

**Graduate Policy Committee**  
**March 5, 2009**  
**10:00 a.m., MH 243**

**AGENDA**

- 1) Welcome and call to order
- 2) Approval of the minutes from 02/19/2009
- 3) Procedure discussion: 4000 level pre-requisites to be listed in pre-reqs box of audit
- 4) Time limit for grade changes - include in graduate catalog
- 5) Continuous thesis/dissertation research enrollment policy - consider exceptions
- 6) Candidacy: timing and portfolio
- 7) Review of graduate certificate program policies
- 8) Other policies to address at future meetings
- 9) Adjournment

# Grade System

The university uses an alphabetic system to identify student grades and other actions regarding student progress or class attendance. This system, with a grade point equivalent per semester hour, is as follows:

## Other Actions

- I Incomplete
- N No grade reported by instructor
- R\* (followed by grade) Repeated course (Grade Forgiveness)
- S Satisfactory (with credit)/Satisfactory Progress (Research, Thesis, or Dissertation)
- T\* (followed by grade) Subsequently repeated (no credit)
- U Unsatisfactory (no credit)
- W Withdrawn
- WF Withdrawn Failing
- WH Health Form Withdrawal
- WM Medical Withdrawal
- WP Withdrawn Passing
- X Audit (no credit)

\* "R" and "T" actions only apply to undergraduates.

The designation of "N" will be temporarily assigned by the Registrar's Office only in the case when a grade has not been submitted by the faculty by the "grades due" deadline. The designator will be replaced by the earned letter grade at the earliest opportunity in the semester that immediately follows. The "N" designator may not be assigned by faculty.

Grade changes other than medical withdrawals will be considered only during the semester immediately following the one in which the grade was assigned, except that grades assigned during the Spring semester may be changed during either the following Summer term or Fall semester. A change in grade must be approved by the dean of the college or school. A grade will not be changed after a degree has been conferred.

## **Incomplete Grades**

A grade of "I" (incomplete) is assigned by the instructor when a student is unable to complete a course due to extenuating circumstances, and when all requirements can clearly be completed in a short time following the close of regular classes. In all circumstances where an "I" grade is received, the student and faculty member must complete an agreement form that specifies how and when the incomplete grade will be made up. This agreement form is submitted with the instructor grade rolls at the end of the semester, and a copy of this agreement is given to the college for further follow-up. For those students on financial assistance such as loans, the incomplete (I) must be made up by the agreement date. Failure to complete course requirements by that date may, at the discretion of the instructor, result in the assignment of an "F" grade, or a "U" grade for thesis, dissertation, or research report hours. It is the student's responsibility to arrange with the instructor for the changing of the "I" grade.

Grades of "I" must be resolved within one calendar year or prior to graduation, whichever comes first. Incompletes in regular course work left unresolved will be changed to "F" if not changed in the allowed time period, and this time period may be sooner for those receiving financial assistance. A student may register for a course in which an "I" was received, but no repeat "R" action will be made on the permanent record. The exception to this is enrollment in thesis (XXX 6971) and dissertation (XXX 7980) hours where the incomplete grade will be allowed to continue until graduation. Incomplete grades cannot be used on the program of study. Students cannot receive an incomplete grade while supported on a UCF fellowship and continue to receive the fellowship. Grade changes will not be processed after a student has graduated.

Type of Change		Normal deadline	Policy petition deadlines
Withdrawal	standard withdrawal	by term withdrawal deadline (~mid-term)	
	medical withdrawal		application within 6 months from end of W term (noted in policy; recorded as WM; refunds tuition)
	late withdrawal		<b>2 yr late withdrawal (noted on the form)</b> (recorded as WP or WF)
"Drop"		by official course drop deadline (within first week of classes)	petition within 6 months of end of term affected (with all supporting documents) (deadline noted on the form) (exten circumstances: sickness, death, military, admin error)
"Add"		by official course drop deadline (within first week of classes)	petition within <b>3 weeks?</b> of beginning of classes (deadline noted on the form) includes "swaps" (combined add/drop)
Grade change	degree conferred	not allowed	petition submitted 45 days after degree conferral until graduation, if justified
	no degree conferred	by next major semester	
	Incomplete resolution	the earlier of: within 1 calendar year of term end; OR prior to graduation	

