses that are deposited as a requirement for the awarding of a degree are considered to be publications. Copyrightable works prepared by students as part of the requirements for a University degree program are deemed to be the property of the student.

As a condition of degree award, the University has the royalty-free right to retain, use and distribute a limited number of copies of the thesis, together with the right to require its publication for archival use (see [University of Illinois Board of Trustees' General Rules](#)).

In order to best disseminate and archive the significant work of University of Illinois graduates, the Graduate College requires that every doctoral dissertation and abstract be published. The Graduate College will determine the method of publication that most effectively secures the existence of the thesis/dissertation in perpetuity. The thesis will be available to the public through the University Library.

Permissions for Previously Published Work Included in the Thesis:

Prior publication of parts of the thesis is increasingly common. Students should secure written permission from the publisher (or whoever holds the copyright to the published work) for the thesis to be submitted in paper and electronic form. Students should bring two copies of these copyright permissions with them to their deposit.

Patent Review:

If a student's thesis contains potentially patentable information, a student may wish to have the thesis held by the Thesis Office while patentability is assessed. Holding a thesis does not postpone degree conferral or graduation. A student wishing to have a thesis held during the patent review process must contact the [Office of Technology Management](#) (OTM) prior to deposit. OTM will review the student's request and notify the Graduate College if a thesis is to be held. Intellectual property is an important aspect of thesis research. See [chapter I.C](#) for more information.

Chapter V: Requirements and Policies for Master's Degrees

Students are expected to be aware of and follow the policies and requirements in effect at their term of admission. Departmental and Graduate College policies may change subsequent to the term of admission, but subsequent changes in program and degree requirements may not be imposed on students. Master's students should also review [chapter IV](#).

[Print](#)

A. Credit Hour Requirements

The Graduate College requires a minimum of 32 semester hours of graduate credit for the master's degree, although a number of programs require more. The Graduate College requires that at least 12 hours be at the 500-level (including thesis, research or independent study credit), and that 8 of these 12 hours be in the major. Half or more of the hours applied to a master's degree must be earned in courses counted for residence credit, (see [chapter IV.A.4](#) and [chapter III.C](#) for more details and to see when transfer credit may count as residence credit). See [chapter IV.A.4](#) if enrolling for thesis research credit.

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B. Examinations

The Graduate College does not require a final examination or thesis committee for the master's degree. Departments that have such requirements determine their own rules for committee membership and administration of the examination. Master's students are not required by the Graduate College to be registered during the term in which they take their final exam, but some departments may.

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C. Completion of Theses

The Graduate College does not require thesis deposit for the master's degree, however, many programs do. In programs requiring a thesis deposit, the Graduate College does not require master's students to be registered during the term in which they deposit, but some departments may.

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D. Master's Adviser

The Graduate College requires that a master's candidate depositing a thesis have an adviser who is a member of the [Graduate Faculty](#).

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E. Time Limits

A master's degree candidate is expected to complete all degree requirements within five years of first registering in the Graduate College, unless the student is enrolled in a program with a different time limit that has been approved by the Graduate College. Therefore, a master's degree candidate with course work that is more than five years old at the time of degree conferral must [petition](#) the Graduate College asking that the course work be accepted for the degree. The petition must include an explanation from the department regarding how the student's knowledge in the areas covered by the old course work meets current standards. This justification is needed for degree certification, and the petition should be filed during the term when the student is placed on the degree list.

Chapter VI: Requirements and Policies for Doctoral Degrees

Students are expected to be aware of and follow the policies and requirements in effect at their term of admission. Departmental and Graduate College policies may change subsequent to the term of admission, but subsequent changes in program and degree requirements may not be imposed on students. Doctoral students should also review [chapter IV](#).

[Print](#)

A. Credit Hour Requirements

Doctoral degrees require successful completion of a minimum of 96 semester hours of graduate credit (see [section C](#) of this chapter for doctoral degree stages), except for those programs approved otherwise. Doctoral degrees also require successful completion of the preliminary and final examinations.

Doctoral degree candidates, regardless of transfer credits or a master's degree completed elsewhere, must complete at least 64 hours of residence credit ([IV.A.4](#)) out of the total of 96 hours required for the doctoral degree, and should also see [chapter III.C](#) for information about transfer credit. Thesis hours count toward residence credit.

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B. Registration Requirements

The Graduate College does not require that students be registered to take preliminary examinations, nor does the Graduate College require students to be registered at the time of deposit. However, individual departments may have registration requirements, so students should check with their department for details. The Graduate College does require that all doctoral candidates **be registered** for the entire term during which they take the final examination, regardless of when the thesis will be deposited or when the degree will be conferred. For this purpose only, "term" is defined as extending through the day prior to the first day of the following term. If enough thesis credits have been accumulated, registration for zero hours is acceptable. See [chapter II.B.6](#) for more information about enrollment in GC 599 for loan deferral. For students in the [Medical Scholars Program](#), registration in the College of Medicine during the term in which they defend meets the enrollment requirement.

Summer:

A student who was registered during summer session need not register for the fall semester if the final examination occurs on or before the final October examination deadline for the doctoral degree students. This date is published on the [Thesis Office Deadlines Web page](#). This policy provides a grace period at the beginning of the fall semester for students who are unable to assemble their dissertation committees over the summer. For example, in Fall 2008, a doctoral student who wants to defend but does not want to register for the fall term must: (a) have been

registered for Summer 2008 and (b) successfully defend by September 19, 2008, the deadline for holding the final examination for October 2008 graduation.

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C. Doctoral Degree Stages

The doctoral degree is commonly thought of in three phases or stages of progress, with each stage having unique components and milestones. Departments usually have specific tasks and requirements in each stage.

Stage I: A doctoral student is considered to be in Stage I from initial enrollment in the Graduate College to completion of a master's degree or its equivalent. Transfer credit can only be applied to Stage I. Each department should have a procedure for evaluating a student's progress at this first stage of doctoral work. Elements of this evaluation will include GPA, along with other factors related to [good academic standing and satisfactory progress \(III.B\)](#). In some departments, this evaluation may take the form of a qualifying examination, or other examination or series of examinations, which a student must pass before entering Stage II of the doctoral degree program. Evaluation of progress in Stage I, whether by examination or other formal review, should take place no later than the end of the second year after a student enters the doctoral program. The evaluation results should be communicated in writing to the student. Students who apply to a doctoral program having already completed a master's degree equivalent to that awarded by the University of Illinois are generally considered to have completed Stage I of the doctoral program unless the department deems otherwise, in which case the department must notify the student of the stage in which they are entering the program.

Stage II: A doctoral student is considered to be in Stage II from completion of the master's degree or equivalent to completion of all departmental requirements (except the defense and deposit of the dissertation), including passing the preliminary examination. In some programs, doctoral students entering with a master's degree will take a qualifying examination early in Stage II. Stage II usually consists of one or more years devoted to course work and research in preparation for the preliminary examination. A student who passes the preliminary examination has completed Stage II and is often referred to as being "ABD" (all but dissertation). A student who has completed Stage II is formally a candidate for the doctoral degree.

Stage III: Stage III is the time from the completion of Stage II to passing of the final defense and deposit of an approved dissertation. See the [Thesis Office Deadlines Web page](#) for deadline dates for final examinations and deposits.

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D. Doctoral Committees and Examinations

Committees may be formed and examinations given at various stages of graduate study in order to monitor and ensure the quality of graduate work. See the complete [policy on doctoral committees](#).

1. **Qualifying Examination and Qualifying Examination Committee:**

The Graduate College does not require qualifying examinations, but departments may. Qualifying exams, usually given at the end of Stage I of the doctoral work (see [chapter VI.C](#)), evaluate the student's knowledge in the field and preparation for the doctoral program. The format of these examinations may be written, oral, or both, as determined by the program. The program must clearly communicate information about the format and rules (i.e. closed-book) to all students in advance. Departments may internally appoint committees to conduct these examinations.

2. **Preliminary Examination and Preliminary Examination Committee:**

The preliminary examination is required for completion of Stage II of graduate study. Preliminary examinations may be oral or written or both, depending on the unit's policy, and generally evaluate the student's overall and specific knowledge in the field. Preliminary examinations also usually include an oral presentation to review the feasibility and appropriateness of a student's dissertation research proposal. The doctoral degree program prescribes the scope, format and procedures associated with the examination. The program must clearly communicate information about the format and rules (i.e. closed-book) to all students in advance.

The preliminary examination is conducted by a committee appointed by the dean of the Graduate College upon recommendation of the executive officer of the unit. In some units the same committee acts for all students taking preliminary exams in a given year. In other units, the preliminary examination committee may be comprised at least in part of those members who will serve on the student's dissertation or final examination committee. In either case, the committee must include at least four voting members, at least three of which must be members of the [Graduate Faculty](#), and two of which must also be tenured.

The [Policy on Graduate Faculty Membership](#) allows this last requirement to be met by term members of the Graduate Faculty who retired or resigned with tenure for a period of five years following the resignation or retirement, if requested by the unit executive officer. Individuals who are not members of the Graduate Faculty who will be voting members of the committee must be approved in advance by the dean of the Graduate College. To request approval, a curriculum vitae for the individual and a justification from the chair of the committee should accompany the request for appointment of the doctoral committee. Non-voting members may be appointed but are rare on preliminary examination committees. The process for selection of committee chairs varies by unit.

The student and committee chair must be physically present for any oral presentation (e.g. presence by teleconference is not acceptable). Ideally all committee members should be present. In exceptional circumstances, the Graduate College allows up to two voting members to participate via electronic communication media such as speaker-phone or video-conference link. Students wishing to take advantage of this option should seek approval from the department.

Decisions of the preliminary examination committee must be unanimous. The committee may make one of three decisions:

- pass the candidate,
- fail the candidate, or
- defer the decision. This option should be used only if the committee intends to hold another examination within six months, and that date should be included on the form.

The result of the examination is communicated to the student and to the Study Abroad, Graduation and Graduate Support unit of the Office of the Registrar as soon as possible at the conclusion of the exam. If this office is not informed of the result of the preliminary examination within six months after the scheduled examination date, the committee is considered dissolved. If the examination took place, but the committee failed to submit the results within six months, a petition must be submitted to the Graduate College requesting that the result be accepted from the committee after the 6-month deadline (see, www.grad.illinois.edu/gsas/petition_instruct.cfm). If the examination did not take place within six months of the scheduled date, then a new committee must be appointed before the examination occurs. The newly appointed committee may, but does not have to, consist of the same members as the dissolved committee.

3. **Dissertation Committee:**

The dissertation committee does not need to be formally appointed or approved. The purpose of this committee is to advise the student with dissertation research and effectively monitor the student's progress, often before the student is ready to form the final examination committee. The Graduate College encourages formation of a dissertation committee as early as possible after the successful completion of the preliminary examination. In units with preliminary examinations that include the presentation of a proposal for the doctoral research, the dissertation committee membership may be substantially the same as the preliminary examination committee. The dissertation committee membership may also be the same or essentially the same as the final examination committee. There is no time limit on the duration of service of the dissertation committee, other than the length of time that the student is allowed to complete the degree.

4. **Final Examination and Final Examination Committee:**

The final examination committee is appointed by the dean of the Graduate College, upon recommendation of the unit executive officer. The student's thesis adviser (or director of research) need not be the chair of the committee. The chair of the final examination committee must be a member of the [Graduate Faculty](#). The final examination committee chair is responsible for convening the committee, conducting the examination, and submitting the Certificate of Result of Final Examination to the department in which the student is enrolled and to the Study Abroad, Graduation and Graduate Support unit of the Office of the Registrar. A contingent chair, who must also be a member of the Graduate Faculty, may be designated to serve as the chair of the final examination committee should the original chair be unable to serve for any reason.

Committee members should be chosen for their expertise in the student's research area,

but may also be chosen to give diversity in viewpoint, methodology, or academic discipline. Such diversity may be achieved by including members from more than one sub-discipline within the department, from other departments, or from other institutions. The faculty of a department may establish procedures or requirements for introducing diversity in the membership of the final examination committee. Students must adhere to departmental procedures or requirements. These procedures and requirements must be clearly communicated to all students in advance of the exam.

The final examination committee must include at least four voting members, of which at least three must be members of the Graduate Faculty and at least two must be tenured. This last requirement can be met by term members of the Graduate Faculty who retired or resigned with tenure for a period of five years following their resignation or retirement, if requested by the unit executive officer. If there are more than four voting members on the committee, at least half of the voting members should be members of the Graduate Faculty.

Individuals who are not members of the Graduate Faculty who would like to be voting members of the committee must be approved in advance by the dean of the Graduate College. To request approval, a curriculum vitae for the individual and a justification from the chair of the committee should accompany the request for appointment of the doctoral committee. Upon departmental request, the dean of the Graduate College may also appoint non-voting members to doctoral committees, such as an external reader, an Urbana-Champaign faculty member who is on leave, or others who have made a significant contribution of academic guidance in the dissertation process.

Note: If **more than five years elapse** between a doctoral student's preliminary and final examinations, the student is required to demonstrate that his or her broad knowledge of the field is current by passing a second preliminary examination ([see Time Limits in chapter VI.E](#) for details).

The committee chair and the defending student must be physically present at the final examination (e.g. presence by teleconference is not acceptable). Ideally, all voting members of the committee must be present at and participate in final examinations. In exceptional circumstances, the Graduate College will allow up to two voting members to participate via electronic communication media such as speaker-phone or video-conference link. Students wishing to take advantage of this option should seek approval from the department. Non-voting members do not need to be present at the final examination.

As a crucial milestone in a student's doctoral experience at Illinois as well as a significant event within the campus scholarly community, the final examination should take place on campus. Final examinations are oral and open to the public.

For the final examination, each committee member must indicate that the thesis has been read and approved. Decisions of the committee for final examinations must be unanimous. The committee may make one of four decisions:

- pass the candidate with no revisions required,

- pass the candidate pending revision of the thesis; the candidate will receive the signed Certificate of Committee Approval when the prescribed revisions have been completed,
- defer the decision; this option should be used only if the committee intends to hold another defense within six months of the first defense date, and registration is required during the semester when a second defense is held, or
- fail the candidate.

Students who fail the first exam may, at the discretion of the committee and according to departmental rules, be granted another opportunity to take the examination after completing additional work. The chair will inform the Graduate College if the student is allowed a second examination.

Certificate of Committee Approval:

Original signatures are required on the Certificate of Committee Approval; signatories must sign for themselves. At the completion of the final examination, all voting members must sign the Certificate of Committee Approval. Non-voting committee members are not required to sign, but may do so. Department heads are also required sign the Certificate of Committee Approval. Persons authorized by the Graduate College to sign dissertations may sign in place of the department head. This certificate must be submitted to the Graduate College with the dissertation.

Certificate of Result:

Original signatures are required on the Certificate of Result; signatories must sign for themselves. Only the voting members of the final examination committee sign the Certificate of Result.

The result of the examination is communicated to the student and to the Study Abroad, Graduation and Graduate Support unit of the Office of the Registrar as soon as possible at the conclusion of the exam. If this office is not informed of the result of the preliminary examination within six months after the scheduled examination date, the committee is considered dissolved. If the examination took place, but the committee failed to submit the results within six months, a petition must be submitted to the Graduate College requesting that the result be accepted from the committee after the 6-month deadline (see, www.grad.illinois.edu/gsas/petition_instruct.cfm). If the examination did not take place within six months of the scheduled examination date, then a new committee must be appointed before the examination occurs. The newly appointed committee may, but does not have to, consist of the same members as the dissolved committee.

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E. Time Limits

The time by which a doctoral candidate is expected to complete all degree requirements varies depending on whether or not the student was accepted with a master's degree that will fulfill

Stage I requirements (see chapter [VI.C](#)). A doctoral candidate who must complete all three stages of the degree is expected to complete all degree requirements within seven years of first registering in the Graduate College. If the doctoral candidate has completed a master's degree at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign within the last three years, the student is expected to complete the Stage II and III requirements within five years of first registering in as a doctoral student. If three or more years passed between receipt of the master's degree at Urbana-Champaign and returning for the doctoral degree, the student is allowed six years to complete Stage II and III requirements. If the doctoral candidate has completed a master's degree from another university he or she is allowed six years to complete Stage II and III requirements. With the written approval of the Graduate College, a department may set different time limits for completion.

Programs with Approved Time to Degree Exceptions

Program	Level	Effective	Time to Degree
All College of Education programs	PhD and Ed.D	Fall 2000	7 years from first enrollment in doctoral program
Anthropology	PhD	Fall 1999	10 years from enrollment in doctoral program, if no master's was earned previously

Course work that is **older** than the number of years by which a doctoral student is expected to complete all degree requirements will not be automatically accepted for the degree. To request acceptance of old course work, the doctoral student must [petition](#) the Graduate College. The petition must include an explanation from the department of how the student's knowledge in the areas covered by the old course work meets current standards. This justification is needed for degree certification and the petition should be filed during the term when the student is placed on the degree list.

