



Western Oregon
UNIVERSITY

Graduate Programs

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

Welcome	2
Contact Information	3
General Information for Graduate Students	5
Funding Graduate School.....	8
Exit Options Information.....	9
Graduate Programs Academic Regulations	12
Doctoral and Master's Academic Regulations	25

Welcome & Contact Information

Dear Graduate Student,

On behalf of Graduate Programs, it is my pleasure to welcome you to Western Oregon University (WOU) graduate studies. Whether you are new to campus or returning to further your education, I am delighted that you chose WOU Graduate Programs.

You are a valued member of our vibrant campus community. Pursuing graduate studies is a major decision and I commend you for making this commitment and investment in your future. The Graduate Programs Office is here to support you throughout your time at WOU. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

This Graduate Student Handbook will help you navigate policies and procedures commonly encountered by WOU graduate students. This publication does not replace the university catalog, which is the official, detailed, and complete final word on all graduate policies and procedures at WOU. To review the catalog, click this online link: [WOU Catalog](#). Another great resource for all graduate students is the [New Student Orientation](#) Module.

Please use these resources in addition to meeting with your program coordinator. Your program coordinator is here to help you navigate your specific program and any questions and concerns that may arise.

I wish you great success in your graduate studies!

Sincerely,

Dr. Hillary Fouts, Dean of Graduate Studies and Research

Graduate Programs Staff	Contact Information
	Dean of Graduate Studies & Research <i>Dr. Hillary Fouts</i> 503-838-8366 foutsh@wou.edu
	Director of Graduate Student Success & Recruitment <i>Amber Deets</i> 503-838-8492 deetsa@wou.edu
	Admissions Coordinator <i>Kristen Stevens</i> 503-838-8597 stevensk@wou.edu

Welcome & Contact Information

Graduate Degree Programs	
MA in Criminal Justice/MS in Justice Studies Criminal Justice Certificates	Dr. Omar Melchor Ayala, Program Coordinator 503-838-9219 ayalao@wou.edu
MAT-Initial License	Dr. Xiaopeng Gong, Program Coordinator 503-838-9251 gongx@wou.edu
MS in Education/MS in Education: Curriculum and Instruction	Dr. Joshua Schulze, Program Coordinator 503-838-9285 schulzejm@wou.edu
MS in Education: Education Technology/Instructional Design Certificates	Dr. Greg Zobel, Program Coordinator 503-838-8728 zobleg@wou.edu
MS in Education: Special Education	Dr. Katrina Hovey, Program Coordinator 503-838-8961 hoveyk@wou.edu
MS in Rehabilitation Counseling	Dr. Denise Thew, Program Coordinator 503-838-9341 thewd@wou.edu
MA in Interpreting Studies/Interpreting Certificates	Amanda Smith, Program Coordinator 503-838-8650 smithar@wou.edu Dr. Elisa Maroney, Program Coordinator 503-838-8735 maronee@wou.edu
MA in Organizational Leadership/Leadership Certificates	Dr. David Foster, Program Coordinator 503-838-8805 fosterd@wou.edu

Welcome & Contact Information

Other Programs:	
EMS K-8 Certificate/Specialization	Dr. Joshua Schulze, Program Coordinator 503-838-9285 schulzejm@wou.edu
ESOL Endorsement/Dual Language/Bilingual Education	Dr. Jessica Dougherty, Program Coordinator 503-838-8929 doughertyj@wou.edu
Healthcare Administration Certificate	Paul Disney, Adjunct Professor 503-838-8546 disney@wou.edu
Reading Endorsement/Certificate	Dr. Joshua Schulze, Program Coordinator 503-838-9285 schulzejm@wou.edu
STEM Educational Certificate	Dr. Joshua Schulze, Program Coordinator 503-838-9285 schulzejm@wou.edu
Writing Theory & Practice Certificate	Dr. Leigh Graziano, Associate Professor 503-838-9360 graziano@wou.edu

General Information for Graduate Students

Program Objectives

Graduate students are screened and admitted into the various programs, each of which has admissions standards and designated graduate faculty. Campus-wide standards for admissions, selection of faculty, curricular revisions, operating policies, and final examinations are established by recommendations of the Graduate-Studies Committee.

Each graduate student at WOU is expected to meet the following objectives pertinent to their specific graduate program:

- Demonstrate advanced competence and skill in the mastery of concepts, principles, systems, and practices which are in the context of the student's specialty.
- Demonstrate advanced competence and skill in reading, interpreting, and applying the research and literature of the professional studies component of the student's graduate program.
- Demonstrate awareness and understanding of ethical, philosophical, and cultural issues that apply to the professional component of the student's graduate program.
- Demonstrate the ability to synthesize and apply program skills and knowledge through the program's exit requirement.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Western Oregon University is committed to a campus climate that exemplifies "respect, civility, and acceptance to allow all members of the university community—administrators, faculty, staff, and students—to succeed as a university employee or student." Furthermore, "diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and cultural competence are core institutional values" and "every member of the University community is responsible and accountable for these values" (WOU Board of Trustees statement on Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Accessibility, April 21, 2021).

Drop/Add: Adjusting Your Enrollment

Each term, you may adjust your enrollment by dropping and adding courses during the drop/add period, without any penalty. Please utilize the Registrar's Office [registration page](#) to learn more about registration requirements.

Email

Both WOU and Graduate Programs will send official, critical, and time-sensitive messages to the WOU business email address listed for you in the student system. Please make a habit of checking that account regularly so you do not miss important information or deadlines. Also, your email address will be added automatically to the graduate student listserv, over which messages will be sent from time to time about academic, financial aid, professional development, and student updates and opportunities. We do our best to keep listserv messages to a minimum and make sure they address as broad appeal as possible, though not all may be of interest to every single student.

General Information for Graduate Students

Graduate Student Representation and Advocacy

The Dean's Graduate Student Council (DGSC) advises the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and serves as a liaison between WOU graduate students, WOU administration, and WOU Student Government. The Council is made up of a maximum of 12 student representatives, representing our diverse student population, programs, and course delivery modalities. The Council will be meeting 1-2 times per term for 1-2 hours to discuss current events affecting graduate students. If you are interested in joining this council, please send an email to Amber Deets at deetsa@wou.edu to request an application.

Official Program Plan

Each graduate program has a unique plan of study. This [Program Plan](#) must be on file in the Graduate Office to receive financial aid and to register for courses beyond the first 9 graduate credits. You should fill out the top portion only and sign on the student signature line before giving the form to your advisor during the first advising session.

The Term Before You Plan on Graduating

The term before you plan on graduating, check with your degree program to:

- Make sure all Incomplete (I) grades and other unresolved or ineligible grades are cleared up.
- Make sure any needed grade changes have been made.
- Make sure your degree program is accurate by checking your DegreeWorks.
- Submit a degree application online no later than the last day of the term before you plan to graduate. If you do not apply by that deadline, you cannot graduate that term.
 - The degree application: Apply to the Graduate
 - Application is located in the Graduate Student channel in your Portal.
 - Ensure that your name is on the graduation lists for that term.
 - Confirms your name for placement on your diploma and in the commencement, program published in spring.
 - Put your name on the list to receive information about commencement ceremonies, including the purchase of graduation regalia, such as cap, hood, and gown.
 - Your degree application will not “roll over” from one term to another. If you do not graduate one term, you must submit a new degree application for the next term you plan on graduating.

General Information for Graduate Students

- During the term you plan on graduating, you must complete satisfactory performance on your final examination whether comprehensive exams, Action Research Project, Professional Project, or Thesis.

At the End of Your Graduating Term

The Registrar's Office posts your graduation date and degree earned on your transcript after graduation certification is finished. Please do not order transcripts until you have received an email from the Director of Graduate Student Success and Recruitment that your degree has been processed. Updated transcripts are usually available within two weeks of the term being completed. Diplomas are ordered after the term is over. About eight weeks after graduation, your diploma will be sent to your permanent home address on file with the Registrar's Office. Thus, please be sure to verify (and, if needed, update) your permanent home address by checking your address in Wolf-Web before graduation.

Graduation

WOU awards degrees after each term in Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer (6-week session). Please note that commencement (a graduation ceremony) and graduation (the actual awarding of a degree) are not the same thing. You are not officially graduated until the Graduate Programs Office certifies that you met all degree requirements, and the Registrar's Office updates your transcript and issues your diploma.

Funding Graduate School

Graduate Loans

Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loans

Students admitted and enrolled in a graduate program who have eligibility for additional funding after receiving Stafford loans and any other financial assistance, can apply for Graduate Plus Loans.

To apply for the Graduate PLUS loan, the graduate student will need to complete and return the Graduate PLUS Loan Request Form, pass a credit check that will be performed by the Direct Loan servicer, and complete Master Promissory Notes and Entrance Loan Counseling online (if applicable). Applicants will be notified directly by the Direct Loan servicer if they are eligible to receive the PLUS loan. If the applicant does not pass the credit check and the Graduate PLUS loan is denied, the credit check may be challenged. Additional information and documentation may be provided to Direct Loans, or an endorser may sign for the loan with the applicant.

Students seeking federal financial aid must be admitted by the Graduate Programs Office and have a Program Plan turned in to the Graduate Office before they are eligible to receive financial aid.

Graduate Scholarships

Most scholarships are found by doing personalized program searches. Graduate Programs offer scholarship applications to those with a GPA of 3.25 or higher in their first year of enrollment in graduate programs. Please check your admissions letter to determine whether you meet the requirements to apply for this annual scholarship.

Graduate Assistant Positions

Graduate Assistantship provides any combination of the following professional duties: library research; data and information warehousing; institutional research and technology projects; development of teaching/training materials, such as webinars, online modes of course content delivery, face-to-face presentations, PowerPoint presentations, and visual aids; laboratory and field research; examination preparation; development and delivery of conference and workshop materials; grades examinations/papers; and, teaching lower division courses. Other duties may be designated that are specific to the supervising unit's needs in their pursuit of achieving the university's mission.

If accepted by the university, this position provides tuition remission minus the cost of student fees. Students work an average of 19.6 hours a week and are awarded a monthly stipend in addition to their tuition remission. The student must maintain a B grade point average to be eligible for this position. An evaluation of the student's performance will be done every term.

Graduate Programs Exit Option Information

Graduation

A student graduates from WOU when the Registrar's Office determines that all university requirements have been met. Graduation occurs at the close of any academic term wherein the student's academic record is closed. Commencement exercises at WOU take place once a year in June.

Final Evaluation Procedures

Apply one term before completion of final coursework. Please pay attention to important dates on the [graduate calendar](#).

- [Application for completion of master's program](#) must be submitted to the Graduate Office.
 - Each candidate must apply to complete the master's program with the Graduate Office. This application also serves as the application to complete the final evaluation such as thesis, professional project, or exams.
 - This form is required for all students seeking degrees, endorsements, certificates, and/or specializations.
- Final evaluation procedures must be completed, either written examinations or alternative evaluations.
- Complete the [Exit Survey](#) administered by Graduate Office.

Exit Option Required Paperwork

All exit options have paperwork that is required for the final report. Please refer to the [Exit Requirement Forms](#) page for further information on the required paperwork. The following information on this page will provide a brief description of each exit requirement option. If you have further questions about your exit requirement, please contact [Amber Deets](#).

Institutional Review Board

If the proposed exit requirement involves human participants, then the project will require review and approval by the WOU Institutional Review Board before any recruitment or research involving human participants may begin.

IRB review and approval are required for all research projects involving human participants, regardless of the level of risk posed to participants. Students are advised to begin the IRB application process several weeks before recruiting human participants for their thesis or field study.

All forms and procedures for the IRB application can be found at <http://www.wou.edu/irb>

Graduate Programs Exit Option Information

Comprehensive Exams

A final written comprehensive examination will be based on areas of study in the approved program. Subject area questions will be based on the statement of components, objectives, and requirements outlined. Comprehensive written examinations are taken during the student's last quarter of study or after all courses have been completed to a particular degree. Comprehensive exams are not offered during the summer.

Written comprehensive examinations will be graded as follows:

- With Distinction
- Pass
- Unsatisfactory
- Fail

If you receive a failing grade, you must retake that section of your examination in a subsequent term. Students only get two attempts to pass their comprehensive exams. If you receive an unsatisfactory grade, a committee of two or three faculty members will schedule a one-hour oral review with you. The oral will focus on the section(s) that were evaluated as unsatisfactory. Every attempt will be made to have at least one member of the oral committee from your program.

Your advisor and/or professors who usually teach courses listed on your Program Plan often write the subject matter or specialty area questions. These questions are based on courses taken as part of your degree. The faculty member who wrote the questions in the subject matter or specialty area usually reads and rates the responses.

Thesis Projects

The thesis attempts to share with the professional community information that may be used to enhance the common knowledge base of a particular profession. The focus of the thesis research is to answer a question that is of interest to the general profession. The results of thesis research are generalized to an entire field.

The master's student must show familiarity with previous work in the field and must demonstrate the ability to organize data and explain results. The format is:

- Rationale for the Project that includes a detailed description of the environment for which the study was designed.
- Review of Literature
- Statement of Hypotheses
- Methodology
- Analysis
- Results

Graduate Programs Exit Option Information

Policy for Accepting and Binding of Thesis or Project

The final thesis will be presented to the student's thesis board. A student is required to submit one copy of the thesis to have on file in the library. This is submitted via Digital Commons after receiving upload instructions from Graduate Programs.

- The thesis must be submitted to the Graduate Office (Administration building, room 107) on the Wednesday of Finals Week via Digital Commons.

Action Research Projects

Students in the Master of Arts in Teaching: Initial Licensure program complete an Action Research Project as part of their exit requirement. This project is a study of the student's practice. This document includes the following:

- Philosophy of Education/Teaching
- Review of the literature
- Methodology
- Results and discussion
- Summary, conclusion, and implications

Students in the Master of Arts in Interpreting: Theory and Practice program complete an Action Research Project as part of their exit requirement. Students will work directly with their committee chair to create an acceptable exit requirement.

Professional Projects

A Professional Project's focus is to share with the professional community information that may be used to enhance the common knowledge base of a particular profession.

The graduate student must show familiarity with previous work in the field and must demonstrate the ability to organize data and explain how the end product will add to the previous body of knowledge. Examples of a professional project may include but are not limited to:

- A curriculum design for a particular discipline
- Training programs, or
- Computer programs for a particular application
- Action Research Project

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

Academic Load (G-1)

The full-time course load for graduate students is nine graduate credits, including coursework portfolio, professional project, field study, or thesis. The maximum course load for graduate students is 16 credits with any combination of courses (graduate or undergraduate) during the fall, winter, or spring term. Twelve credit hours is the maximum load for graduate students during the six-week summer term.

Credit by Examination (G-3)

Graduate courses cannot be challenged. If a graduate student has an extensive background in an academic area, the graduate student's adviser can determine other graduate courses that can be substituted for the course in question on the plan of study. A substitution form must be submitted to the Graduate Programs Office.

Filing a Program Plan (G-4)

All graduate students must file a program plan within the first 9 credits of coursework. This plan lists all courses needed for a particular graduate program.

- The proposed program plan must be completed with the assistance of the appropriate adviser and submitted to the Graduate Programs Office for final approval. Financial Aid receives program verification once the program plan is on file.
- Conditionally admitted graduate students, complete requirements for admission as a regular graduate student, including providing a program plan.
- Students who have not filed a program plan after completing nine credits of coursework will have a hold placed on registration until the form has been filed with the Graduate Programs Office.

The steps listed above must also be completed by graduate students seeking additional endorsements, preparations, licensure, certificates, or specializations.

Final Exit Evaluation (G-5)

All graduate students must complete one or more final exit evaluations. The type of exit evaluation is determined when the graduate program plan is approved. Common exit evaluations consist of written comprehensive examinations, a thesis, portfolio, action research projects, field studies, and professional projects or combinations of two exit evaluations. The Graduate Programs Office will determine the type of exit evaluation(s) based on the graduate student's program plan.

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

Graduate students who write a thesis, professional project, or field study must follow the procedures outlined in the guidelines which can be found on the web at graduate.wou.edu.

Graduate students who prepare a portfolio should contact an adviser for information regarding specific portfolio requirements for that program.

Some divisions at WOU require comprehensive written examinations based on coursework in the student's content area in addition to the completion of the thesis, field study, professional project, or portfolio.

A final written comprehensive examination will be based on areas of study in the approved program. Subject area questions will be based on the statement of components, objectives, and requirements outlined in the statement of program objectives. Graduate students who fail one or more areas of the written comprehensive examination may be given a program of self-study by their adviser(s) and may retake the area(s) that failed at another regularly scheduled comprehensive examination.

Students may retake the written comprehensive examinations only once. Graduate students who score unsatisfactorily (below C-) on any component of the comprehensive examination will be required to take a final oral examination on the unsatisfactory section. Final oral examinations will not be required of students who score a pass or above on all areas of the written comprehensive examination.

A graduate student is eligible to complete final evaluations only after all coursework has been completed or the student is in the final term of enrollment. Per policy, they can also participate in comprehensive exams spring term if they have two or fewer courses to finish during the subsequent summer term. All incomplete grades must be changed to a letter grade before a student will be allowed to take his or her comprehensive examination. An exception is made if the outstanding incomplete grade is for a current student teaching grade, exit project, or special individual study course. Examinations are offered every term except summer.

Graduate Faculty (G-6)

The graduate faculty consists of the President and Vice President of academic affairs of WOU, the academic Deans, the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, the colleges' graduate faculty coordinators, and members of the faculty who have been named by their divisions and approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

To Teach Graduate Courses:

Qualifications: Earned graduate degree equivalent to or above the course degree level. Evidence of professional activity is sufficient to assure awareness of current advances in the discipline or profession. Evidence of effective instruction or effectiveness in other types of professional presentations. In the case of new appointments, the strength of evidence that indicates potential may substitute for experience.

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

To Serve on Graduate Student Committees:

Qualifications: Earned graduate degree equivalent to or above the student's degree level. Evidence of professional activity or scholarship sufficient to assure awareness of current advances in the discipline or profession. Evidence of effectiveness in advising, participation on graduate student committees, and supervising graduate student research. In the case of new appointments, information suggesting the potential for guiding graduate students may substitute for participation on committees.

To Direct master's Exit Requirements:

Qualifications: Doctoral or other relevant terminal degree. A combination of a master's degree and scholarly activity may be considered as a substitute for a doctoral or terminal degree. Evidence of professional activity and scholarship indicating participation in advances in the discipline or profession.

To Direct Doctoral Exit Requirements:

Qualifications: Doctoral degree. Evidence of professional activity and scholarship indicating active participation in current advances in the discipline or profession.

Graduate Faculty Exceptions:

For exceptions to any portion of the graduate faculty requirements, faculty may appeal to their college dean. Upon recommendation of the college dean, the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research will review and consider whether an exception is justified and upholds the academic integrity of WOU graduate programs.

Division chairs shall include information and updates on Graduate Faculty members to the Graduate Programs Office as part of their annual spring review. This information should include which faculty meets the criteria for teaching, directing, and serving on committees.

Graduate Grading System (G-7)

The following grading scale is employed at the graduate level:

Excellent:
A
A-
Normal Graduate Performance:
B+
B

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

B-
Below Graduate Standards:
C+
C
C-
Unsatisfactory Performance:
D+
D
D-
F

The following marks are also used. These grades are disregarded in the computation of grade-point averages.

P	Satisfactory completion (<i>B- or better, special conditions apply</i>)
NC	No Credit, unsatisfactory
I	Incomplete (see Incomplete Grades (W-2c) and Special Regulations Concerning Incomplete Grades (G-11))
RP	Regular Progress (see Regular Progress Grades (W-2d))
W	Withdrawn
X	No grade received/no basis for the grade (see X Grades (W-2e))

Graduate Level Courses (G-8)

All graduate courses will be designed to help students achieve well-defined objectives or student learning outcomes. Student learning outcomes encompass the range of student attributes and abilities that students should be able to demonstrate after successful completion of the course.

400/500 courses

Courses bearing dual-listed numbers (400/500) must provide students who are enrolled with 500-level credit with graduate-level learning. Expectations for learning outcomes in the graduate component of dual-listed (400/500 level) courses are the same as for stand-alone 500-level courses. A distinction

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

must be made between learning outcomes for students taking the course for undergraduate credit (400 level) and those taking the course for graduate credit (500 level). In most cases, this distinction should include an emphasis on developing skills in analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation for the 500-level credit. The differences in student learning outcomes should be accompanied by appropriate differences in learning opportunities and evaluation procedures.

500-level courses

These courses are graduate courses in support of graduate certificate/endorsement/specialization or master's degree programs.

Undergraduates of exceptional scholastic achievements may, outside of an Accelerated Undergraduate to Master's Pathway (AUMP), program be admitted to these courses on the approval of the instructor, and they may, if admitted, under some conditions, use a limited number of these courses toward a graduate certificate/endorsement/specialization or a master's degree program. These courses have one or more of the following characteristics:

- They require upper-division prerequisites in the discipline.
- They require an extensive theoretical base in the discipline.
- They increase or re-examine the existing knowledge or database of the discipline.
- They present core components or important peripheral components of the discipline at an advanced level.

600-level courses

These are graduate courses available for use by graduate and AUMP students, for graduate certificate/endorsement/specialization or master's degree programs. In addition to exhibiting the characteristics of 500-level courses, these courses typically have an increased level of sophistication in developing skills in analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation.

At least 50 percent of coursework in a graduate degree program must be 600 level.

700-level courses

These are graduate courses offered principally in support of doctoral-level instructional programs but also are available for use on graduate certificate or master's level degree programs. In addition to exhibiting the characteristics of 600-level courses, these courses typically require 600-level prerequisites, and they build on and increase the information presented in 600-level courses.

At least 50 percent of coursework in a doctoral degree program must be 700 level.

Blanket-Numbered Courses

Blanket-numbered courses have a zero-middle digit. See [Limitations on Special Arrangement "0" Courses \(G-11\)](#) regarding course limits.

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

- Research (601 or 701) is for research that is not part of the thesis. Data obtained from such research should not be incorporated into the thesis.
- Thesis (603 or 703) covers thesis research and writing. A student may register for thesis credit each term.
- Reading and Conference (605 or 705)
- Professional Projects (606 or 706) are used for special work not given under a formal course number.
- Seminar (607 or 707) is used both for departmental seminars and for special group work not given in a formal course.
- Workshop (608 or 708) is usually a special, short-term course covering a variety of topics.
- Practicum/Internships (609 or 709) are used for courses whose emphasis is the application of academic theory to the work environment.

Accelerated Undergraduate Master's Pathway (AUMP)

Purpose:

To allow qualified WOU undergraduate students that wish to pursue a master's program at WOU immediately after completing their undergraduate degree the opportunity to apply graduate coursework towards the completion of their undergraduate and master's degrees.

Criteria for acceptance and continuation in the AUMP:

- Fully admitted undergraduates of senior standing
- Cumulative WOU GPA of 3.2 or above
- Pursuing an undergraduate program identified as participating in an approved AUMP.
- Meets any requirements set by the graduate program that are more than the stated minimum requirements.
- Undergraduate students who have been accepted to an accelerated undergraduate master's pathway must complete all of their bachelor's degree requirements and graduate within 12 months of the first day of the term in which they begin taking master's courses as part of the accelerated program. Students who fail to do so will undergo a progress review and may be dismissed from the accelerated program.

Provisions:

- 500- and 600-level courses that may count toward both the bachelor's and master's programs will be determined through the collaboration of designated faculty members in each program.

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

- AUMP students may take a maximum of 16 graduate credits while classified as an undergraduate.
 - Minimum grade of B (3.0) or better is required for a course to apply to the master's level program.
 - Courses graded on a Pass/No Credit or Satisfactory/No Credit basis are not eligible for use in AUMP programs.
- The number of graduate credits earned in the AUMP program that can be applied to a master's program will be determined by the graduate program and academic regulation G-18.
- The number of graduate credits earned in the AUMP program that can be applied to an undergraduate program will be determined by the undergraduate program.

Cost:

Undergraduates accepted into AUMP will pay at the undergraduate rate for the approved AUMP courses they take while still an undergraduate.

Upon full admission as a master's student applicable graduate tuition rates apply.

Graduate Student Expectations (G-9)

Professional Code of Conduct

Graduate School Standards of Professional Behavior and Communication:

Graduate students enrolled at Western Oregon University are expected to conform to basic regulations and policies developed to govern the behavior of students as members of the university community. Violations of the regulations subject a student to appropriate disciplinary or judicial action. Refer to the [Code of Student Responsibility](#) for detailed expectations. Additional information regarding the regulations and procedures for disciplinary action and appeal are available via the [Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website](#).

Grade Expectations:

Although grades of C+, C, and C- are below the graduate standard, up to eight hours may be counted as credit toward a graduate degree if the course(s) was/were taken through Western Oregon University. Grades below a B- cannot be transferred into a WOU graduate program from another accredited university or college. A maximum of 15 credits of non-degree graduate coursework can be applied to an endorsement or degree program.

The graduate student must always maintain a B (3.00 GPA) average on the courses fulfilling the degree requirements (courses listed on the student's graduate program plan of study). A department/program can establish more rigorous policies concerning the use of C grades in a degree program and/or overall

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

minimum GPA requirement. Grades of D or F indicate unacceptable work and carry no graduate credit. A graduate student whose overall GPA falls below 3.00 or receives a grade of D or F must submit a petition with a plan of remediation to the Graduate Studies Committee. The petition and plan of remediation must be approved by the student's adviser or program coordinator.

A grade of P/NC can be used by only a limited number of degree programs that have received special authorization and that can be counted as credit toward a graduate degree.

Graduation and Commencement (G-10)

- [Applying to Graduate \(G-10a\)](#)
- [Definitions: Graduation vs. Commencement \(G-10b\)](#)
- [Degree Evaluation System \(G-10c\)](#)
- [Resolve Incomplete Grades \(G-10d\)](#)
- [Commencement Attendance \(G-10e\)](#)

A graduate student graduates from WOU when the Office of the Registrar determines that all university requirements have been met. Graduation occurs at the close of any academic term. Upon graduation, a student's academic record is closed.

Commencement exercises at WOU take place once a year in June. Graduate students who are within one to two courses of completing degree requirements at Western Oregon University may participate in the Commencement ceremony if they have a plan on file in the Graduate Programs Office indicating that those courses will be completed during the subsequent summer term or fall term. Students must also have completed comprehensive exams.

Applying to Graduate (G-10a)

Each graduate student must file, via Wolf Web, an Application for Completion of Graduate Program with the Graduate Programs Office. This application also serves as the application to complete the final evaluation procedures. This is due one term before completion. For specific deadlines, refer to the [Graduate Student Calendar](#) on the Graduate Programs website.

Additional general information is available on the website at graduate.wou.edu.

Students who have completed more than half of their graduate program are eligible to apply for graduation. Once your application is submitted, you are responsible for informing the Graduate Programs Office of any changes in your intended graduation term, change in name or address, and other graduation-related information.

Definitions: Graduation vs. Commencement (G-10b)

Graduation and commencement are not the same. A student graduates from WOU after applying to graduate and after the Office of the Registrar determines that all university academic requirements have been met. Students may graduate at the end of any academic term.

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

Commencement is WOU's annual ceremony in June that recognizes students' completion of degrees. Students who are eligible and wish to participate must submit all required information by the deadline posted on the Graduate Programs Office online calendar. Failure to submit the necessary information by published deadlines may result in the student's name not being included in the published Commencement program. Students receiving their specializations, endorsements or certificates only are not eligible to participate in Commencement. Commencement is held for graduate students receiving graduate degrees.

Degree Evaluation System (G-10c)

Degree Tracks is the official degree evaluation system for students and advisers. Students use this online system to check their progress toward their degree. For information on how to access and use Degree Tracks, see the Office of the Registrar website.

Resolve Incomplete Grades (G-10d)

All incomplete grades must be completed, and the grades entered by the instructor, NO LATER than the end of the term graduation is planned, or the default grade will be applied.

However, an unresolved incomplete grade may prevent graduation because the default grade lowers a student's GPA or prevents a needed requirement from being met. Students are strongly encouraged to resolve incomplete grades within the shortest possible time to prevent problems closer to graduation.

Commencement Attendance (G-10e)

Students are required to declare their intention to participate in the June commencement according to the deadline specified on the Academic Calendar on the Office of the Registrar's website.

Students who have graduated in the previous summer, fall, or winter terms are eligible to attend the Commencement ceremony. Students who have applied to graduate in spring, summer, or fall immediately following the spring term may also participate in the ceremony.

Limitations on Special Arrangement "0" Courses (G-11)

A maximum of 15 credit hours of workshops, special arrangements, and practicum courses may be applied to a graduate degree program. These courses must be pre-approved by the appropriate adviser. Fifteen credit hours of 506, 606, 706, 507, 607, 707, 508, 608, 708, 509, 609, and 709 courses may be included in a program. Additionally, there is a limit of nine credit hours for any one number.

Minimum Registration (G-12)

Minimum Registration Requirement

Minimum Registration Degree-seeking graduate students are required to register once per academic year until all degree requirements have been completed Unless on an academic leave of absence, degree-seeking graduate students who fail to maintain the minimum registration requirement will be regarded by the university as having resigned from the program. Students who later wish to resume

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

studying toward the degree must reapply for admission to their graduate program using the Re-enrollment Application. Readmission cannot be guaranteed and is subject to program review. Programs may require students to complete a new program application.

Graduate students involved in activities requiring any faculty time or library or use of other University resources are required to register for a minimum of one graduate credit during each term in which these activities occur. This includes students engaged in any phase or aspect of research, exit project, or thesis. A minimum of one graduate credit of registration is required any term (including summer) when students are completing a major milestone for the degree such as submission of a final project, thesis defense, taking comprehensive exams, and graduation. Individual graduate programs may have additional enrollment requirements relative to the amount of time required of the faculty or University resources.

Western Oregon University employees receiving tuition waivers in pursuit of their graduate degree are exempt from the Minimum Registration Requirement, however, employees involved in activities requiring any faculty time or use of university resources are required to register for a minimum of one graduate credit during each term in which these activities occur. This includes employees engaged in any phase or aspect of research, exit project, or thesis. A minimum of one graduate credit of registration is required any term (including summer) when students are completing a major milestone for the degree such as submission of a final project, thesis defense, taking comprehensive exams, and graduation.

Appeal

In the case of extraordinarily extenuating circumstances, students may appeal the provisions of the Minimum Registration Requirement policy by submitting a detailed request in writing to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

Implementation of Minimum Registration Policy

Beginning Summer 2023, all graduate degree-seeking students are subject to the minimum registration policy. Students pursuing certificate-only, specialization-only, or endorsement-only are excluded from this policy.

Unauthorized Break in Registration

A graduate student who takes an unauthorized break in registration by failing to maintain registration once per academic year or by failing to obtain an Academic Leave of Absence (see below) will relinquish their graduate standing in the university. Students who wish to have their graduate standing reinstated will be required to apply for readmission and pay the application fee. The readmission application must be reviewed and approved by the student's program coordinator and Director of Graduate Student Success & Recruitment. Acceptance back into a graduate program is not guaranteed even if the student departed in good standing. The petitioner for readmission will be required to meet

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

university and departmental admission requirements and degree completion requirements that are in effect on the date of readmission.

Academic Leave of Absence

Graduate students in good standing may request an Academic Leave of Absence to suspend their program of study for a good cause (i.e., illness, temporary departure for employment, family issues, financial need, personal circumstances). Students must submit an Academic Leave of Absence form indicating which term(s) they intend to be on leave. Students may request more than one leave, but combined leaves cannot exceed six terms. The request must be reviewed and approved by the Program Coordinator, Director of Graduate Student Success & Recruitment, and the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. Students who are granted Academic Leave of Absence may not use university resources or faculty time. A leave of absence does not waive or extend the time limit for completion of a graduate program.

Student Fees

Students on Academic Leave of Absence status are not subject to tuition & fees for the terms they are on leave.

Financial Aid Students who are registered for a minimum of one credit, do not meet the minimum requirement of half-time for federal loans and therefore are not eligible for federal financial aid. Students who follow the process for an Academic Leave of Absence will be treated as a withdrawal for financial aid purposes. A student who does not attend through at least 60.01% of the term will have their aid recalculated and aid will be returned as required with the Return of Title IV calculation. The student will then be financially responsible for paying these funds back to Western Oregon University.

Non-Degree Student (G-13)

Students who are working toward a planned program of graduate study, on or off campus, must file for admission as outlined above if they expect to complete licensure requirements or become candidates for a degree. Effective Fall 2014 allows a maximum number of 15 credits of non-degree graduate coursework to be applied to an endorsement, certificate, specialization, and/or degree program.

Petition Process (G-14)

Students that receive more than 8 total credits of C's, more than 9 credits of incompletes, a GPA lower than 3.0, or a D/F grade will be removed from their program and required to petition for re-enrollment. This process is conducted at the end of each term and students will be notified immediately of their academic standing via email to their student account. Students are required to submit a petition via the General Graduate Student Petition form to the Graduate Programs Office by the deadline given. Students that fail to meet the deadline can petition afterward for reinstatement in the following term pending approval by the committee which is composed of three members of the graduate faculty.

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

Students are allowed to submit **no more than two** petitions during their academic program. If a student exceeds this limit they will be removed from their program and required to take a minimum of one academic year off their studies. After this leave of absence, they can submit a petition that includes a plan of remediation to be considered for reinstatement. Petitions for reinstatement require program coordinator support. No reinstatement is guaranteed.

Re-enrollment (G-15)

Students who have not enrolled in courses for more than four terms will have their student status inactivated as per the Minimum Registration Requirement policy. They will be required to submit a re-enrollment application along with adviser approval, to enroll in courses or have their degree, endorsement, specialization, or certificate recorded with the Graduate Programs Office.

Residency Credit Requirement (G-16)

All graduate programs will include at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of their graduate credits from WOU.

Special Regulations Concerning Incomplete Grades (G-17)

See university regulation [Incomplete Grades \(W-2c\)](#)

- The instructor of a course has the final decision regarding the appropriateness and willingness to award a grade of incomplete.
- A graduate student with more than nine (9) hours of uncleared incomplete coursework (except for student teaching, internship, thesis, field study, and/or professional project) will have a hold placed on registration until a petition has been submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and a remediation plan approved.
- A student requesting a grade of incomplete and the course instructor issuing a grade of incomplete must both sign a contract that specifies:
 1. The course assignments still need to be submitted to remove the incomplete grade.
 2. A timeline for completion of course requirements:
 - A student who has a grade of incomplete in a course that is a prerequisite for a subsequent course may not enroll in the subsequent course until the grade of incomplete is removed or must receive the permission of the instructor to be allowed to enroll in the subsequent course.
 - Any graduate program can decide to not allow a student to register for their final professional field experience (student teaching, internship, etc.) on the basis that incomplete grades have not been cleared before the beginning of the final professional field experience.

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

- The Graduate Programs Office will not allow students to sit for their final comprehensive examination until past incomplete grades have been cleared.

Transfer Credits (G-18)

Transfer credits are those taken pre-admission to a graduate program at WOU or another regionally accredited university.

Transfer credits, outside of a defined Accelerated Undergraduate Master's Pathway, must be documented with an official sealed transcript from a regionally accredited university, approved by the student's program coordinator, and should be submitted and approved early in the student's program to the Graduate Programs Office. Transfer credits are subject to approval by the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

The courses to be transferred must be graduate level. It is the responsibility of the student wishing to transfer the course to provide the necessary documentation to satisfy WOU guidelines.

Graduate students must earn a minimum of 2/3 of the credits required for their graduate degree at WOU, after formal admission to the graduate degree program. Individual programs may have stricter limitations. Pre-admission and transfer credits for graduate degrees must meet the following requirements: must be a letter grade of B- or higher and must total no more than 1/3 of the required credits for a graduate degree. Eligible WOU credits applied toward a completed graduate certificate can be applied toward a subsequent graduate degree without counting toward the pre-admission limits.

A maximum of 15 credits of non-degree graduate coursework can be applied to an endorsement or degree program with adviser approval.

*Credits from non-accredited colleges and universities cannot be used in a graduate program.

Graduate Student Academic Regulations

Doctoral Regulations

Time Limit to Complete Doctoral Degree (D-1)

All work toward a doctoral degree must be completed within ten years. Extensions of this time limit may be requested by submitting a Graduate Student Petition to Graduate Programs.

Final Exit Requirements (D-2a)

Students are required to complete an exit requirement as determined by the professional doctoral program to demonstrate the candidates' preparation for advanced practice in the profession. The exit requirement is met by providing Graduate Programs with exit documentation.

Final Exit Form (D-2b)

Students in professional doctoral programs submit an original final document demonstrating original thinking and the ability to evaluate research in the field analytically. Students in professional doctoral programs are expected to follow the document formatting standards in their disciplines. Each committee member indicates approval of the student's final document by posting their decision on the Final Exit Form.

Master's Regulations

Time Limit to Complete Master's Degree (M-1)

All work toward a master's degree must be completed within seven years. Extensions of this time limit may be requested by submitting a Graduate Student Petition to Graduate Programs.