

Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education at the School of Dentistry

University of Louisville

Guidelines for Graduate Education in the School of Dentistry
GRPOC Revision Date

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Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education

To ensure high quality graduate education programs, the School of Dentistry has the academic authority and responsibility to review and approve the minimum guidelines for graduate education for graduate programs housed in the School of Dentistry. The School of Dentistry may establish policies that are more stringent than those set forth in the University's **Minimal Guidelines for Graduate Education** but may not establish standards that are lesser. The faculty of the School of Dentistry has the academic authority and responsibility to establish rigorous and effective admission requirements, curricula, instruction, examinations, and recommendations to the Faculty Assembly for review and approval.

Currently, the School of Dentistry offers a Master of Science in Oral Biology program and a Master of Science in Dentistry program associated with the Advanced Education Programs in Periodontics, Endodontics, Prosthodontics, Pediatric Dentistry, and Orthodontics, but does not offer an independent PhD program. In accordance with these regulations, the Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education are as follows:

I. Academic standards for students in Master of Science in Oral Biology/Dentistry programs of the School of Dentistry

A. Admissions standards

Master of Science in Oral Biology

1. All applications for graduate program admissions shall include:
 - (a) A completed application form.
 - (b) All application fees.
 - (c) Results from the General Test Section of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE); Part I of the National Dental Board Examinations; or the Dental Admissions Test (DAT).
 - (d) Official transcript(s) for all previous post-secondary coursework.
 - (e) A personal statement of purpose and motivation for pursuing graduate study.
 - (f) At least two letters of recommendation.

All transcripts not in English must be certified as authentic and translated verbatim into English by the *World Educational Services* or *Educational Credential Evaluators*.

- 1) The minimum requirement for admission is the baccalaureate degree or its equivalent from an accredited institution.
- 2) The minimum undergraduate grade point average that will be considered for unconditional acceptance and admission is GPA 3.0 (on a 4-point scale). Applicants with DMD degrees from dental schools that do not provide grades are still eligible to apply.

The minimum scores that will be considered for unconditional acceptance and admission are as follow: GRE - greater than the 50th percentile for the Quantitative and Analytical Writing sections of the examination; NDBE Part 1 – a passing grade; or DAT – at or above the national average in test category # 8 (Academic Average).

- 3) Only complete applications that meet the minimal guidelines for graduate education will be considered. Acceptance into the MS in Oral Biology program is competitive and based on capacity constraints. Meeting the minimal guidelines for graduate education does not guarantee admission to the MS in Oral Biology program.
- 4) The Admissions Committee may request an in person or telephone interview with applicants.
- 5) Any provisional or special conditions acceptances 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 made in writing and must be accepted by the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs. This will allow consideration of special circumstances in which the potential for high quality graduate performance has been clearly demonstrated by other means.

Master of Science in Dentistry

1. All applications for graduate program admissions shall include:
 - (a) A completed application form.
 - (b) All application fees.
 - (c) Official transcript(s) for all post-secondary coursework, including evidence of a baccalaureate degree.
 - (d) At least two letters of recommendation.
 - (e) TOEFL scores, if English is not the applicant's native language.
 - (f) For international applicants, official course-by-course evaluation report from ECE (Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc.) www.ece.org
2. The minimum grade point average that will be considered for unconditional acceptance and admission is GPA 3.0 (on a 4-point scale). Applicants with DMD degrees from dental schools that do not provide grades are still eligible to apply.
- 6) Any provisional or special conditions acceptances 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 made in writing and must be accepted by the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs. This will allow consideration of special circumstances in which the potential for high quality graduate performance has been clearly demonstrated by other means.

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 a degree in the Oral Biology and the individual Master of Science in Dentistry academic programs are found in the university catalog.
- 3) To remain in good standing, an acceptable annual evaluation from the thesis/advisory committee must be obtained.
- 4) To remain in good standing, no more than six hours of course work may be carried with a grade of *C* or lower. Student must maintain a minimum of a 3.0 grade point average.
- 5) 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 semesters may be considered for dismissal from the program.
- 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.

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) Students for whom English is not their primary language must show English language proficiency by providing evidence of (1) a total score of 100 with a minimum of 26 in both speaking and listening sections of the TOEFL iBT test; or (2) 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 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. 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

For the School of Dentistry, faculty participation in graduate education is overseen by the Graduate Research Program Oversight Committee (GRPOC).

A. Certificate for teaching graduate level courses at the School of Dentistry:

- 1) 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 School of Dentistry. The Faculty Affairs Office requires documentation of teaching credentials to be maintained by the Dean and filed with the University of Louisville Faculty Affairs office. Unlike research mentors and thesis committee members, certified graduate teachers need not be filed with the Graduate School.
- 2) Certified graduate teachers may teach in courses outside their home credentialing unit or discipline with the approval of the appropriate outside unit.

B. Certificate for membership to the School of Dentistry Graduate Faculty (Research mentors):

- 1) The School of Dentistry must establish the process by which individuals are nominated and approved for Graduate Faculty status. These criteria and the process for periodic evaluation for continuation of such status must be published. The "School of Dentistry Minimal Guidelines for Graduate Education" document serves this purpose.
- 2) 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.
- 3) Faculty who serve as members of thesis committee must have experience in independent research, scholarship or creative activity.
- 4) Faculty who serve as the chair or co-chair of a student's committee must be currently active in research, scholarship or creative activity. Such evidence shall include senior authorship on peer-reviewed publications; research grants; service on academic committees including review committees and editorial boards; and technical skills or academic expertise not available within the faculty. The faculty member shall also make provisions for continuous availability of student mentoring.
- 5) Faculty who serve as a committee chair or committee member must have this responsibility specified in the annual faculty work plan.
- 6) Certification of Faculty credentials for membership to the Graduate Faculty is the purview of the Graduate Research Program Oversight Committee. Credentialing requires approval by a majority of GRPO members.
- 7) The School of Dentistry will forward the graduate faculty list to the Dean of the Graduate School annually for publication in the graduate catalog.
- 8) The School of Dentistry graduate faculty list will also be filed with the Dean of the School of Dentistry.
- 9) Nominations to the School of Dentistry Graduate Faculty may come from qualified individuals themselves, from course director or from program directors.
- 10) Faculty certified for participation in graduate education shall be evaluated every five years for continuation of such status.
- 11) Masters' thesis committees shall be composed of a minimum of three qualified members. All these committees shall provide sufficient expertise in the area of study and sufficient faculty availability for necessary student guidance.
- 12) Members of the Graduate Faculty of any University of Louisville unit may serve as committee chairs or committee members for the School of Dentistry graduate students, with approval of the Dean of the School of Dentistry.
- 13) If a committee member does not have a primary appointment to a University of Louisville faculty, but is otherwise qualified, this person shall be granted ad hoc approval to participate in graduate education for the specific course or committee in question.
- 14) If a prospective committee member does not meet the standards for a graduate faculty appointment, 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 Dean of the School of Dentistry. This pertains to persons from outside the University, as well as

- faculty and staff employed by the University.
- 15) Exceptions to these guidelines for involvement with graduate education must be documented and approved by the Dean of the School of Dentistry and by the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs.