

## 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 must meet minimum University admission requirements. 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 or equivalent foreign institution.
- b. Present an official standardized admission test score, if required. (Refer to the college/program description for approved standardized tests.)
- c. Meet at least one of the following criteria:
  - Have a minimum GPA of 3.0 or greater (on a 4.0 scale) for the last 60 hours of the baccalaureate degree. No entrance exam is required unless the GPA is less than 3.0. If the GPA is less than 3.0, then an applicant must have a minimum entrance score on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), or Miller Analogies Test (MAT) as set by the program, or;
  - Have a graduate degree from a regionally accredited institution or equivalent foreign institution, unless the Program specifically requires the GRE, GMAT or MAT.
- d. All Graduate applicants must indicate whether or not Florida residency is claimed

English Proficiency test: International graduate applicants are required to submit a minimum TOEFL score of 550 (paper-based test) or 213 (computer-based test) or 79 (internet-based test), or a minimum IELTS score of 6.5, unless otherwise specified by the program.

## **B. Exceptions to Admission Requirements**

The University may admit up to 10% of its total graduate admissions in a given academic year as exceptions to the minimum University graduate admission requirements defined above.

An applicant who does not meet the minimum University requirement for admission and who wishes to apply for an exception must (1) explain why his/her undergraduate or entrance exam performance does not fully represent potential for success in a graduate program, and (2) present additional evidence of potential for academic success at the graduate level, such as excellent letters of recommendation from academicians or professionals in the discipline, performance in previously taken graduate courses, or other relevant professional, educational, or life experiences. Each request for an exception must include a statement describing the special circumstances of the applicant. Review of an application for exception and subsequent endorsement or denial will be made by the graduate program and/or college, as appropriate, subject to final approval by Graduate Studies.

## **C. Student Admission**

### **1. Probationary Admission**

#### **a. Provisional Admission**

Applicants accepted for admission who applied using unofficial documents and 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 official transcripts and/or test scores must be received within the first semester of attendance. Registration is 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 the first semester of attendance may result in a student's provisional admission into a degree program being rescinded and the transcript of completed coursework reflecting 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. Students with Disabilities Admission**

An individual requesting special consideration for admission (petition) due to a disability must provide appropriate documentation (less than five years old) that supports the ability to succeed at the graduate level.

This documentation should explain how the disability likely affected the reason for the special consideration request (i.e., entrance exam score, GPA, etc.). The Office of Adaptive Services will review this petition and all accompanying documentation and will offer an opinion to the graduate program to which the applicant has applied. It is then the individual graduate program coordinator who will provide a recommendation to the College Dean whether to grant the applicant special consideration for the disability. The final admission decision will be made by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

## **3. Acceptance of Graduate Admission/Deferment of Graduate Admission**

A student is admitted for a specified semester and program identified 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.

Students admitted to a graduate program or certificate program are required to enroll in courses in the specified semester of admission otherwise the admission decision will be rescinded after the official add/drop deadline as published in the university academic calendar.

Students who do not enroll in courses in the specified semester of admission may request to have their graduate application changed to a different term for future program admission consideration before the official add/drop deadline; otherwise submission of a new graduate application may be required.

Post Bac-Non-Degree applications and admission decisions are valid only for the specified semester and cannot be deferred.

## **4. 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, after having been fully admitted to a graduate program and/or after having begun taking coursework, must apply for admission to the requested program.

Students must meet/complete all admission requirements set by the requested program and must also complete the "Change of Graduate Degree Program" form. The program directors and the deans of the appropriate

colleges must recommend approval of the change of degree program. The Dean of Graduate Studies must approve all changes of degree program. Change of a college or program results in the term of entry being shifted to the most current University Catalog

The following process must be followed:

- Complete and submit a Graduate Change of Major Form
- Student must be in good standing
- Student must complete all courses in progress.
- All changes will be effective the next immediate semester.
- Change of a college or program results in the term of entry being shifted to the most current University Catalog.

#### **5. 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 both the minimum University and program criteria and who 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.

#### **6. Classification of graduate students**

Graduate level students are classified as degree seeking students or post-baccalaureate non-degree seeking students. Students cannot be classified simultaneously as degree seeking and post-baccalaureate non-degree seeking for a specified semester.

#### **7. Post-Baccalaureate Non-degree Seeking Students**

Post Baccalaureate Non-degree seeking enrollment is on a space available basis. Enrollment as a Post-Bac 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).

**8. Applying Graduate Credits Completed as an Undergraduate Student**

- a. Applicants who successfully completed graduate courses as an undergraduate student and who did not apply those courses toward an undergraduate or subsequent graduate degree may apply a maximum of nine (9) credits toward the completion of a graduate degree at FGCU as approved by the college dean (or designee).
- b. If credits are in quarter hours, they will be converted to semester hours by multiplying the quarter hours by 0.67. As an example, a four-quarter hour course will only be awarded 2.67 semester credits.

**9. Approved Combined Bachelor's-Master's programs**

**a. Student Eligibility**

- Students can apply after having completed 75 to 90 credits in a bachelor's degree at FGCU (or as defined by individual combined bachelor's/master's programs).
- Alternatively, students having completed more than 90 credits in a bachelor's program must have approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

**b. Admission:**

- Minimum overall GPA of 3.2 in the current FGCU undergraduate program or better. Combined bachelor's-master's programs may require a higher GPA than the 3.2 minimum.
- Students must meet other admissions criteria as defined by the approved combined bachelor's-master's programs.

**c. Student status:**

- Students admitted into a combined bachelor's-master's program will be considered to have undergraduate status until the student applies for graduation from their bachelor's degree program. Upon conferral of the bachelor's degree, the student will be granted graduate status and be eligible for graduate assistantships.

**d. Applying Graduate credits in approved Combined bachelor's-master's programs:**

- Students who are enrolled in an approved combined bachelor's-master's program may apply up to nine (9) graduate credits toward the bachelor's degree and the master's degree as approved by the college dean (or designee) for a 30-credit graduate program or up to twelve (12) graduate credits for a 33-credit or more graduate program.

**e. Approval of Combined bachelor's-master's programs:**

- Combined bachelor's-master's programs must be approved through the regular University curriculum approval process and must be consistent with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACSCOC) standards.
- A combined bachelor's-master's program proposal that is fewer than 150 credits (120 credits for the bachelor's degree and 30 credits for the master's degree) must provide a strong justification for the reduction in credit. Excessive "double-counting" of credits can affect the integrity and rigor of degrees offered.
- The combined bachelor's-master's program proposal must also demonstrate how academic merit is a factor in determining which students can participate in the combined program that results in an overall reduction of required credits.

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

**E. 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 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale.
- Students must register for a minimum of one (1) credit hour during the semester in which they apply for graduation.
- Earn more than 50% of the credit hours toward the degree through FGCU (*Policy is consistent with SACSCOC standards*).
- Complete all program requirements as determined by the appropriate college.

- Consult with program coordinators or chairs for specific details regarding graduation requirements

## 2. Educational 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 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale.
- Students must register for a minimum of one (1) credit hour during the semester in which they apply for graduation.
- Earn more than 50% of the credit hours toward the degree through FGCU (*Policy is consistent with SACSCOC standards*).
- 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 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale.
- Students must register for a minimum of one (1) credit hour during the semester in which they apply for graduation.
- Earn more than 50% of the credit hours toward the degree through FGCU (*Policy is consistent with SACSCOC standards*).
- Complete all program requirements as determined by the appropriate college.
- Consult with program coordinators or chairs for specific details regarding graduation requirements.

#### 4. Transitional Professional Doctoral Degree

The following are minimum requirements for the Transitional professional Doctoral Degree:

- Apply for Graduation by the semester deadline indicated in the University calendar.
- Earn a minimum of thirty (30) credit hours (Policy is consistent with SACSCOC standards).
- Students must register for a minimum of one (1) credit hour during the semester in which they apply for graduation.
- 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.
- Students may transfer a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours from graduate level courses completed at another regionally accredited college or university, or equivalent foreign institution, into the graduate program at FGCU. Transfer courses must be applicable toward the graduate degree being sought at FGCU, should be current with respect to the specific field of study, and must be approved by the college dean (or designee). Individual graduate programs may limit the number of transfer credits allowed to less



than twelve (12); admitted students should therefore check with their individual graduate programs for specific information on transfer credits.

- Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 for all graduate work attempted after initial admission into the graduate program.
- 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. Students in the College of Education may apply a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours.
- The number of credits that can be applied from an academic certificate earned at FGCU to a graduate degree program is set by the college awarding the graduate degree, with approval from the Office of Graduate Studies.
- Up to 100% of the credit earned from courses required in a master's degree taken at FGCU for a teaching certificate can be applied to the master's degree with the approval of the college dean or designee in conjunction with the Office of Curriculum & Instruction, and with the approval of the Office of Graduate Studies.

**b. Graduate Student Status**

- In order to maintain active status as degree-seeking, a student must be enrolled in course(s) during at least one (1) semester every year (three consecutive semesters). Failure to meet this requirement will result in the student being dropped from the program. 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.
- Students must follow the program curriculum. If registered courses do not belong to the respective curriculum, the program reserves the right to change the student status to Post-Bac Non-degree seeking.
- 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, 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 (excluding 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 the student has written approval from the 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.
- Students must complete a minimum of one (1) credit hour during the semester in which they apply for graduation.

**2. Educational 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 another regionally accredited college or university, or equivalent foreign institution, into the graduate program at FGCU. Transfer courses must be applicable toward the graduate degree being sought at FGCU, should be considered current with respect to the specific field of study, and must be approved by the college dean (or designee).
- Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 for all graduate work attempted after initial admission into the graduate program.

- Students may apply a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours completed as a Post-Bac Non-degree seeking student toward the completion of a graduate degree as approved by the program.

**b. Graduate Student Status**

- In order to maintain active status as degree-seeking, a student must be enrolled in courses during at least one (1) semester every year (three consecutive semesters). Failure to meet this requirement will result in the student being dropped from the program. 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.
- Students must follow the program curriculum. If registered courses do not belong to the respective curriculum, the program reserves the right to change the student status to Post-Bac Non-degree
- 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. 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 (excluding 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 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 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 another regionally accredited college or university, or equivalent foreign institution, into the graduate program at FGCU. An exception can be made under unusual circumstances based on the determination of the graduate program in question. Transfer courses must be applicable toward the graduate degree being sought at FGCU, be approved by the college dean (or designee), and meet any 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 (Policy is consistent with SACSCOC standards).
- Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 for all graduate work attempted after initial admission into the graduate program.
- 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, 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 in course(s) during at least one (1) semester every year (three consecutive semesters). Failure to meet this requirement will result in the student being dropped from the program. 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.

- Students must follow the program curriculum. If registered courses do not belong to the respective curriculum, the program reserves the right to change the student status to Post-Bac Non-degree
- 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. 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 (excluding transfer credits) must be completed within eight (8) academic 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.
- Students must register for a minimum of one (1) credit hour during the semester in which they apply for graduation.

**4. Transitional Professional Doctoral Degree**

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. Additional Admission Requirements**

- An active professional license issued in good standing (U.S. license required) with minimum experience as determined by the program.

**b. Enrollment and Course Requirements**

- The minimum credit hours for the degree are thirty (30). Students should consult the graduate program in question for total credit hours required, which may be more than the minimum specified here (Policy is consistent with SACSCOC standards).
- Students may transfer minimum credit hours as determined by the program.
- Transfer courses must be applicable toward the graduate degree being sought at FGCU, be approved by the college dean (or designee), and meet any other requirements as specified by the graduate program in question.
- Minimum of 50% of the credit hours toward the degree must be earned through FGCU.

**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 (excluding transfer credits) must be completed within seven (7) academic 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.
- 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 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. An 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 that of the instructor. 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. In either case, the instructor must clearly communicate to the student the expectations for removing the incomplete grade (I) including the timeline. After one year, a grade of I will be changed to an F if the instructor has reported no grade. A student may not 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 subject to 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 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 Gulflink at [gulflink.fgcu.edu](http://gulflink.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 limitation 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 who 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 member 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.

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, student, the college dean, the Academic Grade Appeal Committee chair, the department chair, the University registrar, and the course instructor within ten (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 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 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 acquire written permission from the department chair, or graduate 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, may not receive graduate student assistantships, and may not 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, 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 Graduate Assistant 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.

**B. Research Assistant (RA)**

A Research Assistant 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.

**C. Teaching Assistant (TA)**

A Teaching Assistant 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

**IV. Problem Solving and 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 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 in the FGCU Student Guidebook, and it is the graduate student's responsibility to read and become familiar with these.

**C. University Regulation on Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment**

The FGCU Regulation on Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment is for all students, faculty, staff, vendors and visitors, and is available on the [Regulations page](#) of the General Counsel website.

**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.

**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.

**C. Biosafety**

Graduate students involved in laboratory work are required to be in compliance with FGCU policy and procedures for general laboratory safety, biosafety, research safety, hazardous waste, laboratory ergonomics, radiation safety, and chemical hygiene. The [environmental health and safety policies and requirements](#) are available online.

**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 of the General Counsel website.