

# **Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education**

## **University of Louisville**

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## **Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education**

To ensure high quality graduate education programs, the university maintains minimum guidelines for admission and performance of graduate students, for faculty involvement in graduate education and for proper academic administration. The faculties of the enrollment units have the academic authority and responsibility to establish rigorous and effective: admission requirements, curricula, instruction, examinations, and recommendations to the Board of Trustees for granting of degrees (Redbook Article 3.3.2.)

The faculty of each Unit shall establish and publish its own set of policies and procedures for its graduate programs in the university catalog. Individual academic units and graduate programs may establish policies that are more stringent than those set forth in this document, but may not establish standards that are lesser.

### **I. Academic standards for students in graduate programs**

#### **A. Admissions standards**

1. All applications for graduate program admissions shall include: (a) a completed application, (b) an application fee, (c) results from any standard test required by the enrollment unit (d) official transcript(s) for all previous post-secondary coursework, and (e) at least two letters of recommendation. All transcripts not in English must be certified as authentic and translated verbatim into English.
2. The minimum requirement for admission is the baccalaureate degree or its equivalent from an accredited institution.
3. Each unit shall establish and publish in the university catalog a minimum grade point average requirement to be considered for acceptance and admission.
4. Unconditional admission to degree seeking status shall be made only if all admission credentials shall have been received, evaluated and approved.
5. Any provisional acceptance shall be made on an individual basis and shall require a statement of the rationale for the exception, plans for monitoring progress and performance and stated success criteria. Such justification must be provided in writing and must be accepted by the faculty and Dean of the enrollment unit. This will allow consideration of special circumstances in which the potential for high quality graduate performance has been clearly demonstrated by other means.
6. Students who fail to meet performance goals or who do not meet other requirements as outlined in the admission letter, program requirements or the university's catalog may be subject to academic dismissal from their programs.

## B. Academic Performance

1. Each unit shall establish and publish in the university catalog current curricular and program offerings which include all requirements for degrees.
2. Each unit shall establish and publish in the university catalog a minimum grade point average requirement and any other performance criteria for maintenance of good standing and progress toward degree.
3. Any student who does not satisfy the published performance criteria shall be placed in probationary status. Any student who remains in probationary status for two consecutive terms status may be considered for dismissal from the program.
4. Students receiving graduate assistantships (teaching, research or service) shall be provided adequate training and shall be required to understand and adhere to University policies related to these areas. The performance of teaching, research and service duties by such students shall be periodically evaluated. Students with teaching assistantships shall be evaluated annually.

## C. International students

1. All international students shall comply with regulations of the U.S. Department of Immigrations and Customs, its Student and Exchange Visitor Program and all related policies of the University of Louisville International Center.
2. All international students must be registered with the University of Louisville International Center including presentation of evidence of financial resources adequate to support their educational and living expenses in the United States for the duration of their studies.
3. International students for whom English is not their primary language must show English language proficiency by demonstration of a specified level of proficiency on the TOEFL examination or by successfully completing the exit examination for the advanced level of the Intensive English as a Second Language Program at the University of Louisville or by demonstration of a degree award from an acceptable English language institution.

## D. Academic program administration

1. Policies for administration of academic programs shall be promulgated by the Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies (SIGS) following appropriate consultation with: (1) an advisory body of deans or their designees, (2) directors of graduate programs, (3) representatives of the Graduate Student Council and/or (4) the Graduate Council. Final approval of these guidelines shall be made by the University Provost.
2. These administrative policies shall be published in the university catalog, and shall include policies and procedures for: the academic calendar and catalog maintenance, requirements for maintenance of good academic standing, course, credit and degree requirements, grades and grading policies, honors and awards, requirements for theses and dissertations, residency policies, and policies for award of stipends, benefits, tuition and fee remission.

## E. Conflict resolution

Any student who believes that he or she has been treated unfairly, discriminated against, or has had rights abridged may seek resolution of this conflict. Students, faculty and administrators shall first seek to resolve the matter through informal discussion and through administrative channels, and through the University Student Grievance Officer. Should this fail, a student may initiate a grievance at the unit level within one year of the event giving rise to the complaint. The Graduate Student Academic Grievance committee (Graduate Bylaws 2.3.5) will hold original jurisdiction for students enrolled in the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies and appellate jurisdiction for all other graduate students. All grievance procedures shall be conducted in accord with Redbook Section 6.8.

## II. Faculty Participation in Graduate Education

- A. Faculty who participate in teaching graduate level courses shall meet the requirements of the University of Louisville Faculty Credentials Policy. This policy is consistent with the guidelines of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools which state that faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course work should have an earned doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline. However, units may consider other qualifications (e.g., work experience, research) when determining whether a person is qualified to teach graduate level courses. Such exceptions must be documented and approved by the Dean of the appropriate academic unit and recorded by the Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies.
- B. Faculty who serve as Ph.D. mentors, chair doctoral dissertation committees, and/or chair master thesis committees shall, in addition to the above requirement:
  - 1. Show evidence of active research, scholarship or creative activity, as defined by the faculty of the academic unit.
  - 2. Have this responsibility specified in the annual faculty work plan.
  - 3. Shall make provisions for continuous availability of student mentoring.
- C. Faculty who serve as dissertation and thesis committee members shall in addition show evidence of experience in independent research, scholarship or creative activity, or may be appointed because of specific professional expertise of value to the student's program.
- D. Doctoral dissertation committees shall be composed of a minimum of four qualified members and masters' thesis committees a minimum of three qualified members. One of the members shall come from outside the program of the student. In the case of joint programs with other universities, a committee member from the other institution may fulfill this requirement.
- E. Faculty certified for participation in graduate education or for service as a doctoral mentor shall be evaluated periodically for continuation of such status. Each Unit shall publish its criteria for certification and continuation in graduate faculty and mentor status.
- F. All dissertation and theses committees shall provide sufficient expertise in the area of study and sufficient faculty availability for necessary student guidance.

- G. Academic units shall certify eligibility of faculty for participation on dissertation and theses committees and shall forward committee rosters upon appointment and upon any changes to the Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies.
- H. Exceptions to these guidelines for involvement with graduate education at the masters' and doctoral level must be documented and approved by the Dean of the enrollment unit and by the Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies.