

General Policies

Graduate students must follow all academic policies in the most recent catalog unless a policy states it applies only to undergraduate students.

Non-Discrimination Policy

NDSU does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, participation in lawful off-campus activity, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, spousal relationship to current employee, or veteran status, as applicable. Direct inquiries to: Vice Provost, Title IX/ADA Coordinator, Old Main 201, NDSU Main Campus, Fargo, ND, 58108, 701-231- 7708, ndsu.eoaa@ndsu.edu.

This publication is available in alternate format upon request. Please contact the Graduate College at (701) 231-7033 or ndsu.grad.school@ndsu.edu.

Graduate Courses

Courses approved at the 600, 700 and 800 level may be taken for graduate credit and used to satisfy course requirements on the student's graduate plan of study.

- Didactic courses are those courses approved for graduate credit numbered 601-689, 691; 700-789, 791; 800-889, 891.
- Courses numbered 690, 692-699, 790, 792-799, 890, 892-899 are special or experimental courses and are not to be included as didactic courses on a plan of study.

Change of Degree Objective

Students may change their degree objective within their graduate program. Students must meet the requirements of the new degree objective.

Students moving from a doctoral degree or Plan A master's to a Plan B or C (non-thesis) masters may use, with the approval of their advisor and graduate program coordinator, up to four (4) completed research credits toward the minimum credits for the new degree objective.

Admission Status

Full Graduate Standing

These students have met all admission criteria and are fully admitted to a graduate program. Full graduate standing is a prerequisite for the conferral of a graduate degree.

Conditional Standing

Students in conditional standing do not meet all requirements for admission or have deficiencies in prerequisite course work; however, they show potential for successful graduate study.

- Each program defines specific conditions for students to transition from conditional to full graduate standing.
- Students with an undergraduate CGPA below 3.0 are automatically placed in conditional standing by the Graduate College.
 - **Condition:** Earn a 3.0 or higher CGPA in the first nine didactic graduate credits.
 - **Additional Conditions:** Programs may impose further conditions.
- Students admitted under conditional status are automatically placed on academic warning until the conditions of admission are met (see Academic Standing (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/graduate/graduate-school-policies/#academicstandardstext>)).

Credit Limitations:

- Conditional students are limited to earning 12 graduate credits before fulfilling admission conditions.
- Accelerated degree programs may allow students to earn up to half of their required graduate credits while in conditional status.
 - Credits earned beyond 15 while in conditional status may not be eligible for undergraduate financial aid and will be charged at the graduate tuition rate.

Non-Degree Admission

This category is for individuals seeking personal and professional growth through graduate-level coursework without pursuing an advanced degree.

Important Considerations:

- Non-degree students are not eligible for:
 - Graduate assistantships
 - Tuition waivers
 - Federal Title IV student financial aid
- Non-degree students are affiliated with the Graduate College, not a specific academic program.

- Some courses may have prerequisites or require instructor permission.
 - Degree-seeking students have enrollment priority in courses with limited space.

Transitioning to Degree-Seeking Status:

- **Admission Process:** Students wishing to pursue a degree must complete the Graduate College application process (including a new application and fee).
- **Credit Transfer:**
 - A maximum of 10 credits earned as a non-degree student may be applied towards a graduate degree.

Academic Standing

The scholastic requirements below apply to each student enrolled in the Graduate College. Programs may have additional requirements. Refer to your program handbook for more information.

- A student must have a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of at least 3.0 to receive a graduate degree.
- All courses taken by a graduate student for which grades are given (not satisfactory/unsatisfactory) will be used in calculating the semester and CGPA.
- Grades of A, B, C or S may be used to fulfill graduation requirements.
- Earning more than two grades of C, D, F or U may be grounds for dismissal upon recommendation by the program coordinator.

Good Standing

Good standing is achieved when a student's cumulative GPA is at or above a 3.00.

Academic Warning

Academic warning is issued when a student who entered the grading period on good standing earns a cumulative GPA below the minimum 3.00.

- Any student admitted in conditional status is placed on academic warning starting their first semester.
- Students on academic warning remain eligible for graduate assistantships.
- An academic warning does not appear on the official academic transcript. Students are notified of their academic warning status via official NDSU email.
- Students on academic warning can take a leave of absence from their graduate studies; this will not change their academic standing.

Continued Warning

Continued academic warning is a formal extension of the academic warning status. It is issued when a student entering the grading period on academic warning achieves a minimum semester GPA of 3.00, demonstrating adequate progress, but their cumulative GPA remains below the 3.00 minimum.

- Students on continued warning remain eligible for graduate assistantships.
- Continued warning does not appear on the student's official academic transcript, but does appear on the unofficial transcript. Students are notified of their continued academic warning status via official NDSU email.

Academic Probation

If a student on continued warning fails to achieve a CGPA of at least 3.00, they will be placed on academic probation.

A student on academic probation is not eligible for a graduate assistantship or tuition waiver. An academic probation does not appear on the student's official academic transcript. Students are notified of their academic probation status via official NDSU email.

To continue the pursuit of a graduate degree program, a student on academic probation must develop a remediation plan in collaboration with the advisor and submit the **Academic Probation Remediation Plan** form. This plan must include:

- **Specific Courses:** The courses the student plans to take in the subsequent semester(s).
- **Target Grades:** The grades the student aims to achieve in those courses to raise their CGPA to 3.0 or higher.
- **Improvement Strategies:** An explanation of the specific steps the student will take to improve their academic performance (e.g., study groups, tutoring, improved time management).

The completed Remediation Plan must be received (with all signatures) by the Graduate College before the last day of online registration (<https://www.ndsu.edu/onestop/dates/>) in Campus Connection.

Students on academic probation can take a leave of absence from their graduate studies; this will not change their academic standing. Students on academic probation must submit their remediation plan before requesting a leave of absence.

Dismissal from the Graduate College

Dismissal results in the loss of active graduate student status with the Graduate College and participation in all graduate programs and course work.

Graduate students may be dismissed from the Graduate College as a result of:

- failure to meet our scholastic standards
- academic or professional misconduct
- insufficient progress toward a degree
- failure to meet professional expectations or standards
- failure to submit an acceptable remediation plan
- failure to meet the goals outlined in the approved remediation plan

Additional Information:

- Dismissal is confirmed following the completion of any appeal process (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/graduate/graduate-school-policies/graduate-student-appeals/>).
- A dismissal is documented on the student's official academic transcript. Students are notified of their dismissal via official NDSU email.
- Students dismissed from the Graduate College may reapply for admission after at least one calendar year from the date of their dismissal.

Enrollment Policy

Students must maintain continuous enrollment by registering for at least one graduate credit during fall and spring semester until all degree requirements are completed. If applicable, this includes the Graduate College approval of the master's paper, thesis, or dissertation.

- Registration is required for students completing the preliminary or final examinations during the summer semester.
- Students may take up to 15 credits each semester. Students wanting to exceed the credit limit must submit the Over 15 Credit Petition (https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/forms/#.~:text=Over%2015%20Credits%20Petition) form.
- A student who has not registered for longer than a continuous two-year period must reapply for admission and is subject to the degree requirements at the time of readmission
- For information regarding assistantships and enrollment see <https://catalog.ndsu.edu/graduate/graduate-school-policies/graduate-assistantship-policy/> (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/graduate/graduate-school-policies/graduate-assistantship-policy/>)
- In some circumstances, graduate assistants who are working 20 hours per week and registered for five or more graduate credits may be considered full-time. Check with your lender, funding provider or other organization to determine their specific requirements.

See Credit Load page (<https://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2025-2026/academic-policies/student-credit-load/>) for more information.

Enrollment Requirements for International Graduate Students

Each fall and spring term, international graduate students (those holding an F-1 or J-1 visa) must fully enroll in face-to-face coursework. If an international student holds a graduate assistantship contract, full-time enrollment is 6 credits minimum. For those students without an assistantship contract, full-time enrollment is 9 credits minimum. Exceptions to these minimum enrollment requirement may be made on a case-by-case basis with pre-approval from both the Graduate School and the International Student and Study Abroad Services office. Failure to comply with the minimum enrollment requirements will result in the loss of legal status as an F-1 or J-1 student visa holder. See the International Student and Study Abroad Services page (<https://www.ndsu.edu/international/iss/immigration/students/credits/>) for additional information.

Coursework Completion Deadlines

- Coursework, including transfer credit, more than seven years old cannot be used to satisfy the requirements of any certificate or master's degree. Current students or students returning within the seven year timeframe may petition for an exception to this policy for NDSU coursework only. The petition for exception is limited to one extension of at most one (1) calendar year. The exception must be approved by the student's advisor, the graduate program coordinator, and the Graduate College.
- Coursework, including transfer credit, more than ten years old cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements of any doctoral degree. Current students or students returning within the ten year timeframe may petition for an exception to this policy for NDSU coursework only. The petition for exception is limited to one extension of at most two (2) calendar years. The exception must be approved by the student's advisor, the graduate program coordinator, and the Graduate College.

Master's Paper, Thesis, or Dissertation Completion Deadlines

The student will have one year from the date of the final examination to complete the Graduate College format review process and any other outstanding degree requirements.

If all degree requirements are not completed within one year the student must repeat the final examination. If a period of time two years or greater lapses before the master's paper, thesis or dissertation is approved by the Graduate College, the student must reapply to the Graduate College, redefend the disquisition and register for a minimum of two credits.

Graduate College Leave of Absence

Students may file a Request for Leave of Absence (<https://powerforms.docusign.net/df263d9-611c-4814-a1ef-14376c97f7e8/?env=na3&acct=1ceb9a57-b6a3-4df7-b655-%20d64cf8f1c2d7&accountId=1ceb9a57-b6a3-4df7-b655-d64cf8f1c2d7>) from their graduate program for up to two years. Forms must be received by the Graduate College prior to the Enrollment Census date and can only be submitted if the student is not enrolled or has withdrawn to zero credits (<https://www.ndsu.edu/onestop/withdrawing-classes/>) (see Dates and Deadlines (<https://www.ndsu.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines/>) for details).

Filing a Request for Leave of Absence ensures that you will not need to register for semesters in which leave was approved. To re-enroll (within the two- year limit), submit the Request for Reactivation (<https://powerforms.docusign.net/8e0410f1-3331-4b61-a369-85780b99e512/?env=na3&acct=1ceb9a57-b6a3-4df7-b655-d64cf8f1c2d7&accountId=1ceb9a57-b6a3-4df7-b655-d64cf8f1c2d7>). Any approved leave of absence does not amend the seven- or ten-year coursework completion deadline.

Students who do not maintain continuous enrollment and fail to file for a leave of absence with the Graduate College must submit the Request for Reactivation (<https://powerforms.docusign.net/8e0410f1-3331-4b61-a369-85780b99e512/?env=na3&acct=1ceb9a57-b6a3-4df7-b655-d64cf8f1c2d7&accountId=1ceb9a57-b6a3-4df7-b655-d64cf8f1c2d7>) form and enroll in at least one credit per missed semester (fall and spring) up to four credits.

Family and Medical Accommodation Policy for Graduate Students

The Graduate School at NDSU is committed to supporting students in balancing their academic pursuits with their family responsibilities. This policy outlines provisions for:

1. Extensions for Completing Academic Requirements

Eligibility:

- Graduate students in good academic standing making progress towards their degree may be eligible for extensions on:
 - Preliminary/Qualifying Examinations
 - Final Defense
 - Disquisition Review Process

Qualifying Circumstances:

- Childbirth, adoption, or foster placement of a child
- Caring for a newborn child
- Caring for a child with a serious medical condition
- Experiencing a serious medical condition
- Caring for a seriously ill spouse/partner or parent (may require medical documentation)

Extension Lengths:

- Childbirth, adoption, foster placement: Up to one extra year
- Serious medical conditions (student, child, spouse/partner, parent): Up to six extra months

Application Process:

- Students must submit the extension request form (https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/forms/#:~:text=Request%20for%20Extension%20Under%20Family%20and%20Medical%20Accommodation%20Policy) to their academic unit *before* the desired extension start date.
 - Retroactive requests will not be considered.
- The academic unit and Graduate School will review the request and determine eligibility.
- While each extension granted under this policy will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, absent extraordinary circumstances, the additional time granted by this policy will not exceed two years.
- International students require approval from the Office of International Student and Study Abroad Services.

Leave of Absence:

- Students may also consider a leave of absence from their program.
- International students should consult with the Office of International Student and Study Abroad Services regarding leave of absence eligibility.

2. Modified Duties for Graduate Assistants

Eligibility:

- Graduate assistants who have served at least one academic term may be eligible for modified duties in the following circumstances:
 - Childbirth, adoption, or foster placement of a child
 - A health condition preventing the performance of regular duties (without workload reduction)
 - Caring for a child, spouse/partner, or parent with a serious health condition

Definition and Length of Modified Duties:

- “Modified Duties” means a change to duties and goals without stipend reduction for a limited period. A graduate assistant taking modified duties will still be at a 100% workload and 100% stipend; however, the nature of the responsibilities for this time period will be adjusted.
- Childbirth or adoption of a child under 6.: Up to six weeks
- Serious medical conditions (student, child, spouse/partner, parent): Up to six weeks of excused absences (with appropriate documentation).
- Modified duties agreements must conclude within 12 months.

Application Process:

- Graduate assistants submit a Modified Duties Request (https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/forms/#:~:text=Modified%20Duties%20Request) to be sent to their supervisor and department chair/head.
 - The graduate assistant and department engage in an interactive process to determine modified duties and duration.
 - The dean of the Graduate College will help resolve any disagreements.
 - Performance evaluations will be based on the agreed-upon modified duties.