

**Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education  
at the University of Louisville  
Graduate School Interdisciplinary Studies Programs**

Approved

Revised

Approved by Academic Affairs Subcommittee of the Graduate Council

Approved by Graduate Council

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## **Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education Graduate School Interdisciplinary Studies Programs**

To ensure high quality graduate education programs, the Graduate Council of the Graduate School has the academic authority and responsibility to review and approve the minimum guidelines for graduate education for graduate programs housed in the Graduate School. Interdisciplinary studies tracks may establish policies that are more stringent than those set forth in this document, but may not establish standards that are lesser. The faculties of the interdisciplinary programs have the academic authority and responsibility to establish rigorous and effective admission requirements, curricula, instruction, examinations, and recommendations to the Graduate Council for review and approval.

### **I. Academic standards for students in the interdisciplinary studies graduate programs of the Graduate School**

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

1. All applications for graduate program admissions shall include: a) a completed application, b) an application fee, c) results from Graduate Record Exam or other graduate admissions exam that is appropriate for the discipline of study d) official transcript(s) for all previous post-secondary coursework, and e) at least three letters of recommendation, preferably from individuals who are familiar with the student's proposed disciplinary area(s). All transcripts not in English must be certified as authentic by the World Educational Services or Educational Credential Evaluators for general evaluation, 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 undergraduate grade point average that will be considered for unconditional acceptance and admission in good standing is 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
4. The Graduate Record Exam or equivalent must be taken and general test scores submitted. No minimum score is required; rather the scores are used as part of a holistic evaluation of the student's academic portfolio.
5. All applicants must submit a personal statement describing motivations for pursuing graduate study.
6. Unconditional admission in good standing to degree seeking status shall be made only if all application materials have been received, and all admission credentials have been evaluated and approved by the program

7. Any provisional or special conditions 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 Dean of the Graduate School. This will allow consideration of special circumstances in which the potential for high quality graduate performance has been clearly demonstrated by other means.
8. 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. Current curricular and program offerings, including all requirements for degrees are published in the university catalog,
2. The minimum grade point average requirement and other performance criteria for maintenance of good standing and progress toward degree in the Graduate School and the individual interdisciplinary studies academic programs are found in the university catalog.
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. Doctoral students must be evaluated annually with respect to their progress toward degree, regardless of whether they receive assistantship support.
5. 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.

#### 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 one of the following: a) TOEFL examination scores of 79 or higher on the internet-based test, 213 or higher on the computer-based test, or 550 or higher on the paper-based test, b) official IELTS scores of at least 6.5 overall band score from the academic module exam, c) 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 Graduate School 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 Executive Vice President and 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

1. 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 Complaint Process. Should the complaint result in an academic grievance, a student may initiate a grievance at the unit level within one year of the event giving rise to the complaint. All grievance procedures shall be conducted in accord with Redbook Section 6.8.

## II. Faculty Participation in Graduate Education

### A. A. Certification for teaching graduate level courses.

1. Faculty who participate in teaching graduate level courses required in interdisciplinary studies programs 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. Documentation of faculty teaching credentials must be maintained by the Office of the Dean of the academic unit.

2. Certified graduate teachers may teach outside of their unit with approval of the program within that unit.

#### B. Certification for membership to the Graduate Faculty

1. Membership to the Graduate Faculty requires certification for teaching graduate level courses as described above, as well as certification to serve as a member of a thesis or dissertation committee member or as a committee chair. Faculty who serve in the interdisciplinary studies program must have graduate faculty status in a unit other than the Graduate School.
2. Faculty who serve as members of an interdisciplinary studies thesis or dissertation committee must have experience in independent research, scholarship or creative activity.
3. Faculty who serve as the chair of a student's committee in interdisciplinary studies must be currently active in research, scholarship or creative activity, as defined by the faculty of the academic unit. The faculty member shall also make provisions for continuous availability of student mentoring.
4. Each Academic Unit must establish the process by which individuals are nominated and approved for Graduate Faculty status. Each Unit shall publish its criteria for participation in graduate education and the process for periodic evaluation for continuation of such status. Each Unit will forward the graduate faculty list to the Dean of the Graduate School annually for publication in the Graduate Catalog.
5. Doctoral dissertation committees shall be composed of a minimum of four graduate faculty members and masters' thesis committees a minimum of three members. One of the members shall come from outside the program; a committee member from another institution may fulfill this requirement. All dissertation and theses committees shall provide sufficient expertise in the area of study and sufficient faculty availability for necessary student guidance.
6. Members of the Graduate Faculty may serve as committee chairs or committee members for graduate students outside of their unit with approval of the student's enrollment unit.
7. If a prospective committee member does not meet the standards for a graduate faculty appointment as set by the unit(s) participating in the interdisciplinary studies tracks, but brings professional expertise or value to a student's program, this person may be granted ad-hoc membership to the Graduate Faculty by the Unit Dean of the student's primary mentor. This pertains to persons from outside the university, as well as faculty and staff employed by the university.
8. 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 Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs.