

**Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education  
at the University of Louisville  
College of Arts and Sciences**

**REVIEW HISTORY**

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**approved by the Faculty Assembly of the College of Arts and Sciences**

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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 admission requirements, curricula, instruction, examinations, and recommendations to the Board of Trustees for granting of degrees (Redbook Article 3.3.2.)

The faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences (A&S) establishes this set of policies and procedures for its graduate programs. Individual graduate programs may establish policies that are more stringent than those set forth in this document, but may not establish standards that are weaker.

### **I. Academic standards for students in graduate programs in A&S**

#### **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 graduate program (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. The minimum grade point average (GPA) requirement to be considered for acceptance and admission in the College of Arts and Sciences is 3.0 out of 4.0.
4. Unconditional admission to degree seeking status shall be made only if all admission credentials shall have been received, evaluated and approved.
5. In extraordinary circumstances, students presenting a GPA below 3 may be considered for provisional acceptance. Any provisional admission 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 Arts and Sciences. 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. The College of Arts and Sciences shall establish and publish in the university catalog current curricular and program offerings which include all requirements for degrees.
2. The College of Arts and Sciences establishes 3.0 out of 4.0 as the minimum grade point average requirement for maintenance of good standing and satisfactory progress toward degree. Individual graduate programs may establish more rigorous 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 by the college. Any student who remains in probationary status for two consecutive terms will 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 and must present 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: (a) an advisory body of deans or their designees, (b) directors of graduate programs, (c) representatives of the Graduate Student Council and/or (d) 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 before the Arts and Sciences Academic Discipline Committee 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. Arts and Sciences faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course work should have an earned doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline. However, the College 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 College of Arts and Sciences and recorded by the Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies.
- B. Faculty who serve as mentors, i.e. chair doctoral dissertation committees, and/or chair master thesis committees, shall be approved by the chair of their respective departments, as well as the director of the graduate program, where circumstances so warrant.
  - 1. The approval will be based on the most recent annual review, which should show evidence of proficiency in research, scholarship or creative activity.
  - 2. Mentoring responsibility will be specified in the annual faculty work plan.
  - 3. Faculty mentors shall make provisions for continuous availability of student mentoring (physical presence or email access) throughout the full calendar year.
  - 4. At the time of approval to mentor a specific student, faculty must be active members of their departments. Upon retirement, mentors can continue to advise students previously assigned to them. Retired faculty cannot generally be approved to serve as committee chairs, though exceptions will be allowed, with appropriate documentation, specifically, an active research agenda.
  - 5. These approvals must be documented and accepted by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and recorded by the Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies.
- 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. The most recent annual review will serve as documentation.
- 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.

- E. Faculty certified for service as doctoral mentors shall be evaluated annually for continuation of such status; annual review will serve as this review mechanism.
- F. All dissertation and thesis committees shall provide sufficient expertise in the area of study and sufficient faculty availability for necessary student guidance. Sufficient expertise shall be established by departmental procedures.
- G. The College of Arts and Sciences shall certify eligibility of faculty for participation on dissertation and thesis 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 College of Arts and Sciences and the Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies.