

Florida Gulf Coast University
General Graduate Academic Policies

I. Graduate Admission Policies

A. Graduate Admission Requirements

Applicants to graduate degree programs or post-baccalaureate professional programs are required to meet minimum university admission requirements that are in accordance with system-wide admission requirements (Rule 6C-6.003 Florida Administrative Code). Individual programs may set additional criteria or more selective requirements. Consequently meeting minimum university admission requirements does not guarantee admission to a particular program. Refer to the college/program regarding additional admission requirements.

1. Minimum University Admission Requirements

Students must:

- a. Have a bachelor's degree or equivalent from a regionally accredited institution.
- b. Present an official standardized admission test score. (Refer to the college/program description for approved standardized tests.)
- c. Meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - The minimum university requirements for admission into a graduate program are an earned bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution and a 3.0 GPA (last 60 attempted semester hours of the baccalaureate degree) on a 4.0 scale or 1000 on the combined verbal-quantitative portions of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or an equivalent score based on the new GRE scoring scale, or 400 on the Miller Analogies Test (MAT), or 500 on the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT), or
 - A graduate degree from a regionally accredited institution.

An international applicant who is from a country where English is not the primary language must submit a minimum TOEFL score of 550 (paper-based test) or 213 (computer-based test) or 79 (internet-based test) unless otherwise specified by the program. (Rule 6.009 Florida BOG, FGCU)

B. Student Admission

1. Probationary Admission

- a. Provisional Admission

Applicants accepted for admission whose official documents (transcripts and/or test scores) have not been received by the Office of Graduate Studies can be admitted provisionally, pending receipt of these missing items. The required transcripts and/or test scores must be received within the first semester of attendance. Registration is

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permitted for one semester only and if official documentation is not received prior to the start of the second semester the student will not be permitted to register for the second semester. Failure to provide the missing documents by the end of their first semester of attendance may result in a student having their admission into their degree seeking program rescinded and their transcript of completed coursework reflect non-degree status.

b. **Conditional Admission**

Students who satisfy university minimum requirements for admission but not program or college specific requirements may be admitted conditionally by the program or college. These conditions may include attendance in specific core or remedial courses and/or required earned GPA of 3.0 for those courses. Each college and/or program is responsible for monitoring conditionally admitted students. The college and/or program will inform the Office of Graduate Studies if the student has failed to meet the conditions. Failure to satisfy specified conditions put forth by the college or program by the deadline established will result in a student having his/her admission into the degree seeking program rescinded and the transcript of completed coursework reflect non-degree status.

2. Acceptance of Graduate Admission/Deferment of Graduate Admission

A student is admitted for a specified semester and program noted in the official acceptance notification. Students admitted to a program must respond in writing, by the date defined by the program, as to their intention to accept or reject the offer of admission. Deferment of admission policy is set by individual programs.

3. Change in Graduate Program or College

Students wishing to change major fields of study either between graduate colleges or graduate programs within the same college must withdraw from their current program and complete a new graduate application. The new application will follow the same review procedure and admission criteria specified by the university and program as for a first-time applicant. Change of a college or program results in the term of entry being shifted to the most current University Catalog.

4. Appeal for Reconsideration

The college or program will inform applicants denied admission in writing with an explanation as to why this decision was warranted. Denied applicants who meet the minimum system-wide standards and wish to appeal the decision must write to the graduate program representative or college designee within thirty (30) days of the date of admission denial to request reconsideration.

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5. Non-degree Seeking Students

Graduate non-degree seeking enrollment is on a space available basis. Enrollment as a non-degree seeking student does not guarantee subsequent admission into the university as a degree seeking student. Students may apply a maximum of nine (9) credit hours completed as a non-degree seeking student toward completion of a graduate degree as approved by the college dean (or designee). Students in the College of Education may apply a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours taken as non-degree seeking toward a graduate degree.

Non-degree seeking students are subject to the same rules and regulations as degree seeking students. International students may not enroll as non-degree seeking students due to federal regulations. Non-degree seeking students are not eligible to receive financial aid (except for teacher certification).

C. Florida Residency *(Policy is determined by State. See FGCU Catalog for detail.)*

D. International Students *(Policy is determined by Federal/State. See FGCU Catalog for detail.)*

II. General Academic Policies

A. Graduation Requirements

1. Master's Degree

The following are minimum requirements for the Master's degree. Individual program requirements may exceed the minimum listed below. Students must:

- Apply for graduation by the semester deadline indicated in the university calendar.
- Earn a minimum of thirty (30) credit hours with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale.
- Earn more than 50% of the credit hours toward the degree through FGCU. *(SACS required)*
- Complete all program requirements, as determined by the appropriate college. Consult with program coordinators or chairs for specific details regarding graduation requirements.

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2. Education Specialist Degree

The following are minimum requirements for the Ed.S. degree. Individual program requirements may exceed the minimum listed below. Students must:

- Apply for graduation by the semester deadline indicated in the university calendar.
- Earn a minimum of forty-eight (48) credit hours with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale.
- Earn more than 50% of the credit hours toward the degree through FGCU. (*SACS required*)
- Complete all program requirements, as determined by the appropriate college. Consult with program coordinators or chairs for specific details regarding graduation requirements.

3. Doctoral Degree

The following are minimum requirements for the Doctoral degree. Individual program requirements may exceed the minimum listed below. Students must:

- Apply for graduation by the semester deadline indicated in the university calendar.
- Earn a minimum of seventy-two (72) credit hours with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale.
- Earn more than 50% of the credit hours toward the degree through FGCU. (*SACS required*)
- Complete all program requirements, as determined by the appropriate college. Consult with program coordinators or chairs for specific details regarding graduation requirements.

B. General Degree Requirements

1. Master's Degree

The following minimum degree requirements must be met for successful completion of a Master's degree in an approved program of study. Individual colleges, departments, and programs may have their own requirements that exceed the minimum requirements presented here. Students should therefore refer to the specific degree requirements of the individual graduate program for additional information.

a. Enrollment and Course Requirements

- Students enrolled in a Master's degree program must complete a minimum of thirty (30) credit hours in the approved graduate program.
- More than 50% of the credit hours toward the degree must be earned through FGCU.

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- Students may transfer a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours from graduate level courses completed at a regionally accredited college or university (unless otherwise specified by the State of Florida) into the graduate college program at FGCU. Transfer courses must be applicable toward the graduate degree being sought at FGCU and approved by the college dean (or designee).
- Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 for all graduate work attempted.
- Students may apply a maximum of nine (9) credit hours completed as a non-degree seeking student toward the completion of a graduate degree as approved by program. *Students in the College of Education may apply a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours.

b. Graduate Student Status

- In order to maintain active status as degree-seeking, a student must be enrolled during at least one (1) semester during each calendar year unless granted leave of absence by the program. Failure to meet this requirement will result in the student being dropped from the program and his or her status being changed to that of non-degree seeking. Any student dropped from a graduate program for this reason must complete a new graduate application for admission. If admitted, the program will determine which previously earned credits are applicable towards graduation.
- In order to maintain access to student services, such as library privileges and health benefits, a student must be enrolled during the fall and spring for a minimum of one credit hour each semester.

c. Major Professor, Thesis Committee and Requirements

- For those programs with a required or optional thesis, students should consult the program coordinator or chair for information concerning the appointment of a major professor and the composition of a thesis committee and thesis requirements specific to the degree program in question.

d. Degree Time Limitations/Extension of Time Limit for Degree Program

- In order to ensure that students working toward a Master's degree maintain currency in their field of study, all credit hours (including transfer credits) applied toward the degree must have been earned within the seven (7) academic years prior to graduation. Coursework completed before this time period cannot be applied toward the degree.
- Any student requiring more time to complete his or her Master's degree may request an extension from the Office of Graduate Studies, provided that the student has written approval from the program.

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- e. Requirements for Graduation
 - Students must apply for graduation in the semester in which they expect to graduate. Students should refer to the academic calendar for specific deadline information.
 - Students must complete a minimum of one (1) credit hour during the semester in which they apply for graduation.

2. Education Specialist Degree (Ed.S.) Requirements

The following minimum degree requirements must be met for successful completion of the Ed.S.

- a. Enrollment and Course Requirements
 - Students enrolled in an Ed.S. degree program must complete a minimum of forty-eight (48) credit hours in the approved graduate program.
 - More than 50% of the credit hours toward the degree must be earned through FGCU.
 - Students may transfer a maximum of eighteen (18) credit hours from graduate level courses completed at a regionally accredited college or university (unless otherwise specified by the State of Florida) into the graduate college program at FGCU. Transfer courses must be applicable toward the graduate degree being sought at FGCU and approved by the college dean (or designee).
 - Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 for all graduate work attempted.
 - Students may apply a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours completed as a non-degree seeking student toward the completion of a graduate degree as approved by program.
- b. Graduate Student Status
 - In order to maintain active status as degree-seeking, a student must be enrolled during at least one (1) semester during each calendar year unless granted leave of absence by the program. Failure to meet this requirement will result in the student being dropped from the program and his or her status being changed to that of non-degree seeking. Any student dropped from a graduate program for this reason must complete a new graduate application for admission. If admitted, the program will determine which previously earned credits are applicable towards graduation.
 - In order to maintain access to student services, such as library privileges and health benefits, a student must be enrolled during the fall and spring for a minimum of one credit hour each semester.

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- c. Degree Time Limitations/Extension of Time Limit for Degree Program
 - In order to ensure that students working toward an Ed.S. degree maintain currency in their field of study, all credit hours (including transfer credits) applied toward the degree must have been earned within the seven (7) academic years prior to graduation. Coursework completed before this time period cannot be applied toward the degree.
 - Any student requiring more time to complete his or her Ed.S. degree may request an extension from the Office of Graduate Studies, provided that the student has written approval from the program.
- d. Requirements for Graduation
 - Students must apply for graduation in the semester in which they expect to graduate. Students should refer to the academic calendar for specific deadline information.
 - Students must complete a minimum of one (1) credit hour during the semester in which they apply for graduation.

3. Doctoral Degree (i.e. Ed.D., D.P.T., Ph.D.) Requirements

The following minimum degree requirements must be met for successful completion of a doctoral degree in an approved program of study. Individual colleges, departments, and programs may have their own requirements that exceed the minimum requirements presented here. Students should therefore refer to the information provided for individual graduate programs for specific information regarding required coursework, examinations, and dissertations.

- a. Enrollment and Course Requirements
 - The minimum credit hours for the degree are seventy-two (72). Students should consult the graduate program in question for total credit hours required, which may be more than the minimum specified here.
 - Students may transfer a maximum of thirty (30) credit hours in fulfillment of the above seventy-two credit hour minimum from acceptable graduate level courses completed at a regionally accredited college or university (unless otherwise specified by the State of Florida) into the graduate program at FGCU.

Notwithstanding, an exception can be made under unusual circumstances based upon the determination of the graduate program in questions. Transfer courses must be applicable toward the graduate degree being sought at FGCU and approved by the

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college dean (or designee) and meet other requirements as specified by the graduate program in question.

- More than 50% of the credit hours toward the degree must be earned through FGCU. (*SACS required*)
- Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 for all graduate work attempted.
- Students may apply a maximum of nine (9) credit hours completed as a non-degree seeking student toward the completion of a graduate degree as approved by the program.
- The doctoral degree is earned on the basis of satisfactory completion of course requirements and the dissertation, or scholarly project, or equivalent as determined by the graduate program.

b. Graduate Student Status

- In order to maintain active status as degree-seeking, a student must be enrolled during at least one (1) semester during each calendar year unless granted leave of absence by the program. Failure to meet this requirement will result in the student being dropped from the program and his or her status being changed to that of non-degree seeking. Any student dropped from a graduate program for this reason must complete a new graduate application for admission. Any subsequent placement in a graduate program will be determined by the program.
- In order to maintain access to student services, such as library privileges and health benefits, a student must be enrolled during the fall and spring for a minimum of one (1) credit hour each semester.

c. Qualifying Examination/Admission to Candidacy/
Dissertation Requirements for Ed.D. and Ph.D.

- Students should consult with the program coordinator or chair for information regarding qualifying examinations, admission to candidacy and dissertation requirements specific to the degree program in question.

d. Degree Time Limits/Extension of Time Limit for Degree Program

- All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within 8 calendar years from the date of admission to the doctoral program.

e. Requirements for Graduation

- Students must apply for graduation in the semester in which they expect to graduate. Students should refer to the academic calendar for specific deadline information.

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- Students must register for a minimum of one (1) credit hour during the semester in which they apply for graduation.

C. Grading System

1. Grade Point Average Calculation

Florida Gulf Coast University's grading system includes grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F, I, NR, S, U, W, WF, X, and Z.

Grade	Definition	Quality Points Per Semester Hour
A		4.0
A-		3.7
B+		3.3
B		3.0
B-		2.7
C+		2.4
C		2.0
C-		1.7
D+		1.3
D		1.0
D-		0.7
F	Failure	0.0
I	Incomplete	0.0
NR	Not Reported by instructor	0.0
S	Satisfactory	0.0
U	Unsatisfactory	0.0
W	Withdrawal without academic penalty	0.0
WF	Withdrawal with academic penalty	0.0
X	Audit (no academic credit)	0.0
Z	Thesis/Dissertation Continuation	0.0

It is the option of the college, department or instructor to use all, some or none of the plus/minus grades in assigning student grades in a course as long as the grading system is communicated to students via the course syllabi at the beginning of the course. Numerical ranges corresponding to letter grades are established for each course according to the professional judgment of the instructor.

Some colleges, departments and programs have established minimum grade requirements. In these instances, a grade of C- does not satisfy the requirement of a minimum grade of C, and a grade of B- does not satisfy the requirement of a minimum grade of B.

The grade of D+, D or D-, while considered passing for undergraduate

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students, may not be acceptable for graduate courses (see program specific requirements).

Earned credit hours are not assigned in courses with grades of F, I, U, W, WF, X and Z (see definitions). A grade of NR will be posted for grades not reported by the instructor. A NR grade will be converted to an F at the end of the following semester.

Incomplete (I) grade. A student who is passing a course but who has not completed all of the required coursework by the end of the term may, with permission of the instructor, be assigned an incomplete (I) grade. A grade of I is not computed in a student's GPA.

An incomplete (I) grade cannot be assigned to a course if the student fails to attend the course, drops the course after the drop/add period, or withdraws from the university. A student, who registers for a course but fails to meet the course requirements, without officially dropping the course, will receive a grade of F in the course.

To initiate consideration for a grade of I, a student must contact the instructor before grades are reported. The decision to award a grade of I is solely the decision of the instructor. Should a professor decide to assign the grade, both the student and the professor must complete and retain a copy of an Incomplete Grade Agreement Form. The maximum amount of time to complete coursework to remove a grade of I is one year from the ending date of the semester for which the grade was assigned or graduation whichever comes first: however instructors may restrict the amount of time given to the student to complete the coursework. After one year, a grade of I will be changed to an F if the instructor has reported no grade. A student may re-register for a course in which he or she currently has an incomplete (I) grade. Once an incomplete grade (I) has converted to a failing grade (F), the grade may not be converted back to an incomplete (I) grade or to a regular grade. Exceptions due to university error may be approved by the college Dean (or designee) with supporting justification attached to a change of grade form.

Students approved for reinstatement by the Reinstatement Appeal Committee after the deadline expires are not eligible for the grade assignment of incomplete (I).

2. Auditing a Course

Graduate students may audit a graduate course on a space available basis pending approval of the course instructor and the relevant College Dean (or designee). Audit students must register for the course as an audit. Audit students are listeners in the course and do not complete

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examinations, assignments or other graded course work. Audit registration is permitted only during the late registration period and regular course fees are assessed. An audit course is noted on the academic transcript with a grade of X.

3. Final Grade Reports

Grades are available via Gulfline at <http://gulfline.fgcu.edu>. The university does not mail final grade reports. Students needing written verification of grades should submit a request for an unofficial or official transcript to the Office of the Registrar.

4. Change of Grade

A request for change of grade will be considered only during the term immediately following the term in which the grade was assigned. Grades assigned during the spring semester may be changed the following summer or fall terms. The dean (or designee) of the college offering the course must approve grade changes. Exceptions to the time limitations may be approved by the college dean (or designee) with supporting justification attached to the Change of Grade Form.

Grades will not be changed after a degree or certificate has been awarded.

5. Grade Forgiveness

Graduate courses are not subject to grade forgiveness.

6. Grade Appeal

All graduate student grade appeals or allegations should first be brought to the attention of the instructor of the course, where instructor shall mean any classroom instructor, thesis/dissertation/directed study supervisor, or graduate chair that interacts with the student in an academic environment. Students are responsible for presenting documents or evidence supporting the grade appeal to the instructor within one semester after the grade issuance. Students and faculty should attempt to resolve the problem in a timely and satisfactory manner. If the faculty is not available, or the student is dissatisfied with the instructor's decision, the student may pursue an informal solution with the chair of the department.

If not satisfied with the resolution of the informal procedures, the student may file a formal written appeal with the Office of the Dean of the College in which the course is offered. Each college shall establish an Academic Grade Appeal Committee, for the purpose of reviewing and rendering decisions concerning all formal grade appeals to the college dean. The college dean will approve or deny the appeal committee's findings. Written notification to the student will be provided within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the student's request.

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A final appeal process is provided whereby the student, after receiving notification of the Academic Grade Appeal Committee's decisions, may file a request for review with the Office of the Provost. The provost, acting as a representative of the university president, shall render a final decision. Copies of the provost's final decision shall be provided to the student, the college dean, the Academic Grade Appeal Committee chair, the department chair, the university registrar, and the course instructor within 10 days of receipt of the student's request for review.

D. Courses Drop/Add/Withdrawal Policy

1. Course Drop/Add

Graduate students should first consult with their program coordinator or chair regarding dropping or adding courses. Graduate students may drop/add courses or change sections of courses during the registration period and the drop/add period (first week of classes), as published in the Academic Calendar. Courses dropped during this period will not appear on the student's academic record.

2. Course Withdrawal

Graduate students wishing to withdraw from a course after the semester commences should first consult with their course instructor and graduate program coordinator. Individual courses dropped after the drop/add period but before the "last day to completely withdraw without academic penalty" (as published in the Academic Calendar) must be dropped through the Office of the Registrar. These courses will remain on the academic record and are assigned a grade of W. A grade of W is not calculated in the student's grade point average (GPA).

An individual course dropped after the "last day to completely withdraw without academic penalty" must be dropped through the Office of the Registrar and will remain on the student's academic record resulting in a grade of WF, which is calculated as a failing grade in the student's grade point average (GPA). An appeal regarding the WF assignment is considered a request for grade change. Student appeals are to be submitted in writing, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate college. The college offering the course will make the final decision regarding the appeal.

Dropping all courses does not constitute formal withdrawal from the university. A student is financially liable for all courses in which he or she is registered for at the end of the drop/add period.

Individual graduate programs may set additional policy regarding the number of times graduate students may withdraw from graduate courses

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and whether students dropping/withdrawing from all courses are required to file a leave of absence request.

E. Full and Part-Time Enrollment Status

The University defines full-time graduate status as being enrolled in a minimum of nine (9) credit hours during the fall and spring semesters and a minimum of six (6) credit hours during a summer semester. The university requires that any graduate student wishing to enroll for more than twelve (12) credit hours in a semester to acquire written permission from an academic advisor or the chair or program coordinator.

