GRADUATE POLICIES

Academic Regulations

Academic Eligibility to Continue in Graduate School
Persons enrolled in The Graduate School are regarded as members of the student body of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and are held responsible for conducting themselves in conformity with the moral and legal restraints found in any law-abiding community. Continued enrollment in The Graduate School is at all times subject to review of the student’s academic record and of the student’s actions with regard to observance of University rules and regulations.

Academic Good Standing
After completing nine credit hours of graduate coursework, students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in all graduate coursework at UNCG to remain in Academic Good Standing.

Academic Probation and Academic Dismissal
Any student who has completed at least nine credit hours of graduate coursework and whose cumulative GPA for all graduate courses drops below 3.0 will be placed on Academic Probation. Probationary status will be removed if, within the next nine credit hours, a student brings the cumulative GPA to at least 3.0 for all graduate coursework. If probationary status is not removed, the student will be dismissed from the program and is ineligible to continue in The Graduate School. While on academic dismissal, students are not eligible to take courses through the VISIONS program.

Academic Progress and Professionalism
Satisfactory performance in The Graduate School also involves maintaining the professional standards and academic progress expected in a particular discipline or program. Failure to maintain the standards or progress set out in a student’s departmental or program handbook may result in dismissal of the student from the program.

Readmission after Academic Dismissal
A student who is dismissed for academic reasons may re-apply for the same or a different program after two semesters or the equivalent. It is important to note that all graduate courses previously taken at UNCG will remain on the student’s academic record. Only students whose current GPA predicts the ability to graduate with a 3.0 within the allotted timeframe will be offered re-admission.

Fresh Start Admission
A graduate student may request a “fresh start” when changing or returning to a graduate program leading to a master’s degree or certificate at UNCG. A fresh start is defined as beginning a graduate program and having the academic record recalculated to reflect no credits attempted and no graduate grade point average for the new or returned to program; however, all graduate courses previously taken at UNCG will remain on the student’s academic record. The attempted credit hours from all courses will be counted for financial aid eligibility (as applicable).

To be eligible for a fresh start, the student must meet the following criteria:

- A period of time of at least five years must have passed since the student withdrew or was dismissed from a UNCG graduate program;
- The student’s cumulative graduate GPA must be below a 3.0;
- The student must be recommended for admission into the program by the appropriate department; and
- The student must request and be granted a fresh start from The Graduate School.

Courses completed in a previous UNCG graduate program will not transfer nor will they be applied to the requirements of the new or returned to program. The new program must be finished and the degree conferred within five years of the completion of the first new course.

At most, one fresh start will be granted to any one graduate student at UNCG. Final approval for a fresh start application rests with the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School.

Bryan Prelude (Visiting Students)
Bryan Prelude students will become academically ineligible to continue in The Graduate School under any of the following circumstances:

- When grades of U, F, or WF (or D in an undergraduate course) are received in any 6 credit hours.
- When grades of C+ or C are received in 9 credit hours of any coursework taken (graduate or undergraduate).
- When any grade of U, F, or WF (or D in an undergraduate course) is received in combination with 6 semester hours of C+ or C grade.

Academic Progress and Professionalism
Satisfactory performance in The Graduate School also involves maintaining the professional standards and academic progress expected in a particular discipline or program. Failure to maintain the standards or progress set out in a student’s departmental or program handbook may result in dismissal of the student from the program.

Appeals Policy and Procedures
This policy provides a procedure for graduate students to make claims that their rights under University policy or under the law have been violated. This procedure is to be used to resolve grievances against decisions or action that were made by employees or agents of UNCG and that would adversely affect the student’s progress toward a graduate degree. The procedures set forth below may be used by persons who are enrolled as UNCG graduate students.


There are two types of appeals available through The Graduate School: 1) Appeal of grades, and 2) Appeal based on misapplication or misinterpretation of University policy, regulation, rule, or procedure or a violation of state or federal law.
Apologies of Grades
A current student may appeal a grade within 90 calendar days of the date the grade was posted. The process of appeal must adhere to the following steps. An informal complaint is initiated by the student with the instructor assigning the grade. If the instructor endorses the change, the department/program head must review the request. If approved, a Grade Change is initiated. If the informal appeal is not endorsed at the department/program level, the student may initiate a formal appeal. (See Appeals Procedure).

A retroactive Withdrawal may be requested in cases in which the student will be unable to complete the term and the deadline to drop without academic penalty has passed or when a grade of Incomplete has been assigned and the student is unable to complete the remaining requirements. Such withdrawals will only be considered when truly extenuating circumstances exist. The student is required to submit supporting documentation.

The process must adhere to the following steps:

- The student should submit a written request for a retroactive Withdrawal to the course instructor, preferably within 90 days but no later than 6 months from the posting date of the final letter grade.
- The instructor will review the request and determine whether or not to endorse the student’s request. If the instructor is no longer employed by UNCG or chooses not to endorse the request, the student can submit the request to the Department Head/Chair.
- An endorsed request for retroactive Withdrawal should be submitted to the Graduate School for review by the Vice Provost or the Vice Provost’s designee. If the request is not endorsed by both the Department and the Vice Provost, the student may initiate a formal appeal. (See Appeals Procedures)

Appeals of Misapplication or Misinterpretation of Policies or Procedures
An appeal of the application of a rule or regulation must be made by the student within 90 calendar days as determined by the date of the letter from The Graduate School informing the student of the decision in question.

Criteria for Appeals
Grade Appeals
This section applies when a student wants to appeal a final course grade that has been recorded by the Registrar on the student’s academic record. A currently enrolled student may appeal a grade within 90 calendar days of the date the grade was posted.

A grade appeal under this policy may be based on one or more of the following criteria:

- The grade(s) was/were calculated in a manner inconsistent with University policy, the syllabus, or changes to the syllabus.
- The grade(s) was/were erroneously calculated.
- Grading/performance standards were arbitrary.
- The instructor failed to assign or remove an Incomplete (“I”) or to initiate a grade change as agreed upon with the student.
- The student (who may or may not be currently enrolled) is requesting a retroactive Withdrawal from a course due to truly extenuating circumstances as demonstrated in supporting documentation.

A grade appeal cannot be made in response to a grade penalty assessed as a result of a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy.

Informal Appeals Procedure
Before initiating a formal appeal, a student is encouraged to initiate discussions with the instructor or, in the case of an appeal of regulations, with a Graduate School official. A written appeal is not necessary in the informal stage. During the informal procedure, the student discusses the appeal with the instructor or Graduate School official. Such meetings often help students understand the practices of instructors and other Graduate officials and often lead to resolution of disputes with students. If the instructor endorses the change, the department/program head must also review the request. If approved, a Grade Change is initiated. In the case of an informal appeal of regulations, the Graduate School official will forward recommendations to the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School for a final decision.

Formal Appeals Procedure
If there is no resolution at the informal stage or the student wishes to pursue a formal appeal, the following processes must be followed:

Step 1: Written Appeal to Department/Program or Graduate School
The student must submit a written appeal to the department/program head or graduate school official. The formal letter must identify the basis of the appeal and must state in detail the applicable criteria for the appeal and why the student believes that the grade should be changed or how the policy, regulation, rule, or procedure was misapplied or misinterpreted.

The department/program head or graduate school official reviews the written appeal and uses normal administrative methods to learn of the facts and make a decision regarding it. Within a reasonable time, normally no longer than fifteen (15) calendar days, the department/program head or graduate school official sends a written response to the student, with a copy to the instructor or appropriate Graduate School officials. The Step 1 response shall include a recommendation of whether or not the instructor should re-evaluate the student’s work in the course(s) or the application of the regulation against the student should be re-evaluated.

In the case of a grade appeal, the department/program head cannot change the student’s grade without the instructor’s agreement. The instructor will determine if a grade change is warranted, and if so will submit a grade change.

The granting of exceptions to Graduate School regulations must receive the approval of the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School. Therefore, after approval of the exception by the department/program, the appeal must be sent to the Vice Provost for final decision.
If the student is not satisfied with the outcome at Step 1, the student may proceed to Step 2.

**Step 2: Written Appeal to The Graduate Studies Committee**

The final date to initiate the Step 2 appeal is fifteen (15) calendar days after the student receives a response under Step 1. Failure to observe this time frame will result in a waiver of the right to proceed to Step 2.

Under Step 2, the student sends a copy of the formal appeal request and the decision of the instructor/Graduate School official from Step 1 to the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School. If the student attempts to raise a new basis for an appeal after the original appeal at Step 2, he/she must present a new appeal under Step 1.

If the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School determines that the formal appeal request does not qualify under the appeals criteria contained in this policy, the appeal will be dismissed subject only to the authority of the Chancellor. If the appeal meets the criteria, the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School will transmit the appeals materials to the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee and will send a copy of it to the Dean of the Student's academic unit as notification of a pending appeal.

After conferring with the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee, the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School will notify the student, the instructor, and any witnesses who will be needed, of the time and place of the hearing. Each party shall be notified at least fifteen (15) calendar days in advance of the scheduled date of the hearing.

**Conduct of the Hearing**

The Chair of the Student Affairs Subcommittee of the Graduate Studies Committee has responsibility for ensuring that the proceedings are conducted in an orderly and fair manner. The Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School may be present during the hearing but will not take part in the questioning of witnesses or deliberations. The Vice Provost may, however, provide a brief impartial overview of the appeal at the beginning of the hearing. The Vice Provost's statement shall be limited to a summary of the facts and issues present in the appeal and shall not include any opinions regarding the appeal.

All evidence including personal testimony will be heard by the Committee in the presence of the student, the instructor, and/or the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School or his or her designee. Since the hearing is a normal part of the educational process and not a legal proceeding, neither the student nor the University shall have an attorney present. Following the presentations, the Subcommittee members will have an opportunity to ask questions of the presenters and witnesses. The student, the instructor, and/or appropriate representatives will have reasonable time, as determined by the Subcommittee Chair, to question witnesses and respond to evidence.

At the completion of the questioning all presenters, witnesses, and the Vice Provost, will leave the room and deliberation by the Subcommittee will begin.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Chair of the Student Affairs Subcommittee of the Graduate Studies Committee will prepare a report describing the facts of the appeal as determined by the Committee after hearing the evidence and the Committee's recommendations for the action which should be taken. The Chair of the Subcommittee will send the report within fifteen (15) calendar days, to the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School.

**Final Decision**

The Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School has responsibility under this policy to make the final University decision in Graduate School appeals, subject only to the authority of the Chancellor. The Vice Provost's decision will be communicated to the student and the instructor/Graduate School official within a reasonable time, normally no more than fifteen (15) calendar days, after receipt of the report from the Committee.

**Conflict of Interest**

**Student-Faculty Relationship**

It is essential to the promotion of high academic standards and maintenance of sound professional practice that the student-faculty relationship be free of real or apparent conflicts of interest based on familiar relationships. To this end, a member of the faculty shall not serve in any capacity that will involve evaluating the academic performance of a graduate student when there exists between them a relationship in the first or second degree of affinity or consanguinity or when they otherwise are so closely identified with one another as to suggest a possible conflict of interest.

**Faculty as Student**

Members of the voting and non-voting faculty (as identified in sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the Constitution of the Faculty: The University of North Carolina at Greensboro) may not pursue a graduate degree or certificate in their home department or degree-offering unit. For exceptions, the unit Dean may petition the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School.

**Student as Faculty**

Graduate students should not be assigned to graduate assistantships that generate conflicts of interest. In the rare instance that a graduate student must be assigned to teach a graduate level course, the department is required to seek permission from the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, providing rationale for the assignment and a plan to ensure that the assignment will not generate conflicts of interest.

**Continuous Enrollment**

Students pursuing a graduate degree or certificate program are required to be enrolled from the time of matriculation through degree/certificate completion. Continuous enrollment is defined as completing a minimum of 1 hour of graduate credit (including 699/799) every Fall and Spring semester, or one semester during the academic year in combination with a Summer Session. This coursework must be approved for the student’s program of study and selected in consultation with the departmental Director of Graduate Study and or advisor/committee chair.

Students who have already enrolled in the maximum number of 699/799 hours but who have not yet completed the requirements for thesis/dissertation are required to maintain continuous enrollment. These students will enroll in and pay tuition and fees for no fewer than one nor more than three hours of thesis/dissertation extension credit each semester, after consultation with and approval by their faculty adviser. These credit hours will not count toward the degree.

All graduate students must be enrolled for at least 1 credit during the semester in which they are scheduled to receive their degrees. This may include extension courses (801/802/803).

Any student who breaks continuous enrollment must apply for re-admission to the university. If re-admitted, the student will be assigned to the catalog requirements for the program in effect for the re-admit term.
Course Loads
Graduate students enrolled in nine or more credit hours per term are considered full-time. After completing all required coursework, a master’s student may be considered full-time while enrolled in a 3 credit hour thesis course (699). Master’s students may maintain full-time status with 3 credits of 699 for two terms.

After entering candidacy status, a doctoral student may be considered full-time while enrolled in a 3 credit hour dissertation course (799). Doctoral candidates may maintain full-time status with 3 credits of 799 until completion of the number of dissertation credit hours specified by their programs in the Graduate School Bulletin or their departmental plan of study.

Continued enrollment in thesis or dissertation credit hours beyond those that are required will not provide full-time status unless the student also enrolls in thesis extension, dissertation extension, and/or research extension courses to fulfill the 9 credit hour requirement.

Permission to enroll in extension courses will require verification by the committee chair that the student is making satisfactory progress.

Meeting Visa Requirements for International Students on an F-1 or J-1 Visa
Doctoral students on an F-1 or J-1 visa, upon completion of all required coursework and any thesis and dissertation hours required on the plan of study, may enroll in one hour of dissertation extension each term to meet visa requirements.

Master’s students on an F-1 or J-1 visa, upon completion of all required coursework and any thesis hours required on the plan of study, may enroll in one hour of thesis extension or research extension each term to meet visa requirements.

Each term, the academic department must supply a letter to the International Programs Center verifying that the student remains in good standing and is making satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree.

Grades
Graduate Grading Scale
Plus/minus grades are incorporated into the GPA for all graduate level courses according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points Awarded Per Hour of Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/WF</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Grades of NR, not reported, are assigned in instances in which the instructor does not report a grade and the semester has officially closed.
- Grades of S, satisfactory, or U, unsatisfactory, are reported on all workshops and institutes, and certain seminars, field projects, internships, practica, music groups, and others.
- The grade point average is determined by dividing the accumulated number of grade points earned by the accumulated number of semester hours undertaken. Hours attempted but not passed must be included in this calculation. Courses graded S/U and courses transferred from another institution (except those courses taken through cross registration) may not be used in determining the UNC Greensboro grade point average.
- If a student receives a course grade other than Incomplete (I) and later submits additional work (whether that work is specified in the syllabus or not) after grades are posted, this work cannot be used as a basis for changing the assigned grade. Except for independent study or where specific provision is made in the course description, no student may repeat for credit a course for which he/she has earned credit. If a student repeats such a course, the grade will be recorded on the transcript, but no additional credit will be allowed toward graduation or toward the grade point average. A failing grade remains on the student’s academic record permanently.

Withdrawal from a Program or a Course
Graduate students who must withdraw from the University may do so by dropping all courses online through UNCGenie until the last day to drop without academic penalty. Students whose registration for all courses is cancelled must seek reactivation or readmission through The Graduate School to return to school in subsequent terms.

After the deadline to withdraw without penalty, and no later than the last day of classes, a Withdrawal (W) may be granted only with the permission of the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School and if status in the course at the time of withdrawal is satisfactory. If the student is in failing status at the time of withdrawal, a grade of Withdrawal Failing (WF) is given. A course abandoned with insufficient reason for withdrawal is assigned the grade of F. In certain cases, faculty may initiate the withdrawal procedure for cause.

Incomplete (Graduate)
The symbol I indicates inability, for reasons beyond the student’s control, to complete course requirements by the end of the term in which the course was offered. The Incomplete may be removed by completion of the deferred requirements within six months from the last day of examinations in the term in which the course was taken. An Incomplete not removed within this time limit automatically becomes an F. A grade of I on any course, including work not required for the student’s program, must be removed before graduation. A grade of I cannot be removed with a grade of W.

In the case of a thesis, master’s production, or dissertation in progress, a grade of In Progress (IP) will be recorded each semester of registration until completion of the thesis, master’s production, or dissertation, when a final grade of Satisfactory (S) will be assigned. Extension of thesis, research extension, and extension of dissertation courses also may be graded with IP on a limited basis, but faculty advisers may be required to provide documentation of the student’s satisfactory progress toward completion of the program.

S-U Courses
Grades for the following courses are reported as Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U):
- All Practicum and Internship courses in Education and Library and Information Studies
Graduation and Commencement

Applying for Graduation

Students must formally apply for graduation to The Graduate School by the end of the first week of classes during the term in which they plan to graduate. Degrees are awarded at the end of each semester and the second summer session (i.e., in December, May, and August).

All graduate students must be enrolled for at least one credit during the term in which they are scheduled to receive their degree. This may include extension courses (801, 802, 803). See the Continuous Enrollment Policy.

Diplomas and transcripts of students owing money to the University will be withheld until the account is cleared. Students may not be admitted to and graduate from the same degree or certificate program in the same academic term.

Students who do not apply for graduation before the published deadline for any semester may apply for graduation during the next semester. Students who have applied for graduation but fail to meet the requirements must reapply for graduation by the published deadline for the semester in which they will fulfill the requirements.

Degrees are conferred only after all requirements are completed and the Board of Trustees has taken official action.

GPA Requirement for Graduation

For the completion of graduate programs, the overall GPA for graduate courses taken at UNC Greensboro must be at least 3.0. Additionally, the overall GPA for all courses included on the student’s final Plan of Study must be at least 3.0. A GPA of 3.0 or better may be required in the major field at the option of the major department.

In the case of a student who has attempted the minimum number of credit hours for the degree or certificate without achieving the required GPA, the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School, upon the recommendation of the department, may permit the student to continue taking courses in an effort to earn the required minimum GPA. If permission is granted, a maximum of 25% of the coursework hours required for the program may be added to the plan of study, not to exceed 12 credit hours. The additional credit hours may not be independent study.

Students completing all degree requirements by the end of the spring semester are encouraged to participate in the May Doctoral Hooding or Commencement ceremony. Students completing all degree requirements by the end of the fall semester are encouraged to participate in the December Doctoral Hooding or Commencement ceremony. Students completing all degree requirements by the end of the Summer Session may participate in either the May or December Doctoral Hooding or Commencement ceremony by applying to graduate, paying the graduation fee, and notifying The Graduate School. Degree candidates will not earn degrees nor be graduated from the University until they have completed all degree requirements. Participation in a commencement ceremony does not presume graduation from the University.

Only those doctoral candidates whose degree requirements are completed by the established deadlines (see the Academic Calendar) are authorized to participate in the University’s formal December or May Doctoral Hooding ceremony.

Graduation Fee

The graduation fee is payable in the Cashier’s and Student Accounts Office. The Bryan School requires an additional graduation fee that goes directly to the Bryan School. Students who do not graduate in the term for which they originally applied must file a new application. Check with The Graduate School regarding your status.

Degree Name Changes

Graduates who have been awarded a degree by UNC Greensboro will not be able to convert that degree to another if later the name of the degree is changed.

Independent Study (Graduate)

Independent study is reserved for certificate or degree seeking students. VISIONS/visiting students are not eligible to register for independent study. To be eligible for independent study, a student must have completed several regular courses of graduate work and attained at least a 3.0 average. Students may not register for independent study as a substitute for existing courses. Registration for independent study must have the approval of the instructor, the department head or dean, and the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School.

Post-Baccalaureate and Post-Master’s Certificate students may count no more than 3 credit hours of independent study toward certificate requirements.

Master’s students may register for no more than 3 credit hours of independent study per semester and may count no more than 6 credit hours of independent study toward satisfying the minimum requirements for the master’s degree. At the discretion of the department, M.F.A. students may earn up to a maximum of 20% of their required credits as independent study credits.

Doctoral students may count no more than 15 credits of independent study toward degree requirements.

Leave of Absence

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro supports a leave of absence policy to assist graduate students who are temporarily unable to continue their programs. The leave of absence may extend for up to one academic year.

Current students who must break continuous enrollment may apply for a leave of absence. Students choosing this option must file a Graduate School Request for a Leave of Absence that states the reason for the requested absence and that they will neither use University resources, nor require faculty communication or interaction during the leave period. If the leave of absence extends beyond one academic year, the student’s matriculation is closed and the student must re-apply for admission to The Graduate School.

International students on F-1 visa/status must remain continuously enrolled until the thesis, dissertation, project or directed study is completed. Those international students who wish to apply for a leave of absence are advised to consult with the International Program Center.

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the proposed leave is compatible with the regulations of any granting agency from which funding would normally be received during the leave period and that such agencies are informed of the proposed leave. Students on student loan programs should inquire with the Financial Aid Office and/or lender.
If transfer credit is to be considered, the following stipulations must be present:

- All credit offered in transfer must have been taken at an accredited graduate school and not have been used to complete the requirements for a degree.
- All credit to be transferred must fall within the time limit for the degree/certificate.
- The student must have earned a grade of B (3.0) or better on all transfer credit. In a four-letter grading system, only credit earned with either of the top two grades is transferable. The transfer of credit where a grade of P or its equivalent is received in a two- or three-letter grading system (such as P-F, S-U, or H-P-F) reduces hour for hour the number of C grades earned that may count toward the minimum requirements for the degree/certificate.
- The credit must be recorded on an official transcript placed on file with The Graduate School.
- It must be approved both by the student's major department and by the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School.
- It must be necessary to meet specific degree/certificate requirements.
- Hours only, not grades, may be transferred from other institutions. Quarter-hours do not transfer as semester hours. A fraction of an hour of credit will not be transferred. See sample below:
  - 2 quarter hours transfer as 1 semester hour.
  - 3-4 quarter hours transfer as 2 semester hours.
  - 5 quarter hours transfer as 3 semester hours.
  - 6-7 quarter hours transfer as 4 semester hours.
  - 8 quarter hours transfer as 5 semester hours.
  - 9-10 quarter hours transfer as 6 semester hours.

### Summary of Regulations on Certificates and Degrees

**Certificates**

A student may apply coursework from a certificate program toward a graduate degree at UNCG with the approval of the department offering the degree and The Graduate School.

**Summary of Requirements for Certificates**

- Satisfaction of all requirements for admission.
- A plan of study must be submitted to The Graduate School when a student in a certificate program applies for graduation.
- Satisfactory completion of all course requirements.
- Certificate students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in all certificate coursework and achieve a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 to graduate.
- Only three credit hours with a grade of C+ (2.3) or C (2.0) will count towards a certificate.
- With the exception of internship, practicum, independent projects or clinical work, all courses for a certificate will be letter graded.

**Credit Hours Required for Certificates**

In general, certificate programs should be between 12-18 credits hours at the 500-level or above with at least half of this course work at the 600-level or above.

**Plan of Study for Certificates**

The course work comprising the certificate program must be an integrated and organized sequence of study.

**Time Limits for Certificates**

Certificates awarded from UNCG indicate that our students have current, usable knowledge in their field; therefore, the certificate curriculum, including the capstone, must be completed within five academic years, from the date the first courses carrying graduate credit applicable to the student’s program are begun. However, if study for the program extends beyond three years, the student may need to meet new requirements.

**Independent Study for Certificates**

No more than 3 credit hours of independent study may be applied to the minimum number of semester hours required for completion of the graduate certificate program. (See additional requirements above in order to pursue Independent Study.)
Transfer Credit for Certificates
A maximum of three credit hours of transfer credit will be accepted toward a certificate.

