

SECTION 2: GRADUATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

Graduate Committee. The Graduate Committee has general supervisory authority over the graduate program and is responsible for recommending policy relative to the program. The committee membership includes the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of the School of Professional Studies, the Chair of the Education Division, the Chair of the Psychology Department, the Director of Teacher Education, one at-large representative from the School of Arts and Sciences, one at-large representative from the School of Professional Studies, one student representative from the Master of Education program and one student representative from Master of Counseling Psychology program. The Associate Dean of Graduate Studies serves as chair of the Graduate Committee.

Functions of the Graduate Committee include:

1. the general supervision of matters pertaining to the graduate program and the formulation of policy for the program;
2. the formulation of the aims and objectives of the graduate program and the design and content of the graduate curricula;
3. the evaluation of proposed requirements for programs submitted by the respective academic schools;
4. the formulation of policies for admission to, and retention in, the graduate program;
5. the formulation of criteria and the approval of faculty membership on the graduate faculty;
6. the formulation of policies to provide quality control of courses, faculty, and physical resources relative to the graduate program;
7. the provision of systematic and periodic opportunities for graduate students and the graduate faculty to evaluate the graduate program and to make recommendations for its further development;
8. the responsibility for formulation and recommendation of policy on expanding and up-grading present programs, discontinuance of programs, introduction of new programs, or limitation on enrollment in graduate programs; the responsibility for graduate program long-range planning.

ADMISSION POLICIES

Application for Admission. An official application for admission to graduate study must be submitted to the graduate office prior to enrollment in graduate courses. Additionally, students who have not previously attended Northwestern must apply for university admission through the Registry Office. A \$15 application fee is required of first-time students applying for university admission. Official transcripts (not photocopies) from all colleges/universities previously attended (undergraduate and graduate) must accompany applications. Applicants holding teaching certificates or licenses must submit copies of their current teaching certification; until such copies are received, the student will be limited to a maximum enrollment of nine hours of graduate courses. Application forms are available in the graduate office and online. **For assessment purposes, all students are required to have a Graduate Record Examination (GRE) aptitude test OR Miller Analogies Test (MAT) on file with the graduate office before enrollment in the tenth semester hour of coursework.** GRE or MAT scores to be used to meet admission criteria are valid only if the test was taken within five years of the date of application.

Applications are processed by the Coordinator of Graduate Studies. Unusual cases will be reviewed by the Graduate Committee.

Unconditional Admission. Admission to the graduate program will be granted to students who hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution and who meet any ONE of the following standards:

1. A minimum cumulative undergraduate grade-point average of 2.75 (on a 4.0 point scale).*
2. A minimum grade-point average of 3.0 in the last sixty semester hours of undergraduate work (both undergraduate and graduate hours may be used in calculating the GPA to meet admission standards; however, any graduate hours used for admission purposes cannot be counted toward a master's degree).*
3. A score that places the individual at the 25th percentile on two of the three areas (verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing) of the GRE or at the 25th percentile on the MAT.*
4. If a student has already completed a master's degree from another accredited institution, the student may be unconditionally admitted to the program at Northwestern upon providing an official copy of a transcript stating the degree.

*Students with prior graduate work (transfer students or NWOSU students applying for readmission) must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 in all graduate courses in order to be admitted unconditionally.

Conditional Admission. Conditional admission may be granted to applicants who do not meet the requirements for unconditional admission to the graduate program but who satisfy the following standards:

1. *First-time graduate students (with no prior graduate work):* Possess a minimum cumulative undergraduate grade-point average of 2.3 (on a 4.0 scale) **OR** a grade-point average of 2.5 in the last sixty hours attempted;
2. *Transfer graduate students or NWOSU graduate students applying for readmission:*
 - (a.) Possess a minimum cumulative undergraduate grade-point average of 2.3 (on a 4.0 scale) **OR** a grade-point average of 2.5 in the last sixty hours of undergraduate or graduate work attempted (both undergraduate and graduate hours may be used in calculating the GPA to meet admission standards; however, any graduate hours used for admission purposes cannot be applied toward a master's degree).
 - (b.) Possess a cumulative graduate grade-point average less than 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale).

All students who are admitted conditionally must have a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 (B) after the first sixteen hours of graduate work following their admission to the graduate program. If the GPA requirement is not met as prescribed, the student shall be removed from the degree program.

Senior Undergraduate Students in the Graduate Program. Senior students may be admitted to the graduate program by meeting the following standards:

1. Be enrolled in the final hours required to complete a baccalaureate degree.
2. Submit an application for graduate study.
3. Possess a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 2.75 (on a 4.0 scale) [Unconditional Admission Standard 1].
4. Be enrolled in a maximum of sixteen semester hours of combined undergraduate and graduate course work during the fall or spring semester, or a maximum of nine hours in a summer term (including interim courses).

There is a one-semester limit for seniors to enroll in graduate courses; they must complete all requirements for the undergraduate degree and be fully admitted to the graduate program in order to continue work towards a master's degree.

Non-Degree Seeking Student. Students who wish to take courses for graduate credit but who do not wish to work toward a master's degree must meet the following standards:

1. Hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution.
2. Possess a minimum cumulative undergraduate grade-point average of 2.3 (on a 4.0 scale) OR a grade-point average of 2.5 in the last sixty hours of undergraduate work attempted (both undergraduate and graduate hours may be used in calculating the GPA to meet admission standards).

If a student admitted as prescribed should decide to pursue a master's degree, all admission standards established for the degree program must be met before the student will be allowed enrollment beyond nine hours. Any graduate hours used for admission purposes cannot be applied toward a master's degree.

Admission to Candidacy. Admission to graduate study does not carry with it admission to candidacy for a degree. The student must apply on forms available from the graduate office or online. Application for admission to candidacy must be made following the completion of at least sixteen semester hours of acceptable work toward the master's degree and no later than nine weeks prior to graduation. A minimum grade-point average of 3.0 (*B*) is required for admission to candidacy. An approved plan of study must be on file in the graduate office before admission to candidacy can be granted.

Fee Waivers. Non-resident students wishing to apply for waiver of out-of-state fees must meet the criteria for unconditional admission to the graduate program. Application for the fee waiver eligibility must be processed each semester in the registrar's office.

CREDIT-HOUR REGULATIONS

Level of Courses. Effective January 1, 2006, all work used to fulfill requirements for the Master of Education or Master of Counseling Psychology degree shall be selected from graduate courses, which are listed by department in Section 6, beginning on page 28.

For students who entered under prior policies, at least sixteen semester hours of 5000-level courses must be completed. Only 3000 and 4000 level courses identified in the class schedule with a *G* may be applied as graduate credit (courses taken at the undergraduate level may not be repeated for credit toward the master's degree). Graduate students should experience a more rigorous academic requirement than that which is expected of undergraduate students in the same class. A minimum grade of *B* must be earned in all courses of 3000 or 4000 level which are applied toward the graduate degree program (see **Grade Point Requirements**, page 8).

Full-Time Student Status. A student is considered full-time at the graduate level by enrolling in (and completing) a minimum of nine hours in a fall or spring semester or a minimum of five hours in a summer term.

Incomplete. A grade of *I* is given only when conditions justify extension of time for a student to complete the course. Any grade of *I* not removed within one calendar year becomes a permanent incomplete on the student's transcript. *Grades of I must be removed prior to taking the written comprehensive examination or submitting the graduate portfolio for the Milestone 3 defense.*

Transfer Credit. A maximum of nine hours of graduate credit earned at accredited institutions of higher education

may be transferred, provided the work forms an appropriate part of the student's program and is approved by the student's advisory committee. To meet requirements for the Master of Education, a minimum of thirty-two hours of graduate credit must be completed. The Master of Counseling Psychology degree requires a minimum of forty-eight graduate credit hours.

Residency Requirement. A minimum of twenty-three semester hours, including the final eight hours, must be earned in residence at Northwestern Oklahoma State University. The remainder of the candidate's program (nine hours maximum) may be earned at other accredited institutions. These hours, or any part thereof, may be applied to the program only if, in the judgment of the student's graduate advisory committee and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, they contribute to the student's overall program. Exception: students in the Adult Education Management and Administration program may transfer the final 18 hours of discipline-specific courses if the courses are listed on an approved plan of study.

Continuing Education Credit. Continuing education credits from an approved institution will be evaluated for possible graduate credit when the request is submitted with an official transcript. Inquiries should be directed to the graduate office.

Correspondence Credit. Correspondence credit is not acceptable at the graduate level and may not be applied toward a degree program.

Individual Study, Readings, Seminar, and Short Course Credit. A maximum of six credit hours in any combination of Individual Study (5170), Seminar (5180), Readings (5190), and/or Short Courses (5300) will be applicable toward a master's degree program.

Prerequisites. Some courses may have prerequisites. The student should consult the course descriptions (see Section 6, Graduate Courses) or consult with the appropriate department or division chair.

TIME LIMIT

A master's degree program must be completed within six calendar years. If a student has not completed the graduate degree in the six-year limit, the student must then meet with his/her advisory committee and file a new plan of study reflecting current program requirements. In some cases, the student may be asked to re-apply for admission to graduate study. If course(s) exceed the six-year limit, the student may re-take the course(s) or validate the course(s) following procedures listed below.

COURSE VALIDATION

Credit in courses older than six years (at the time of the degree completion) will be awarded only after competency in the area has been demonstrated by examination. The examination will be prepared and evaluated by the faculty member currently responsible for teaching the course. The validation process is initiated through the Office of Graduate Studies.

For a written validation:

1. The graduate office will notify the student, the advisory committee chair, and the instructor of the course of the need for the exam.
2. The instructor will provide the exam to the graduate office to be administered.
3. The exam will be returned to the instructor for scoring.
4. The instructor will return the results and the exam to the graduate office to be filed in the student's folder.

For an oral validation:

1. The graduate office will notify the student, the advisory committee chair, and the instructor of the course of the need for the exam.
2. The instructor will administer the oral exam.
3. The instructor will provide results and a detailed synopsis of the exam to the graduate office to be filed in the student's folder.

For a performance validation:

1. The graduate office will notify the student, the advisory committee chair, and the instructor of the course of the need for the exam.
2. The instructor will administer the performance exam.
3. The instructor will provide results and a copy of the performance (cassette, video, CD, VDV, or other appropriate media) to the graduate office to be filed in the student's folder.

Credit from other institutions which exceeds the six-year limit will not be validated.

STUDY LOAD LIMITS

The maximum study load for a full-time graduate student during a sixteen-week semester is twelve hours. For an eight-week summer term the maximum load is nine hours.

Graduate students taking the written comprehensive examination OR submitting the graduate portfolio for Milestone 3 evaluation must have completed all coursework OR be enrolled in final coursework not exceeding nine hours in a regular semester or six hours in a summer term. (See requirements on page 9).

GRADE POINT REQUIREMENTS

A student in good standing shall maintain a grade-point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in the graduate program. If the grade-point average falls below 3.0, the student must have the deficiency corrected by the completion of the next nine hours of coursework. Those students admitted conditionally must have corrected any grade-point deficiencies during their next enrollment of nine graduate hours.

A grade-point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale is required for graduation and no grade lower than C (B in 3000 and 4000 level courses) will be credited toward a master's degree.

UNIVERSITY ATTENDANCE POLICY

Responsibility for attending class rests with the student. Attendance in class is expected. Each instructional staff member will determine his/her attendance policy. The staff member may require between 75 and 90 percent attendance for credit in a course.

GRADUATE PLAN OF STUDY

STEP ONE: Advisory Committee. An advisory committee, consisting of three members from the graduate faculty, is formed for each student pursuing a graduate degree as soon as possible after the student's application for graduate study and prior to enrollment in the tenth hour of coursework.

The members of the committee are selected by the student, contingent upon their willingness to serve and the approval of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. The chair of the committee must be a full member of the graduate faculty. Adjunct instructors are not allowed to serve. The committee is responsible to assist the student in developing the plan of study and to administer the written comprehensive examination (and the oral follow-up exam) or to evaluate the graduate portfolio, whichever is appropriate to the student's degree (see page 9 for details).

STEP TWO: Plan of Study. A report of the plan for the student's graduate program formulated by the student and his/her advisory committee must be filed with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies during the semester of the student's tenth hour of coursework. Students are encouraged to take the required core courses early in their plan of study, to the extent possible. Students completing graduate work prior to approval of the plan of study should not expect all such course work to apply toward requirements for the master's degree. *The plan of study requires original signatures of advisory committee members.*

Revisions to Plan of Study. The plan of study may be revised as the student progresses, but all changes must have the approval of the student's advisory committee. The revised plan of study must be filed with the Graduate Office by the end of the enrollment period of the semester in which the student is to graduate.

THESIS OPTION

Where appropriate the student may elect to substitute a research thesis (Thesis 5333) for three hours of coursework on the master's degree.

GUIDELINES FOR THESIS PREPARATION

1. The chair of the student's graduate advisory committee will serve as thesis advisor.
2. The student and thesis advisor will explore topics for potential research and develop a proposal based on the topic selected for research. The proposal will be submitted to the advisory committee for approval. Upon approval of the proposal, the student will work directly with the thesis advisor in developing the research approach and methodology.
3. When a final draft of the thesis is completed to the satisfaction of the thesis advisor and student, four copies of the thesis, unbound and in separate manila envelopes, should be submitted to the graduate office. One copy will be reviewed by the graduate office for format compliance. The other copies will be reviewed by the student's committee members for any additional changes to be made prior to submitting a final copy. Graduate office and committee recommendations will be presented to the student for incorporation into the final copy. The student will meet with the advisory committee for a defense of the thesis.
4. The student is responsible for securing committee members' signatures on three final copies of the thesis. All final copies must have **original signatures** of committee members.
5. The final copies of the thesis should be on 20 lb. bond paper and should be submitted in separate manila envelopes according to the following deadlines:

Fall Semester	November 1
Spring Semester	April 1
Summer Semester	July 1
6. After final copies of the thesis have been checked by the graduate office and any necessary corrections have been made by the student, the graduate office will provide written notification to the registrar indicating completion of the thesis. The final thesis grade will then be assigned by the thesis advisor.
7. Copying and binding fees must be submitted with the final copies of the thesis. Contact NWOSU Printing Services for current copying and binding fees. Copies should be submitted in a self-addressed manila envelope appropriate for mailing. A minimum of four weeks should be allowed for copying and binding.

SECOND MASTER'S DEGREE

A student desiring a second master's degree will be permitted to apply a maximum of twelve hours of appropriate coursework toward requirements for a second master's degree, subject to the approval of the advisory committee. All coursework in the approved plan of study must meet the six-year time limit, according to university policy.

APPLICATION FOR DEGREES

Candidates who expect to complete degree requirements must file an application for the degree and submit the \$15 application fee to the graduate office by October 15 for December graduation, by February 1 for May graduation, or by March 1 for July graduation.

CONFERRING OF MASTER'S DEGREES

Candidates who have fulfilled all requirements for the master's degree are recommended by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies to the President of the University for the conferring of their degrees. Attendance at commencement is expected.

Degrees will be conferred at regular convocations. Master's degree candidates who apply for graduation in the fall will participate in the December commencement ceremony; candidates who apply for graduation in the spring will participate in the May commencement ceremony. Candidates will participate in the May commencement ceremony if a degree check indicates they can complete coursework for the degree by the end of the following summer session.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

WRITTEN ESSAY EXAMINATION

For M.C.P candidates only. Written essay examinations will be administered to graduate students who (1) have either completed all coursework or are currently enrolled in final coursework, not exceeding nine hours in a regular semester or six hours in a summer term and (2) have removed all grades of "Incomplete" from their plan of study. The exams will be administered each semester based on the following schedule:*

October 1, 2009	October 7, 2010	October 6, 2011
March 4, 2010	March 3, 2011	March 1, 2012
June 10, 2010	June 9, 2011	June 14, 2012

Students eligible to take the comprehensive exams should process application material in the graduate office at least four weeks prior to the exam date.

The student will be responsible for submitting the appropriate application form to the graduate office by the prescribed deadline for administration of the exam.

Candidates sitting for the comprehensive examination will complete a 200-item comprehensive multiple-choice exam. *The exam is a pass-fail exam, based on a minimum score of seventy percent overall OR a minimum of seventy percent on seven of ten sections of the exam.*

If the student does not pass the exam, (s)he should meet with his/her advisory committee to determine the course of remediation needed (perhaps further coursework or directed study). A second unsuccessful attempt will result in another meeting and further remediation. If a third attempt is unsuccessful the student will be dismissed from the graduate program with no degree awarded.

Students will be notified within two weeks regarding comprehensive examination results.

*Confirm date, time, and location by calling the graduate office at (580) 327-8410. ***Paperwork must be submitted by the published deadline, at least four weeks prior to the date of the exam, in order to take the examinations.***

GRADUATE PORTFOLIO

For M.Ed. candidates only. In lieu of the written comprehensive and oral follow-up examinations, the student will submit and defend a graduate portfolio within the web-based "LiveText edu-solutions" system, as outlined in the course syllabus for EDUC 5010 Graduate Study Seminar.

To be eligible to submit the portfolio, students must (1) have completed all coursework or be currently enrolled in final coursework, not exceeding nine hours in a regular semester or six hours in a summer term and (2) have removed all grades of "Incomplete" from their plan of study.

The LiveText portfolio requires three checkpoints: Milestone 1 during the semester of the tenth hour of graduate work (required in the EDUC 5010 course); Milestone 2 during the semester of the seventeenth hour of graduate work; and Milestone 3 at the conclusion of the degree program.

Only one assessment per semester is allowed; therefore, students should allow at least three semesters for the development and final assessment of the graduate portfolio. Failure to complete an assessment by the stated deadline will result in a hold on further enrollment in the graduate program, until such time as the assessment is completed and on file in the Office of Graduate Studies.

The application for the LiveText portfolio defense (Milestone 3) must be submitted to the graduate office no later than November 1, April 1, or July 1 in the semester in which the student expects to graduate. The student's advisory committee will have at least two weeks to review the portfolio, make any final recommendations for its improvement, and return the recommendations to the student. A consensus approval vote of the student's advisory committee is required for passing the portfolio requirement.

SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Procedure...	To Be Completed...	Initiate Through...	Approved By...
1. Admission or readmission to the university*	Prior to enrollment	Registry office	Registry office
2. Admission to graduate study*	Prior to enrollment	Graduate office	Graduate office
3. MCP students: degree area application	Prior to enrollment (application process includes letter of recommendation, career goals, self-evaluation, sample of scholarly work, <i>GRE</i> or <i>MAT</i> test, and interview with psychology faculty)	Coordinator of Counseling	MCP screening
4. MEd students: <i>GRE</i> or <i>MAT</i> test	ASAP, before enrolling in 10th hour	Academic Success Center	Graduate office
5. Select graduate advisory committee	Concurrent w/ EDUC 5010	Graduate office; Advisory committee	Graduate office
6. Submit plan of study	Concurrent w/ EDUC 5010	Graduate office; Advisory committee	Advisory committee; Graduate office
7. Portfolio Milestone 1	Concurrent w/ EDUC 5010	Advisory committee	Advisory committee
8. Apply for candidacy	After completing 16 hours and at least 9 weeks prior to graduation	Graduate office	Graduate office
9. Portfolio Milestone 2	Concurrent with 17th hour	Advisory committee	Advisory committee
10. Thesis option: submit thesis	Prior to comprehensive examination or portfolio	Advisory committee	Graduate office
11. Degree application \$15	At least 9 weeks prior to graduation	Graduate office	Graduate office
12. MCP students: Schedule written comprehensive exam and oral follow-up**	At least 4 weeks before exam	Graduate office	Advisory committee; Graduate office
13. MCP Oral follow-up**	No earlier than 2 weeks after written exam, but before final exam week	Graduate office	Advisory committee
14. MEd students: Submit portfolio**	By Nov. 1, April 1, or July 1	Graduate office	Graduate office; Advisory committee
15. Portfolio Milestone 3**	No earlier than 2 weeks after submitting, but before final exam week	Graduate office; Advisory committee	Advisory committee
16. Exit interview	Immediately after oral exam or portfolio defense	Graduate office	Graduate office

* Admission form must be accompanied by *official transcripts* reflecting all college/university credit attempted. Students who have completed undergraduate degree requirements at NWOSU do NOT need to submit a transcript from Northwestern. New applicants and re-admissions must submit an immunization record and Hepatitis B statement. Applicants who hold teaching certification must submit copies of their current teaching certificate.

** All students, regardless of their degree plan, must have (1) completed all course work OR be enrolled in the final nine hours in a regular semester or the final six hours in a summer semester and (2) have successfully removed all grades of "Incomplete" from their transcripts before being allowed to take the written comprehensive exam OR to submit the graduate portfolio for Milestone 3 assessment.