

Non-degree Admissions and Financial Aid

Applicants who do not desire to seek an advanced degree but wish to take graduate course work may be permitted to enroll in non-degree status. The decision to admit a student to non-degree status belongs to the program. Application credentials must include the application form, application fee and an official transcript showing the award of a baccalaureate degree. No more than six hours of course work taken in a non-degree status may be applied to a graduate degree program, and the department must approve. If a department wants to allow the student to apply more than six hours, the DGS must submit a variance signed by all the appropriate folks.

Non-degree status may also be recommended when a student's credentials are so incomplete that a program cannot make a recommendation to admit to degree status (although an official transcript indicating that the applicant has been awarded a baccalaureate degree is always required) but would like to allow the student to begin taking classes; in this case, the student is expected to complete the application and provide all required credentials during the first semester of enrollment. Some programs admit students whose credentials do not meet the minimum requirements of the program, unit, or SIGS into non-degree status in order to give the student an opportunity to prove that they are capable of doing graduate level work. In such cases, students should be told that the decision to admit non-degree is no guarantee that the student will eventually be admitted to degree-status. Students who are admitted to non-degree status must reapply to be admitted to degree-status, but they do not have to pay another fee.

Students who are admitted to non-degree status do not normally qualify for financial aid (and should be told that in their admission letter). There is, however, a "non-degree exception" which may be used in very rare cases when a student is fulfilling published prerequisites to admission to the graduate program (usually these are undergraduate courses). For example, if a student has a bachelor's degree in math but wants to pursue a graduate computer science degree that has an admissions requirement of 12 credits of undergraduate computer science coursework, he might be eligible for financial aid to take those 12 hours, even though he wouldn't be enrolled in a degree program. Normally, graduate courses are not prerequisites for admission to a graduate program, and therefore a non-degree student taking graduate courses is almost never eligible for financial aid.

Students may accumulate a maximum of fifteen hours while in non-degree status. Exceptions to this policy are the RANK I program in the College of Education and Human Development, the Nurse Practitioner program in the School of Nursing, and certificate programs.