Master's Degrees and Specialists in Education Degrees
Programs at UNCG leading to a master's degree hold the objective of a reasonable, comprehensive mastery of the subject matter in a chosen field, accomplished through study, training, and experience in research or other scholarly activities.

Summary of Requirements for Master's Degrees
- Satisfaction of all requirements for admission.
- Submission of plan of study to The Graduate School prior to 50% of program completion.
- Satisfactory completion of all course requirements.
- Achievement of the required B (3.0) GPA overall, for courses listed on the plan of study, and, if required by the department, for the major.
- No more than six credit hours of credit evaluated as C+ (2.3) and/or C (2.0) applied toward the minimum credits required for the degree.
- An applied knowledge of one modern foreign language, or approved option, in programs having this requirement.
- Capstone Experience: The nature of this experience (or combination of experiences) will be left to the discretion of individual academic units. They may include some combination of:
  - Comprehensive written or oral examination,
  - Thesis or research paper,
  - Portfolio,
  - Creative work, and/or
  - Internship experience.
- Filing of an application for graduation and the final plan of study with The Graduate School by the end of the first week of classes of the term in which the degree will be granted and payment of the graduation fee.
- Payment of all accounts owed the University. Diplomas and transcripts of students owing money to the University will be held until the account is cleared.

All the requirements above must be met by the deadlines stated in the Academic Calendar. Some special programs may have additional requirements not listed above but explained in materials supplied by the major department or school.

Time Limit Master's Degrees
Advanced degrees awarded from UNCG indicate that our students have current, usable knowledge in their field; therefore, the master's curriculum, including the thesis, must be completed within five academic years, from the date the first courses carrying graduate degree credit applicable to the student's program are begun. However, if study for the program extends beyond three years, the student may need to meet new requirements.

Credit Hours Required Master's Degrees
Minimum credit-hour requirements, which vary with the degree, are stated under the respective departmental program description. Credit that is applied to one master's degree cannot be applied to another master's degree. No course below the 500 level will be counted towards graduate degree requirements. In all programs, at least one half of the work credited toward the degree must be in 600-level courses or above.

Plan of Study Master's Degrees
A plan of study for the master's degree (or Specialist in Education degree) must be outlined and signed by the student and director of graduate study/designee at the earliest practical time following the student's admission to The Graduate School, but no later than 50% of the program's completion. The plan must indicate the following:
- All courses the student is expected to complete as a minimum requirement, including courses required for the major, supporting courses, number of elective hours, and courses recommended for transfer.
- Courses required by the department but not counted toward the degree, including prerequisite courses.
- No more than 6 credit hours of independent study. At the discretion of the department, M.F.A. candidates may earn up to a maximum of 20% of their required credit hours as independent study credits. (See additional requirements above in order to pursue Independent Study.)
- No more than six credit hours of credit evaluated as C+ (2.3) and/or C (2.0) applied toward the minimum credits required for the degree.
- Capstone Experience.
- Credit earned for STA 667 Statistical Consulting is not applicable to a graduate plan of study.

Copies of the approved plan of study must be filed in the student's permanent folder in The Graduate School, in the department's files, and with the student. If changes have been made to the plan of study, a revised plan of study must be submitted to The Graduate School by the end of the third week of classes of the semester in which the student applies for graduation.

Language Requirements Master's Degrees
Some programs require the student to demonstrate an applied knowledge of a modern foreign language. Exceptions are made at the discretion of the major department.

Foreign students whose native language is not English, who are seeking a master's degree in which a reading knowledge of a modern foreign language is required, may not offer their native language as satisfaction of this requirement. They may offer a reading knowledge of any other approved modern language, including English. When English is offered, the examination will be of the traditional type and will be administered by the Department of English or by the student's major department in consultation with the Department of English.

Upon the recommendation of the department, The Graduate School may approve requests for graduate students to pass a maximum of 12 semester hours of undergraduate level language courses by special examination. The results of the examination (S-U) will be posted to the student's graduate transcript. Permission will be limited to language skills courses.

Capstone Experience Master's Degrees
The capstone experience may consist of a comprehensive written or oral examination, thesis or research paper, portfolio, creative work, internship, or some combination of these experiences. The requirement can be satisfied after the student has completed at least two-thirds of the minimum program credits. If an unsatisfactory grade is given on the first attempt to satisfy the requirement, no more than one additional attempt is permitted. If the student fails to meet the department's minimum criteria for the capstone experience on the second attempt, The Graduate School will be notified and will send the student a letter of dismissal from the program.
### The Thesis Master's Degrees

Some master's programs require a thesis; some offer a thesis or non-thesis option. A student in a thesis program prepares a thesis under the guidance of a thesis committee consisting of a chair and two other members appointed by the head of the major department or school. The committee members must hold membership on the graduate faculty. Although all members of the committee may come from the major department, appointment of one member from another department is encouraged.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is required for research involving human subjects prior to acceptance of a thesis based on such research.

The thesis must conform to rules established by the Graduate Studies Committee in the Guide for Preparation of Theses and Dissertations. The guide can be printed from The Graduate School's website or paper copies can be obtained from the office at no cost.

An oral examination on the thesis may be required at the discretion of the major department or school, either for the individual or all students in a thesis program.

The process for submitting the thesis to The Graduate School has two components: submitting the approval copy and submitting the final copy. Specific instructions and deadline dates affiliated with each step are available in the Guide and the Academic Calendar.

Students file the thesis electronically via the online submission system available on The Graduate School's website. The approved electronic submission must conform to the format requirements stated in the Guide and must be uploaded by the deadline dates as specified in the Academic Calendar. Publication of the thesis by ProQuest Information and Learning is required by The Graduate School. There is no charge for traditional publishing. However, optional services requested by the candidate during submission may have associated charges.

Maximum credit allowed for the thesis is 6 credit hours. Additional 801 credits may be required to maintain continuous enrollment but will not count toward the degree.

### Transfer Credit Master's Degrees

At the master's and specialist's levels, credit may be given for graduate work taken at other institutions (including credit earned through the Greater Greensboro Consortium), but certain conditions must be met:

- Transfer credit may not exceed one-third of the minimum number of credit hours required by the student’s program.
- All credit offered in transfer must have been taken at an accredited graduate school and not have been used to complete the requirements for a degree.
- Such work must have been taken within the five-year time limit.
- The student must have earned a grade of B (3.0) or better on all transfer credit. In a four-letter grading system, only credit earned with either of the top two grades is transferable. The transfer of credit where a grade of P or its equivalent is received in a two- or three-letter grading system (such as P-F, S-U, or H-P-F) reduces credit for credit the number of C grades earned that may count toward the minimum requirement for the degree.
- The credit must be recorded on an official transcript placed on file with The Graduate School.
- It must be approved both by the student’s major department and by the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School.
- It must be necessary to meet specific degree requirements.

Credit hours only, not grades, may be transferred from other institutions. Quarter-hours do not transfer as semester hours. A fraction of an hour of credit will not be transferred. See sample below:

- 2 quarter hours transfer as 1 semester hour.
- 3-4 quarter hours transfer as 2 semester hours.
- 5 quarter hours transfer as 3 semester hours.
- 6-7 quarter hours transfer as 4 semester hours.
- 8 quarter hours transfer as 5 semester hours.
- 9-10 quarter hours transfer as 6 semester hours.

Students must secure approval from their major advisor and the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School in advance of registration at other universities. In general, however, not less than two-thirds of the total program for the master's and specialists degrees must be completed at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

All credit to be transferred must come within the time limit described above and must be supported by placing an official copy of the transcript on file in The Graduate School. No credit will be transferred unless it is required to meet specific degree requirements.

No more than 3 credit hours of institute and workshop credit may be counted toward satisfying the minimum requirements for the master's and specialists degrees.

### Doctoral Degrees

#### Doctor of Philosophy

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is conferred upon those students who have completed, with high distinction, a prescribed period of intensive study and investigation in a single field of learning. Students must master the methods of study in the chosen field and demonstrate familiarity with what has been done and with the potentialities for further progress in the field. They must also demonstrate capacity for original and independent study or creative work and must present evidence of such investigation in a scholarly dissertation.

A Ph.D. may be earned in communication sciences and disorders; community health education; computational mathematics; consumer, apparel, and retail studies; counseling and counselor education; economics; educational research, measurement and evaluation; educational studies; English; environmental health science; geography; history; human development and family studies; information systems; kinesiology; medicinal biochemistry; music education; nanoscience; nursing; nutrition; psychology; and special education.

#### Doctor of Education

The major premise of the Doctor of Education degree program is that students receive depth in subject matter as well as professional development. Therefore, the program is purposely flexible, allowing the students to develop under careful advisement a course of study best suited to their ability, personality, experience, and major professional goal. It is expected that each student will make a significant research contribution to the discipline culminating in a scholarly dissertation.

An Ed.D. may be earned in kinesiology and educational leadership.
Doctor of Musical Arts
The Doctor of Musical Arts degree program is a performance degree offered only in the School of Music. The requirements of The Graduate School stated below apply to the Doctor of Musical Arts; however, due to the highly specialized nature of the degree, the student should consult the Director of Graduate Study in the School of Music for specific requirements and procedures.

Doctor of Nursing Practice
The Doctor of Nursing Practice degree program is an applied degree offered only in the School of Nursing. The requirements of The Graduate School stated below apply to the Doctor of Nursing Practice; however, due to the highly specialized nature of the degree, the student should consult the information in the Doctor of Nursing Practice section regarding the specific requirements and procedures.

Summary of Requirements for Research Doctoral Degrees (Ph.D., Ed.D., D.M.A.)
- Satisfactory completion of all requirements for admission to a doctoral program, including the removal of any deficiencies identified at the time of admission.
- An approved advisory/dissertation committee, to be filed in The Graduate School by the end of 18 semester hours.
- An approved plan of study, to be filed in The Graduate School by the end of 18 semester hours.
- Satisfactory completion of any language requirement or approved option.
- Satisfactory completion of any diagnostic qualifying examination that may be required by the major department or school.
- Satisfactory completion of all course requirements in the student’s approved program of study.
- Satisfactory completion of the preliminary written and oral examination and any additional work that may be required as a result of this examination.
- An approved dissertation topic, to be filed in The Graduate School.
- Admission to candidacy upon the satisfaction of the requirements above (formal application to be made in The Graduate School).
- Submission of a dissertation acceptable to the advisory/dissertation committee.
- Satisfactory oral defense of the dissertation.
- Acceptance of the dissertation by The Graduate School.
- Filing of an application for graduation with The Graduate School by the end of the first week of classes of the term in which the degree will be granted and payment of the graduation fee.
- Payment of all accounts owed in the University. Diplomas and transcripts of students owing money to the University will be held until the account is cleared.

The requirements above must be met by the deadlines stated in the Academic Calendar. Detailed explanations of these requirements follow. Some programs may have additional requirements not listed above but explained in materials supplied by the major department or school.

Admission Requirements
Admission to the doctoral program is distinct and separate from any previous admission to The Graduate School. For this reason, a student who has been admitted to a master’s degree program must reapply for doctoral study by notifying The Graduate School of the desire to be considered for admission to the advanced program. Admission to study for the doctorate normally follows completion of the master’s degree or its equivalent coursework, but some departments will consider admission directly from an undergraduate program in the case of exceptionally well-qualified applicants. Applicants who hold the master’s degree or its equivalent, however, are not automatically eligible for admission to doctoral study.

In addition to satisfactory entrance examination scores and recommendations (explained in the application materials), final approvals of the major department or school and of the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School are required.

Advisory/Dissertation Committee
The advisory/dissertation committee, consisting of at least four members of the graduate faculty, shall assist the student with the preparation of the plan of study and shall guide and evaluate the doctoral dissertation. This committee will be appointed by the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School upon the recommendation of the major department head or dean and must be mutually acceptable to the student and all committee members.

Of the four members, the chair must hold an Endorsement to Chair Doctoral Committees, and no more than one may be an Adjunct Member of the graduate faculty. The committee chair must be from the major department, and it is recommended that when appropriate, one member be selected from the minor area of study. If at any time the advisory/ dissertation committee decreases in number to fewer than four members, additional members of the graduate faculty must be approved by the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School to bring the number to at least four. See Policy on Appointment to the Graduate Faculty for further details.

The student must request the appointment of this committee no later than upon completion of the first 18 semester hours of graduate courses. Any subsequent changes in the advisory/dissertation committee must be submitted to The Graduate School for approval.

Minor
Certain doctoral programs may permit, encourage, or require a minor, which is a formalized curricular sequence of advanced work in one or more areas outside the major field but cognate to it. The student should ask the chair of his/her advisory/dissertation committee if a minor is appropriate or required. The minor must consist of at least 12 credit hours of study. The student’s advisory/dissertation committee approves the minor, and it must appear on the doctoral plan of study.

For information concerning the doctoral minor in educational research and methodology, human development and family studies, information systems, and statistics, see the relevant academic program.

Research Competence
Competence in research is required of all doctoral students. Whereas the specific requirements will vary from field to field and according to the student’s professional objective, the plan of study must provide for mastery of techniques of research that not only are appropriate to the particular field of study but also will help prepare prospective holders of the doctorate to continue their intellectual and professional growth.

Plan of Study
A plan of study for the doctoral degree must be outlined by the student and the advisory/dissertation committee at the earliest possible time following admission of the student to The Graduate School, preferably at
the end of the first semester of residence or not later than the completion of 18 credit hours. The plan must indicate the following:

- Major and minor fields of study.
- Specific courses the student is expected to complete as a minimum requirement.
- All specific core, seminar, language, and research requirements of the major department.
- No more than one quarter of the coursework credited to the degree, exclusive of the dissertation, at the 500 level.
- No more than 15 credit hours of independent study, exclusive of the dissertation. (See additional requirements above in order to pursue Independent Study.)
- No credit evaluated as B- (2.7) or less. All courses applied toward the degree must be B (3.0) or better, and additional hours must be taken for any hours earned with a grade of B- (2.7) or less.
- Credit earned for STA 667 Statistical Counseling is not applicable to a graduate plan of study.

A record of all graduate work the student has taken must accompany the proposed program. It is at this time that the advisory/dissertation committee evaluates the student’s qualifications to be recommended for further study in The Graduate School, further preparation for such study, or withdrawal. The committee may propose prerequisite coursework to be taken if it believes the student shows weaknesses that might be corrected by additional formal study.

The plan of study must be submitted to the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School for approval. The Vice Provost reserves the right to refer any or all plans of study to the Graduate Studies Committee for review and recommendation.

Copies of the approved plan of study must be filed in the student’s permanent folder in The Graduate School, in the department’s files, with the chair and each member of the advisory/dissertation committee, and with the student. Any subsequent changes in the plan of study or in the subject of the dissertation must be submitted to The Graduate School for approval.

Language Requirement
Each candidate for the doctorate must show either a satisfactory reading knowledge of at least one modern foreign language relevant to the student’s major area of study, or, where approved, a satisfactory mastery of research skills at an appropriate level of competence.

The language or languages used to satisfy a language requirement must be approved by the student’s major advisor. French, German, and Spanish are most frequently used.

The language requirements must be passed prior to the preliminary examinations, and prior to admission to candidacy.

A student whose native tongue is a language other than English may use English, but not the native language, to satisfy a language requirement. When English is offered, the examination will be administered by the Department of English or by the student’s major department in consultation with the Department of English. A statement certifying the candidate’s proficiency in English must be filed in The Graduate School before the preliminary examinations may be taken.

Residence Requirement
Doctoral students are expected to satisfy a residence requirement, which provides them the opportunity for an extended period of intensive study and intellectual and professional development among a community of scholars.

The basic requirement is two consecutive semesters (minimum of 6 hours per semester) of graduate coursework (excluding independent study and dissertation hours) on this campus after admission to a doctoral program. Spring and fall may be considered consecutive semesters if summer courses are not regularly available in the program. The two sessions of summer school count as one semester. Undergraduate courses taken in support of a graduate program cannot count towards residence.

Residence Requirement - Online Doctoral Programs
The minimal residency requirement for online professional/practice doctoral programs will be met when students make a minimum of three required visits to campus as part of their graduate program:

- To participate in an orientation program prior to coursework to foster a sense of community with their peers and faculty, and to gain knowledge of UNCG resources available to them;
- Upon completion of coursework, to participate in written and oral comprehensive examinations, in discussion regarding the dissertation proposal with faculty, and in observation of a dissertation defense; and
- To participate in their dissertation defense at the culmination of the program.

Time Limits for Doctoral Degrees
Advanced degrees awarded from UNCG indicate that our students have current, usable knowledge in their field; therefore, all requirements for the doctorate, including the dissertation, must be completed within seven academic years. Post-master’s (or equivalent) credit that is to be applied to the student’s doctoral program must be no more than seven years old when the degree requirements are completed. This means that all coursework to be credited to the student’s doctoral program must fall within a seven-year period of time beginning with the date the first courses carrying graduate degree credit applicable to the student’s program are begun. If credit to be transferred was earned before enrollment at this University, the seven-year period of time commences with the beginning date of the term in which the transfer credit was earned.

The seven-year time limit does not apply to students who are admitted directly to a doctoral program upon completion of the baccalaureate. In this case, the time limit is ten years.

Transfer Credit for Doctoral Degrees
In some instances, work done in other institutions may be counted toward the degree, particularly work culminating in a master’s degree from a regionally accredited institution and representing an appropriate area of study. If the student proposes the transfer of credit from another graduate school, the work for which credit was received must be covered by the preliminary examination, and the transfer must be recommended by the student’s advisory/dissertation committee before The Graduate School will credit the work to the student’s doctoral program. A maximum of one-third of non-dissertation course credit hours beyond the master’s degree may be transferred to a doctoral program.

The following conditions apply to transfer credit for doctoral program:

- All credit offered in transfer must have been taken at an accredited graduate school.
• Such work must have been taken within the time limit described above.
• The student must have earned a grade of B (3.0) or better on all transfer credit. In a four-letter grading system, only credit earned with either of the top two grades is transferable.
• The credit must be recorded on an official transcript placed on file with The Graduate School.
• The credit must be approved by both the student's doctoral advisory/dissertation committee and the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School.
• The credit must be necessary to meet specific degree requirements.

Credit hours only, not grades, may be transferred from other institutions. Quarter-hours do not transfer as semester hours. A fraction of an hour of credit will not be transferred. See sample below:

- 2 quarter hours transfer as 1 semester hour.
- 3-4 quarter hours transfer as 2 semester hours.
- 5 quarter hours transfer as 3 semester hours.
- 6-7 quarter hours transfer as 4 semester hours.
- 8 quarter hours transfer as 5 semester hours.
- 9-10 quarter hours transfer as 6 semester hours.

Students must secure approval from their doctoral advisory/dissertation committee and the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School in advance of registration at other universities. In general, however, not less than two-thirds of the total non-dissertation credit hours of doctoral degrees must be completed in residence courses at UNCG.

In order to ensure that the courses fall within the time limit permitted, the transfer credit will be accepted finally and posted to the transcript only at the time of completion of the degree requirements.

Preliminary Examination
When a student has removed any provisions or special conditions that may have been attached to admission, completed a minimum of 75% of the coursework contained in the program of study, passed any foreign language requirements, and completed the research skill requirements, that student is then eligible to take the preliminary examination. Individual departments may have additional requirements. Each doctoral student is required to pass the doctoral preliminary examination, which consists of both a written and oral examination. The written part is scheduled and prepared by the dissertation advisor with the assistance of the advisory/dissertation committee. The questions may cover any aspect of the coursework taken by the student during the period of this graduate study or any subject logically related and basic to an understanding of the subject matter of the major and minor areas of study. Any transferred coursework is subject to examination at the time of the preliminary examination. The oral examination should be scheduled within one month following the written examination.

Unanimous approval is required for passing the preliminary examination. Approval may be conditional, however, upon the satisfactory completion of such additional work as may be required by the committee. However, if the student does not pass the preliminary examination, no more than one re-examination will be allowed. The re-examination will not be permitted during the semester in which the preliminary examination was failed. If the student fails to pass the re-examination, The Graduate School will send the student a letter of dismissal from the program.

The complete advisory/dissertation committee of at least four must participate in the holding of the preliminary oral examination.

Admission to Candidacy
When a student has completed all major and minor required courses, has passed the preliminary written and oral examinations, satisfied any language or skill requirements, and submitted a dissertation research outline that has been approved by his dissertation advisor and advisory/dissertation committee, that student may then make formal application in The Graduate School for admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree.

The Dissertation
The dissertation is the product of a thorough investigation of a basic and significant problem or question within the major area of study. An appropriate plan of research must be developed and executed by the student under the general guidance of the chair and the advisory/dissertation committee. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is required for research involving human subjects prior to acceptance of a dissertation based on such research.

The dissertation requirement is designed to develop the capacities of originality and generalization in the candidate. It should foster and attest to the development in the candidate of ability in scientific inquiry, understanding and mastery of the techniques of scholarship, and the art of exposition within the field of specialization. The advisory/dissertation committee, with such other professors as may be appointed by the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School, shall examine the dissertation. No dissertation shall be accepted unless it secures unanimous approval of the advisory/dissertation committee.

It is expected that the dissertation will serve to demonstrate the student's ability to contribute to the development of research or scholarship within the discipline. As such, The Graduate School must be certain that the dissertation is a demonstration of the student's ability to identify a problem, develop a methodology, carry out the necessary steps to gather data, analyze the findings, and form a defensible conclusion.

In the case of non-traditional dissertations that may contain chapters or sections with multiple authors, it is necessary to clarify the contribution of the dissertating student and others who may contribute to the dissertation. In situations where there may be multiple authors, it is the responsibility of the advisory/dissertation committee chair to identify the percentage of proposed work to be developed by each of the contributors and submit it to The Graduate School for approval. This must be done at the proposal stage and again at final defense if the original plan has been revised.

It is expected that the dissertating student will be identified as the primary author of each of the chapters. The introduction to the dissertation must be solely authored by the dissertating student and must contain the theoretical framework that unifies the chapters that follow. The dissertating student also must be the sole author of the concluding chapter in which the significance of the various articles is explained. It is also expected that within the dissertation, appropriate attribution will be given to the other authors who contribute to the chapters.

Students file the dissertation electronically via the online submission system available on The Graduate School's website. In final form, the dissertation must comply with the rules prescribed by the Graduate Studies Committee in the Guide for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations. The approved electronic submission must be uploaded by the deadline dates as specified in the Academic Calendar.
Publication of the dissertation by UMI Dissertation Publishing/ProQuest Information and Learning is required by The Graduate School for all programs except the DNP. There is no charge for traditional publishing. However, optional services requested by the candidate during submission may have associated charges.

The process for submitting the dissertation to The Graduate School has two components: submitting the signed approval copy and submitting the final copy. The specific instructions and deadline dates affiliated with each step are available in the Guide and the Academic Calendar.

Dissertation hours vary according to the program but are never less than 12 semester hours, normally taken in units of three semester hours. For a complete explanation of requirements affecting dissertation registration, see the Policy on Continuous Enrollment.

**Oral Defense**

The doctoral candidate who has successfully completed all other requirements for the degree must defend the dissertation orally. The defense will be scheduled by the chair of the advisory/dissertation committee in consultation with the other committee members. The Graduate School will publish the dissertation title, date, time and location of the oral defense at least two weeks prior to the defense. The defense is open to all members of the University community who may wish to attend, as required by state laws on public meetings. The oral defense is administered by the advisory/dissertation committee according to program guidelines. The defense is largely related to the dissertation field of study including courses taken here and elsewhere. Approval of the defense must be attested to by all members of the advisory/dissertation committee. The results of the defense are to be reported in writing to the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School.