If **more than five years elapse** between a doctoral student's preliminary and final examinations, the student is required to demonstrate that his or her broad knowledge of the field is current by passing a second preliminary examination. It is not adequate that the student has sufficient current knowledge in the area of the thesis. The form of the second preliminary examination need not be identical to that of the first. Scholarly publications and college-level teaching assignments may be used as partial evidence of the student's current knowledge of his or her field, but a preliminary examination committee must be appointed by the Graduate College, an examination given, and its result reported to the Study Abroad, Graduation and Graduate Support unit of the Office of the Registrar.

It is expected that the doctoral dissertation will be **deposited within one year** of the final examination. If more than one year elapses between the student's final examination and the deposit of the dissertation in the Graduate College, the dissertation must be accompanied by a signed petition and statement from the executive officer of the student's department to the dean of the Graduate College. The statement should recommend accepting the thesis on the basis that it is essentially the one defended and should also state why the late award of the degree is appropriate.

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F. Survey of Earned Doctorates

The University of Illinois participates in a long-standing national survey of doctoral students conducted by the [National Opinion Research Center](#) (NORC) at the University of Chicago for the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, and other supporting institutions.

All doctoral students are required to complete the survey and submit it to the Graduate College at the time of final deposit. Students may decline to answer any or all of the questions by indicating refusal with the word “refused” for each question they decline to answer.

Chapter VII: Tuition and Fees Assessment and Waivers

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A. Assessment

Tuition and fee assessments are based on the student's [Illinois residency status](#), the college and curriculum of enrollment, and the amount of credit for which the student registers. Credit is organized by "ranges" (e.g. Range I for fall and spring terms is 12 or more hours), and the amount of tuition and fee assessments may vary by range of enrollment. For example, if a student registers for fewer than 6 hours in fall or spring terms, or less than 3 hours in summer, certain fees would not be assessed. Without the fee assessment, the student would not have access to the services associated with that fee.

In addition to tuition, certain courses carry a fee to cover instructional costs. These fees may apply to computer equipment and usage, laboratory equipment and supplies, musical instruments for practice, and similar instructional costs. Instructional fees are noted in the [Class Schedule](#) and assessed along with tuition and other fees.

The Office of the Registrar's Web site contains complete information about [tuition and fees assessment](#), current fee [structures](#), and [which services are supported by specific fees](#).

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B. E-bills

The University E-Bill system reflects all charges incurred and credited to a student's account. These charges may include tuition, fees, instructional fees, University Housing charges, parking tickets, library fines, emergency loans, and credits from financial aid sources, scholarships, and payments.

Students are notified by e-mail (to their University e-mail account) when E-bills are posted. Students with questions about their accounts should contact the Office of Student Accounts and Cashiers at 333-2180. Complete information about E-bills can be found at www.usfsco.uillinois.edu/Billing.html.

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C. Adjustments, Cancellation, Withdrawal and Refunds

A student's assessment of tuition and fees may be adjusted for a number of reasons, including changing the number of hours of registration, cancelling registration, or withdrawing from the University. Because tuition and fee assessments are based on the hours of credit organized by "ranges," adding or dropping classes could result in a student moving from one range to another, which would result in either an increase or decrease in the assessment.

Cancellation of registration is only permitted if a student has not attended classes and has not used any University services. If a student wishes to **cancel** registration and avoid payment of the tuition and fee charges, the student must complete a [Withdrawal/Cancellation form](#) (PDF) and submit it before 5:00 p.m. on the last business day before the first day of instruction of the term (including requests by mail). A student must obtain permission from their departmental office and [International Student and Scholar Services](#) (international students only) before depositing the Withdrawal/Cancellation form at the Graduate College. If cancellation is approved by the Graduate College, all tuition and fee charges are removed from the account for that term.

A student who wishes to **drop** all courses after the [cancellation deadline](#) must **withdraw** from the University for that semester. This applies even if the students had been registered for only one course. Students withdrawing from the University are refunded on a [pro-rata basis](#) until a specified date in the semester after which no refund is available. No portion of the health insurance fee or health service fee is refundable; therefore, students who withdraw continue to be covered by health insurance and are eligible to receive campus-provided health services (if these fees were paid) until the first day of instruction for the next term. The [withdrawal refund policy](#) contains more details.

Special refund policies apply to those who withdraw to enter active duty in the armed forces or other approved national defense service. See the complete policy, [Rule 3-314 of the Student Code](#).

If a student reduces course registration to a lower assessment range (e.g., [from Range I to Range II](#)), the student may be eligible for a refund. Refund policies vary depending on the action taken by the student and when the action is taken. Before any refund is made to the student, the University must make a refund to the appropriate financial aid programs providing assistance to the student. If the student is indebted to the University when due a refund, the amount owed is deducted from the amount of refund. See the University [Refund Schedule](#) for details and specific dates.

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D. Waivers

The Tuition Waiver Policy governs waivers of tuition and fees associated with [assistantship appointments](#) and [fellowship and traineeship appointments](#). For the full text of the tuition waiver policy, see www.grad.illinois.edu/policies/tuitionwaiver.htm.

In addition to tuition, all waiver-generating appointments also waive the service fee, the health service fee, the Academic Facilities Maintenance Fund Assessment (AFMFA) fee and the Library/Technology fee. They also provide vision insurance, dental insurance, and partial payment of the health insurance fee.

1. **Assistantship Appointments:**

Waiver-generating assistantship appointments are defined as appointments ranging from 25 percent through 67 percent time (based on a forty-hour week) for three-quarters of the term, [defined as the period starting on the first day of classes and ending on the last day of final examinations](#). Three quarters of the term is defined for spring and fall as 91 days and as 41 days for the summer term. A teaching assistant appointment between 25 percent and 67 percent of full-time service for at least 21 days in Summer I (four-week part of Summer term) will be considered to be a waiver-generating appointment.

Assistants on appointment for 68 percent or more of full-time service do not receive a tuition waiver. Appointments are cumulative. ([See article 3-503 of the Student Code on Tuition Waivers](#))

Waiver-generating assistantship appointments provide either a [waiver of full tuition or waiver of base-rate tuition](#), depending upon the curriculum in which the student is enrolled. In certain curricula, tuition waivers are "base-rate" waivers, i.e., the waivers cover no more than the in-state lowest full-time tuition, regardless of the student's residency status and regardless of the source of assistantship. The student is responsible for paying the remaining tuition. **It is the student's curriculum that determines the type of tuition waiver, not the unit granting the assistantship.**

Some enrolling colleges or departments may demand reimbursement for tuition income lost through assistantship waivers. Under the current budget policy, each college receives the tuition income from its graduate students and the tuition waiver represents a reduction in potential income for the student's disciplinary college. The policy allows authorized colleges to demand, from the unit appointing the assistant, reimbursement for the value of the tuition income lost through assistantships outside the college. For details, see the full [Tuition Waiver Policy](#) for graduate assistants.

2. **Fellowship (or Traineeship) Appointments:**

A waiver-generating fellowship (or traineeship) provides a living allowance of at least \$3,000 per semester and requires no services in return ([see chapter VIII.B](#)).

Waiver-generating fellowship appointments provide a full waiver of tuition, regardless of whether the student's program is full or base-rate for assistantship waiver purposes.

3. **Summer Automatic Waivers:**

Students without summer waiver-generating appointments who held waiver-generating appointments for the previous spring semester are eligible to receive summer automatic tuition waivers if they enroll in the summer semester. The summer automatic waiver provides the same tuition waiver (base rate or full) as that granted during the previous spring. However, it does not provide a waiver of the same fees as a waiver-generating appointment. Only the service fee, the AFMFA Fee, and the Library/Information Technology Fee are waived, see [section 3-503 of the Student Code](#). Authorized enrolling colleges may request reimbursement for summer automatic waivers from an appointing unit if that unit was billed for the waiver in the spring semester, see chapter [VII.D.1](#).

4. **Courtesy Fellowship Waivers:**

Departments may request waivers for individual students who receive a fellowship from

outside the University only in cases where the stipend is paid directly to the student and the award has no funding for tuition and fees. Requests for courtesy waivers must be issued by the student's graduate program (on a Rating Form) and include specific information on the financial support the award provides. The Graduate College will review the information and determine the eligibility for a courtesy waiver. Courtesy fellowship waivers include a waiver of all tuition assessed, as well as the service fee, the health service fee, the AFMFA fee, and the Library/Technology fee. They also provide vision insurance, dental insurance and partial payment of the health insurance fee.

5. **Stand-alone Waivers:**

At their discretion, colleges may waive the tuition and service fee for students with no waiver-generating appointments. This stand-alone waiver does not waive any of the other fees that are assessed, nor does it provide vision or dental insurance. Students are advised to check with their prospective departments for further information.

6. **Waiver Priority:**

The campus has established a priority system to guide the work of the Office of Student Financial Aid in processing waivers in cases where students have more than one waiver-generating appointment or are eligible for waivers from multiple sources. If a student has a waiver-generating fellowship and a waiver-generating assistantship for the same term, the fellowship waiver (full waiver of tuition) will take priority. It is not possible to combine a base-rate graduate assistant tuition waiver with other partial tuition waivers (such as a waiver of non-resident tuition) to obtain a more complete waiver of tuition. Questions about the waiver priority system can be directed to the [Office of Student Financial Aid](#).

7. **Taxes and Waivers:**

Current tax law exempts teaching assistants (TAs), research assistants (RAs), and most fellows from having to pay taxes on the value of waivers of tuition and selected fees associated with these appointments. Some students holding graduate assistantships (GAs) or pre-professional graduate assistantships (PGAs) may be required to pay taxes on tuition and fee waivers that exceed a value of \$5,250. Students receiving waivers associated with GA or PGA appointments will receive information from the Payroll Office to assist in determining what portion, if any, of the waiver should be considered taxable income and whether or not it will be necessary to withhold additional taxes from these students' paychecks. See the policy on [Taxability of Tuition and Fee Waivers Associated with Assistantship and Fellowship Appointments](#) for more information. For information about the taxability of fellowship stipends, [see chapter VIII.B.4](#).

Chapter VIII: Assistantships and Fellowships

There are many policies which govern assistantship and fellowship appointments, including those set by the Provost's Office and other governing bodies on campus. Because students are frequently also employees, they need to be aware of policies set by Academic Human Resources, and the University's agreement with the Graduate Employee's Organization (GEO). Students should consult and be familiar with campus policies set by the following units as they pertain to assistants and fellows.

[Academic Human Resources](#) – Administers University policies for employees, including graduate employees, hours of work, stipends and leaves.

[Division of Research Safety](#) – provides online training that is mandatory for all employees or students working in research labs that have or use biological, chemical, or radiological materials. This training should be completed within the first month of activity in such a lab.

[Graduate Employee's Organization](#) (GEO/IFT/AFT/AFL-CIO) – recognized officially as the exclusive bargaining unit for all graduate assistants (GAs) and most teaching assistants (TAs). For assistants represented by GEO, wages, hours, terms and conditions of employment are included in their [Agreement with the University of Illinois](#) (PDF). Teaching assistants not represented in the bargaining unit include those whose assistantships are not waiver-generating, and teaching assistants who are teaching for the first time in one of the following units: Animal Biology, Biochemistry, Cell and Structural Biology, Chemistry, Germanic Languages and Literatures, Microbiology, Plant Biology, and Psychology.

[Provost's Office](#) – requires that graduate teaching assistants attend orientation before beginning any teaching appointment. Before the start of classes, departments either conduct orientation programs for all new teaching assistants or require attendance at the [Graduate Academy for College Teaching](#) (which includes sessions about language and culture that meet the University's policy requirements for all non-native speakers of English before they teach in a University of Illinois classroom). For more information, see the [Center for Teaching Excellence Web site](#).

[University Ethics Office](#) – administers an annual online ethics training program to all University of Illinois employees. The University of Illinois Ethics Office contacts students via their official University e-mail account during a pre-announced time period with individual login instructions for the training.

[Print](#)

A. Assistantship Policies

The various departments of the University appoint students as teaching (TA), research (RA), pre-professional graduate (PGA) or graduate assistants (GA). [Academic Human Resources](#) has defined the duties associated with each type of [assistantship](#).

To receive and hold an assistantship, a student must be in [good standing \(III.B.3\)](#).

Individuals may not receive an assistantship prior to the admission term. If a unit has an interest in providing a summer assistantship to a person admitted for fall, the unit must recode the application to indicate summer as the term of admission.

Students admitted for summer term who receive assistantships **must register**.

In the fall and spring terms, students receiving assistantships must be registered for the semesters of appointment. If a student receives a summer assistantship (the period between May 16 and August 15), and the student was registered for the immediately preceding spring semester or has registered for the following fall semester, the campus policy does not require the student to register for the summer term. However, the student's department may require the student to register in summer. See chapter [VII.D.1](#). for more information about assistantship waivers.

Summer assistantships cannot be offered to students who have graduated in May, unless the student successfully [petitioned](#) to continue in another program, and is enrolled for the summer or upcoming fall semester.

International students can receive a maximum of a 50% assistantship per government regulations, and should check with [ISSS for additional rules](#).

1. **English Proficiency for Teaching Assistants:**

Illinois law requires that [all instructors at the University of Illinois be orally proficient in English](#). Campus has established a minimum acceptable score for approved English proficiency exams that is required of all non-native speakers of English serving in instructional roles. There are no exceptions. This means that students applying for teaching assistantships in foreign language programs are not eligible to seek an exemption from the requirement for demonstrated English proficiency. Some campus units may require higher scores. In addition, campus policy requires those who pass the proficiency exam to attend the Graduate Academy for College Teaching and have their classroom teaching monitored closely by their departments during the semesters in which they teach. Additional information may be obtained from the [Center for Teaching Excellence](#).

2. **Hours of Work:**

All [assistantship appointments must be processed](#) to reflect the actual percentage and length of time the employee works. The appointment level is based on the appointing unit's determination of the amount of time it should normally take to perform the assigned duties over the full appointment period including orientation and training. Hours of work are separate and distinct from the time required for an assistant's own academic course work.

3. **Stipends:**

The University establishes a [campus minimum stipend](#) for assistants and the terms of the [GEO Agreement](#) (PDF) with the University sets the minimum for represented assistants. Units may pay above the minimum, and stipend amounts vary from unit to unit. Assistantship stipends are taxable, and state and federal taxes are withheld from stipends. Assistants whose enrollment is deemed to be less than half time (4 hours in this situation)

will also have Federal Insurance Contributions Act tax (i.e., the Social Security and Medicare deductions) withheld from their stipends.

4. Employment Leaves:

Assistants are eligible for holidays, sick leave, [parental](#) and bereavement leave. See graduate employee information posted on the [AHR site](#) for full information. Assistants who are appointed on a twelve-month basis are entitled to University holidays and are eligible for 24 vacation days at the percentage of their appointment, with a maximum accumulation of 48 workdays at the percentage of their appointment. Questions about leave policies should be directed to the [Office of Academic Human Resources](#) at 333-6747 or 807 South Wright Street, Room 420.

5. Teaching of Graduate Level Courses:

Teaching assistants may not, either intentionally or by default, be given sole responsibility for instruction of courses or sections of courses at the 400- or 500- levels or for the assignment of final grades in such courses (except 400-level course sections in which enrollment is limited to undergraduates). Teaching assistants may only assist the responsible instructor in grading, laboratory supervision, and similar activities for courses at the 400- or 500-level. Infrequent lecturing is permissible. Exceptions are rarely granted. Departments requesting an exception must provide the dean of the Graduate College with a letter explaining the special circumstances that justify the exception, including the qualifications (expertise in subject, nearness of date on which the doctorate is expected, and so forth) of the student who is proposed as the teacher. Sometimes it is possible for the department to appoint the student as lecturer or instructor. A student is not allowed to enroll in a course in which he or she is a teaching assistant.

6. Renewal, Resignation, Graduation, and Termination of Appointments:

Assistantships are ordinarily assigned on a semester-by-semester or year-by-year basis. An appointment remains in effect only if the student maintains good academic standing, makes satisfactory academic progress, and provides satisfactory service. Assistants are eligible for reappointment at the sole discretion of the unit based on past performance of the assistant, availability of funds and the determination of the need for services. Departments are encouraged to communicate with assistants concerning plans or prospects for new appointments. Departments have differing policies on the length of time students may hold assistantships and sometimes limit the total number of semesters an assistant may serve. Many departments require that teaching assistants obtain and maintain certain teaching standards in order for their assistantships to be renewed. It is essential for the student to be aware of his or her department's policy and to plan accordingly.

A student who resigns an assistantship appointment or whose appointment is canceled before service is rendered for at least three-fourths of the term (91 days during a spring or fall semester and 41 days in summer term) loses the accompanying tuition and fee waiver. This means that the student would be required to pay the full amount of appropriate tuition and fees for that term. There are two exceptions. The waiver remains in effect if the student withdraws from the University ([see chapter VII.C](#)) on or before the last day of the assistantship appointment, or resigns from the assistantship and then completes all degree requirements for graduation within seven calendar days of the resignation.

Effective spring 2008, students with assistantship appointments (RA, TA, GA PPGA) are eligible to hold their assistantships through the end of the semester in which they deposit if that or a later date was the end date of the appointment when offered and accepted. For example, a student with a spring appointment processed to end May 15 may hold the assistantship through May 15, even if the student deposited the thesis anytime between January 1 and May 15. This does not obligate the student to continue the assistantship, and the [campus policy](#) permits students to resign their assistantships and retain their waivers, if they complete all degree requirements for graduation within seven calendar days of the resignation, **as detailed in the paragraph above**. For students with academic year assistantship appointments, their assistantship would end at the end of the semester in which they deposit and may not continue into the next semester.

An assistantship appointment may be terminated during the term of the appointment if the assistant is no longer registered, is no longer making satisfactory progress, or substantially fails to perform assigned responsibilities. The assistant must be provided with written notice and an opportunity to respond to the department head prior to termination. For more information about procedures for terminating an assistantship appointment, see [Graduate Student Assistantship Conflict Mediation and Appointment Termination](#). Assistants with questions about their appointments and benefits may contact the [Office of Academic Human Resources](#). Teaching assistants and graduate assistants may also consult the [GEO Agreement with the University of Illinois](#) (PDF).

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B. Campus Fellowship and Traineeship Policies

Fellowship appointments are reviewed in the Graduate College. Students admitted on limited status due to grade point average or a bachelor's degree not comparable to that at this university or current students on academic probation or dismissal status should not be nominated unless there is some extraordinary justification for doing so. In submitting the nomination, the department must provide the justification and the Graduate College will determine whether a fellowship may be awarded. Non-degree students are not eligible for fellowships and grants administered by the Graduate College.

A fellowship is defined as an award that provides a living allowance of at least \$3,000 per semester and requires no services in return. **Fellowship awards count against student loan eligibility.** A fellowship always includes payment by the funding agency or a full waiver of all tuition assessed. This applies to fellowships originating on- and off-campus. In questionable cases, the Graduate College will decide whether an award is a fellowship. Tuition waiver income lost due to fellowships is not reimbursable.

Traineeships are research fellowships that are awarded to provide educational training in particular disciplinary areas. **Traineeships are not counted when eligibility for direct loans is calculated for students.** A traineeship covers full tuition, may cover all non-refundable fees, and provides a stipend for living expenses. In questionable cases the Graduate College will decide whether an award is a traineeship. Tuition waiver income lost due to traineeships is not

reimbursable.

Students in the College of Medicine, except those in the Medical Scholars Program, must obtain written approval from the College of Medicine before accepting a fellowship or traineeship, and subsequent tuition waiver, controlled by another campus or university unit.

Students in the College of Veterinary Medicine, except those in the Veterinary Medical Scholars Program, must obtain written approval from the College of Veterinary Medicine before accepting a fellowship or traineeship, and subsequent tuition waiver, controlled by another campus or university unit. Should a student in the College of Veterinary Medicine, not in the Veterinary Medical Scholars Program, accept a fellowship or traineeship without the approval of the College, the College may request that the Graduate College remove the fellowship or traineeship waiver.

1. [Registration for Fellows:](#)

Acceptance of a [waiver-generating \(VII.D.2\)](#) fellowship appointment carries with it the agreement that the student will pursue a full program of study while on appointment. During the fall and/or spring semester fellows are required to register for at least 12 hours during the semester of the appointment. A student with a twelve-month fellowship appointment is also required to register for at least 4 hours in an eight-week course during the summer. An audited course does not count toward the registration requirement for fellows.

For **international fellows**, each required or recommended ESL course taken as a result of the English as a Second Language Placement Test (EPT) or the SPEAK Appeal will count as the equivalent of 4 graduate hours, even if the course credit is recorded as zero hours.

2. **Award Periods:**

The standard award period for an academic year fellowship is August 16 to May 15. The standard award period for a fall fellowship is August 16 to December 15; the standard award period for a spring fellowship is January 16 to May 15.

3. [Concurrent Awards:](#)

Fellows are prohibited from holding two major awards concurrently (fellowship, traineeship, grant, tuition payment award or comparable support from any government agency, state, federal or foreign, or from any foundation, corporation or similar organization). Any award offer should be reported immediately to the [Graduate College Fellowship Office](#), where the determination will be made whether the two awards may be held concurrently.

4. [Concurrent Appointments:](#)

Unless otherwise restricted by campus policy or the granting agency or unit, fellows may, at the discretion of their department and the Graduate College, carry an assistantship or graduate hourly appointment of up to 50 percent time. Any offer should be reported to the [Graduate College Fellowship Office](#), where the determination will be made whether the appointment can be held concurrently with the fellowship.

5. [Taxability of Stipend:](#)

Fellowship stipends may be subject to income taxes. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

has ruled that universities are not responsible for withholding or reporting income taxes on fellowship payments for U.S. citizens, foreign national resident aliens for tax purposes, or permanent residents. Taxability of the fellowship payment is a matter between the fellow and the IRS. Therefore, no income taxes are withheld from fellowship payments. Fellows do not receive a Form W-2 for their fellowship income nor does the University report the fellowship payment to either the state or federal government.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that universities withhold taxes from the fellowship payments to **international students** on temporary visas who are classified as non-resident aliens for tax purposes. International students may be able to claim a treaty benefit that exempts the fellowship payment from income tax withholding. All students on temporary visas must schedule a tax status review appointment with the University Payroll Service Center to determine their tax residency status and whether they qualify for tax treaty benefits. At this appointment, University Payroll determines residency and tax status classification. Fellowship stipend payments will be taxed at the highest possible rate until after the tax status review process is completed. For additional information and links to tax forms, see the [Tax Information](#) Web page. For information about the taxability of tuition and fee waivers associated with fellowships, see the policy on [Taxability of Tuition and Fee Waivers Associated with Assistantship and Fellowship Appointments](#).

