Looking Ahead: Information about New Policies & Practices
Updates from Academic Affairs

Spring 2021 Policy Modifications

• Extension of Drop (without “W”) deadline
  • Full semester courses: May 5, 2021
  • First 8 Week: March 19, 2021
  • Second 8 Week: May 5, 2021
  • Non-Standard: Last day of instruction of the course

• New Pass COVID/No Pass COVID Grade Option Available
  • Pass COVID Grade will apply to grades earned of D- and above
  • No Pass COVID will be assigned to grades of F
  • Students can opt in to this grade mode by choice for any course
  • Pass COVID grades will fulfill major, minor and general education requirements. (As with previous emergency policies, this overrides program restrictions)
  • No limits on hours
  • Deadline for opting in/out will be May 27th, after grades are available
  • CR/NC grading option suspended for SP21

• What does this mean for degree certification/graduation?
Campus Graduate Certificate

• New graduate level credential offered by our campus
  • Approved in Spring 2020
  • Post-baccalaureate credential
  • Requires a minimum of 12 credit hours of 400 or 500 level courses for a minimum of 10 weeks of instruction.
  • Can be designed to “stack” into a specified degree program
  • Will be eligible for Federal financial aid

• Policy and procedural details:
  • Admissions
  • Academic Policies/Procedures
  • Financial Aid
  • Credentialing
  • Procedural steps for initiating the proposal
  • Details available at: https://grad.illinois.edu/faculty/certificate

• College level non-transcripted certificates
Admissions
Looking Ahead: Admissions

Duolingo English Test:
- Considering Permanent Acceptance
- Admitted 88 students for FA20 with Duolingo
- 57 met minimum for full status requirements (125)
- 31 met minimum for limited status (105)
- 39 enrolled – average GPA after first term: 3.59/4.0

Admissions Processing Updates:
- Admission letter now links to new Final Credentials Requirements page: https://grad.illinois.edu/admissions/admitted-student-final-credential-requirements
- Domestic final transcripts discontinue sending scanned documents to programs

CGS Admissions Offers Resolution Updates:
- Deadline remains as April 15, but programs can choose to allow a later deadline
- **CHANGE:** If an applicant wants to withdraw from an offer of acceptance of financial support, the applicant must first inform the program they are withdrawing/resigning from the offer; however, they are no longer required to obtain a formal release from the program whose offer they accepted either before or after the April 15 deadline. Once they have informed the program they are withdrawing their acceptance of the offer, they then can accept any other offers.
Looking Ahead: Admissions

Holistic Admissions

• Toolkit of guidelines and resources for departments
• Potential change to personal and academic statements

Current default personal statement language:

Please describe your previous academic work in your proposed field of study and include a personal statement regarding your goals for graduate study and a professional career. Please also describe any relevant research experience and what you have learned from it, and other educational and life experiences that you feel are important and relevant. If you have specific interests in your proposed field of study or are interested in working with any particular faculty members, please tell us about them.

Proposed new academic statement language:

**Option A:** Please use the Academic Statement of Purpose to describe (within 1000 words): (1) the substantive scholarly questions you are interested in exploring in graduate study, (2) your academic background, intellectual interests, and any training, research, or other experiences that have prepared you for graduate study, (3) how our program would help you achieve your intellectual goals, (4) any specific faculty members, if applicable, whose research interests align with your own interests, and (5) your professional goals.

**Option B:** Please use the Academic Statement of Purpose to describe (within 1000 words): (1) your academic interests, (2) your academic background, preparation, and training, including any relevant professional experiences, (3) your reasons for pursuing graduate studies in this specific program, and (4) your professional goals.

**Option C:** Customized Statement
Looking Ahead: Admissions

Proposed new personal statement language:

Please use the Personal Statement to describe (within 500 words) how your personal background and experiences influenced your decision to pursue a graduate degree. Additionally, provide insight on your potential to contribute to a community of inclusion, belonging, and respect where scholars representing diverse backgrounds, perspectives, abilities, and experiences can learn and innovate productively and positively together.

• This new personal statement will be required for all applicants nominated for major internal fellowships funded by the Graduate College
  • Aspire Fellowship
  • Aspire Master’s Fellowship
  • Distinguished Graduate Fellowships in the Humanities & Arts
  • Graduate College Fellowship
  • Graduate College Master’s Fellowship
  • Illinois Distinguished Fellowship
  • SLOAN Scholarship
Student Success
Annual Academic Progress Review

- Flexibility and understanding of the challenges of the year
- Holistic review of a student’s record
- Opportunity for a supportive discussion and degree planning
Doctoral Examinations

• Since March 2020, remote examinations have been allowed without a petition due to the pandemic
• Starting in August 2021, revised policy will go into effect permitting fully or partially remote examinations
• Regardless of format, examinations must take place synchronously and all members must participate in all portions of the examination
Career Development
Career Disruptions

• Job markets
• Experiential learning opportunities
• Conferences and networking

• Forward momentum
• Stability and future planning
• Sense of self
What Can Departments Do?

• Communicate regularly with students
• Support students exploring and pursuing broad career options
• Connect students with campus resources
  • One-on-one support
  • Workshops and programming
• Integrate career programming and information into life of program
  • Request a workshop by the Graduate College
Graduate Education Community

• Grad-Ed listserv
• Directors of Graduate Studies Meetings
Graduate College Business & Fellowship Processing
New Fellowship Processing Application

• The new web application will:
  • Increase reliability of data
  • Eliminate manual processes of Graduate Fellowships, Tuition Waivers, Notification of Appointment Letters & Student Acceptance.
  • Provide a higher level of security for University and student data
  • Eliminate dependent on paper files
  • Provide access to historical data
Functions

The web-based automated system will perform several general functions:

• Provide a means for electronic creation, delivery, and signing of Notice of Fellowship Appointment (NOA) letters as well as a response by students

• Provide a means to transmit tuition and fee waiver information to the Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA)

• Provides a means to department to track fellowship appointment transactions

Note: once the automated system is implemented, the current outdated non-supported application will be decommissioned