University status affects eligibility for certain types of financial aid benefits (e.g., loans). Individual graduate programs may have different eligibility requirements. Eligibility for program and department awarded assistance and other benefits (e.g., tuition waivers; graduate, research, and teaching assistantships) is program-specific. Graduate students should check with program coordinators or department chairs for these program-specific eligibility requirements.

F. Academic Standing

All students are expected to demonstrate continuing progress towards their degree as defined by the college and/or program. A college or academic program may put a student failing to meet progression expectations on academic probation. In addition, a student will be placed on academic probation by the college when his/her cumulative grade point average (GPA) drops below 3.0 and the student will have three subsequent courses, or nine hours, to raise the GPA to 3.0. A student on academic probation may not begin any program specific comprehensive examination and/or thesis work and may not receive graduate student assistantships, or graduate until all conditions of academic probation are met. If the student does not bring the GPA up to 3.0 during the probation period, then the student is dismissed. A student who is dismissed may apply for admission. If admitted, the program will determine which previously earned credits are applicable towards graduation.

III. Graduate Student Assistantships

A. Graduate Assistant (GA)

A GA is defined as a graduate student employed by a college, department, or program to assist a faculty or staff member in the teaching of a course, the implementation of some university service, or in the conduct of research or scholarly activity. If the GA serves in a teaching capacity, that graduate student is not the instructor of record, but rather assists the faculty member, adjunct professor, or teaching assistant (TA) in the implementation of the course.

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B. Teaching Assistant (TA)

A TA is employed by a college, department, or program to independently teach a course for the university, though under supervision by a regular faculty member. To qualify as an instructor of record, a TA must have a minimum of eighteen (18) graduate credit hours in their discipline completed toward their graduate degree.

C. Research Assistant (RA)

A RA is employed by a faculty member, through extramural funds or using monies allocated by the university to assist that faculty member with research or scholarly activity.

IV. Problem Solving/Academic Integrity

A. Student Rights, Responsibilities and Code of Conduct

The policy, procedures and regulations governing student rights, responsibilities and conduct that are part of the terms and conditions of admission and enrollment for all graduate students are published annually in the FGCU Student Guidebook and it is the graduate student's responsibility to read and become familiar with these.

B. Student Academic Behavior

FGCU is committed to a policy of honesty in academic activities. Conduct that breaches this policy shall result in academic and/or disciplinary action. Academic behavior standards, academic and/or disciplinary action, student grade appeals and grievance policy and procedures are published annually in the FGCU Student Guidebook and it is the graduate student's responsibility to read and become familiar with these.

C. University Policy on Unlawful Harassment

The FGCU Policy on Unlawful Harassment is for all students, faculty, staff, vendors and visitors. The University Policy on Unlawful Harassment is available at the following website: http://www.fgcu.edu/eoo/eoo_03_01.html

V. Scholarship & Intellectual Property

A. Human Subjects in Research

Graduate students involved in research activities are required to be in compliance with the policy and procedures of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human subjects in research and research related activities at FGCU. The IRB requirements are available at the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs website <http://www.fgcu.edu/orsp/Compliance.html#IRB>

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B. Review of Animal Experimentation

Graduate students involved in research activities involving animals are required to be in compliance with FGCU Policy on Animal Care and Use in Education and Research. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) requirements are available at the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs website <http://www.fgcu.edu/orsp/Compliance.html#IACUC>

C. Bio-safety

Graduate students involved in laboratory work are required to be in compliance with FGCU policy and procedures for general laboratory safety, bio-safety, research safety, hazardous waste, laboratory ergonomics, radiation safety and chemical hygiene. The environmental health and safety policies and requirements are available at <http://www.fgcu.edu/EHS/LaboratorySafety.html>

D. Intellectual Property

Graduate students are required to follow FGCU intellectual property and invention disclosure policy and procedures. Intellectual property policy and invention disclosure requirements are available at the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs website <http://www.fgcu.edu/orsp/Compliance.html#IP>