6. **Thesis Deposit/Graduation for Fellows:**

For each degree conferral date, the Graduate College has established end dates for fellowship support for fellowships falling with the [standard award periods](#). See the [Fellowship Degree Conferral and End Date Web page](#) for exact dates and exceptions. Students with fellowship or traineeship appointments must notify the Graduate College Fellowship Office in advance of thesis deposit as it may result in a change in the terms of the fellowship award, including termination.

Chapter IX: Problem Solving

[Print](#)

A. Standards of Conduct

The Graduate College and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign have established policies and standards for academic, professional, and personal conduct. Students are responsible for being familiar with these policies and standards (see the [Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research](#), the [Provost's Office on Campus Conduct](#), and the [Student Code](#)). Conduct that violates these policies and standards may result in serious consequences including dismissal. In addition to the information in this chapter, also see the [Graduate College Web site for resources on problem solving and conflict mediation](#). Students should also review the section on Academic Integrity, located in [chapter I](#) of this document.

[Print](#)

B. Petitions

The policies, requirements, and deadlines of the Graduate College have been put in place to uphold high academic standards. Exceptions may be justified under extenuating circumstances. Students who wish to request an exception to Graduate College policies may submit a petition providing an explanation or justification for the action requested. The more unusual or major the request, the more detailed the explanation should be from the student and the adviser and/or other appropriate members of the Graduate Faculty or staff. Requests for exceptions to the deadline to deposit a thesis for a certain conferral date and for exceptions to the requirement to be enrolled during the semester that a dissertation is defended are never granted. Students with questions about exceptions to fellowship policies should contact the [Fellowship Office](#) instead of submitting a [petition](#).

[Print](#)

C. Conflict Resolution

The University has procedures to provide assistance to students experiencing conflict. Policies and procedures for conflict resolution are overseen by several offices on campus, including the Graduate College, the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), [International Student and Scholar Services](#), the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Access](#), and, in some cases, individual departments. The type of conflict will determine from which University office the student should seek assistance.

[Print](#)

D. Academic Conflict

Academic conflict may be addressed through informal processes or through a formal grievance process. [Some graduate programs have established grievance procedures](#) and students should be aware of whether their program has such a procedure in place. The Graduate College has a [grievance policy and procedure](#) in place to assist students and graduate programs. It is recommended that students first explore the option of informally resolving an academic conflict. A student who believes he or she has an academic grievance should first discuss it with his or her adviser. If discussion with the adviser is inappropriate or unfruitful, discussion with a senior faculty member, director of graduate study, or a department or unit head is recommended.

A student may elect to file a formal grievance within the unit in which a problem has arisen if the department has a written grievance procedure approved by the Graduate College. The student may also choose to file the grievance directly with the Graduate College. Students should be aware of differences between the Graduate College and departmental grievance policies, as well as what types of grievances are appropriately addressed by these policies. More information and resources related to grievance policies and procedures can be found on the [Graduate College Web site](#).

Course work-based charges of academic integrity infractions against graduate students will be handled according to [applicable procedures in the Student Code](#).

Charges of academic integrity infractions against graduate students that involve research and/or publication will follow procedures contained within the [Bylaws of the Graduate College](#) and the [University of Illinois Policy and Procedures on Academic Integrity in Research and Publication](#).

[Print](#)

E. Discrimination

The [Student Code](#) contains information for specific procedures for student grievances alleging discrimination, [see the non-discrimination policies in Article 1, Part 1](#).

[Print](#)

F. Capricious Grading

Information on capricious grading and the departmental procedures for investigating capricious grading complaints can be found in the [Student Code, section 3-107](#).

[Print](#)

G. University Discipline System

Jurisdiction of the University discipline system is outlined in [section 1-301 of the Student Code](#). The Subcommittee on Graduate Student Conduct of the Senate Committee on Student Discipline has the right to impose sanctions including, but not limited to dismissal, suspension, conduct

probation, censure, and reprimand. More detailed information concerning the operation of the procedures in the [Student Code](#) may be obtained from the [Office for Student Conflict Resolution](#) at 333-3680.

[Print](#)

H. Employment Conflict

When a serious conflict between an assistant and a supervisor occurs, reasonable attempts should be made to resolve the conflict informally. If there is a conflict between a supervisor and an assistant that cannot be resolved by informal means, the most practical solution may be to reassign the student to new responsibilities. If reassignment is not feasible or does not appear to be warranted, the assistantship appointment may be terminated by following the procedures given below. The assistant may also choose to resign the appointment by submitting a letter of resignation, ([see chapter VIII.A.6](#))

Most conflicts between a supervisor and a student can be prevented if the student is given a clear description of responsibilities and expectation for performance and if the student receives regular supervision and evaluation. If conflicts surface, however, the Graduate College encourages and supports concerted informal efforts toward resolution within the department, beginning at the supervisor-student level. For procedures to provide guidelines for resolving and mediating conflicts informally, see [Procedures for Graduate Student Assistantship Conflict Mediation and Appointment Termination](#).

Additional resources for students experiencing employment related conflict include the following:

- the [Policy and Procedures for Addressing Discrimination and Harassment at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](#),
- the [Agreement](#) (PDF) by and between The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois and the Graduate Employees' Organization (GEO) (for graduate assistants that are covered); with respect to any complaint alleging a violation of the [Agreement](#) (PDF), and
- the [Academic Human Resources](#) Office.