# UCF Graduate Certificate Program Policies

Current Policy: 2008-2009

## Overview

Graduate certificate programs are a way for universities to provide the latest disciplinary knowledge in the most flexible and convenient formats for the professional development of its alums and others who desire further education. Graduate certificate programs are very popular options at UCF for graduate study without having to commit to an existing master's or doctoral program. One of the benefits of enrolling in a graduate certificate program is that later, should students decide to do so, they can usually apply all of the credits earned in the graduate certificate to a graduate program. The graduate certificate program is meant to be flexible and offer a short-term of study that provides specialized knowledge that supplements an existing degree. Graduate certificate programs are particularly helpful to those professions where licensure and continuing professional development are required. Many of our graduate certificate programs are offered online for convenience. One of the most important benefits of our graduate certificate programs is that they are taught by our graduate faculty using regular graduate courses at the university.

UCF has over 70 graduate certificate programs available to supplement existing graduate programs or to provide specialized knowledge in disciplines that complement the education of working professionals in the metropolitan area served by UCF. Many of our area employees have advanced graduate degrees and can enhance their education with specialized groups of courses. Frequently, a package of specialized courses that forms a certificate will increase employment credentials, lead to career enhancement, and produce more income.

It is the intent of these programs to be current and to provide specialized, state-of-the-art content to area employees. Often certificate programs are offered using flexible and nontraditional delivery systems that provide the best service to the employees in this metropolitan area. Distributed learning, weekend courses, evening courses, and accelerated term courses are acceptable.



Certificate programs are often ideal for nondegree students who would like to sample graduate courses before committing to a graduate degree program. Certificate programs may round out a graduate degree program, providing a special emphasis that supplements a graduate degree. Frequently, a certificate program can provide an interdisciplinary focus that provides more depth and understanding to an existing graduate program.

Any academic unit may propose a graduate certificate program that encompasses graduate courses in its graduate program. If an interdisciplinary certificate program is proposed, it must be

acceptable to departments and faculty offering the courses and graduate programs on which the certificate program is based.

## Certificate Program Admission Requirements

Students currently admitted to a graduate degree program or to nondegree status can apply and are eligible to enroll in graduate certificate programs. In addition, individuals who have previously completed bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees are eligible to enroll in certificate programs. In order to apply to a graduate certificate program, a student must submit an online admissions application, pay a \$30 application fee, and submit an official transcript showing an earned bachelor's or higher degree from a regionally accredited or recognized foreign institution. On the online application, the student must designate the certificate program that he/she wishes to enter. Students are required to submit the application and obtain formal admission to the graduate certificate program by the end of add/drop period in the semester in which the student registers for the final course in the certificate program.

Admission to a certificate program does not guarantee admission to a graduate program. However, once a person is accepted into a  master's, specialist or doctoral graduate program, credits from a completed UCF certificate program may be applied toward an existing graduate program with the consent of the program.  Nondegree students who are enrolled in a certificate program are not eligible for tuition support, assistantships, fellowships, or federal financial aid. Students are advised to apply for the graduate certificate program well in advance of completion of all required courses; formal admission is required by the end of add/drop period in the semester in which the student registers for the final course in the certificate program.

Students must complete the certificate requirements listed in the Graduate Catalog at the time of their formal admission to the certificate program.

## Course Requirements and Loads

A certificate program must include a minimum of nine semester hours. The course work must consist of an integrated and organized sequence of study; course substitutions are not permitted.

No internship or independent study courses may be used in a certificate program. The use of practicum courses in certificate programs is not generally encouraged, but may be used in programs where there is a strong professional setting and on-campus faculty supervision. Alternative delivery programs are acceptable and encouraged.

A course may not apply toward more than one certificate program. Certificate students must take the full number of required hours. If an overlap of course work occurs between two or more certificate programs for the same student, the student must complete the total required hours by taking electives approved by the program.

All courses that are offered as part of a certificate program must be graduate-level courses. Students must earn course grades of "B-" or better to get credit toward the certificate. Courses


may be retaken to achieve a better grade. However, the certificate will only be awarded if the graduate status GPA in the certificate program of study is 3.0 or higher.

## Applicable Credits

### Transfer of Credit

No graduate credit hours taken at other institutions can be applied to a graduate certificate program at UCF. If requested prior to the completion of the certificate program requirements, graduate credit hours taken at UCF from a prior baccalaureate, master's, specialist, or doctoral degree may be applied toward a certificate, with the consent of the program, provided they are no more than three years old. The request for using credits from prior years must be submitted no later than the end of the add/drop period in the semester in which the student takes the final course in the certificate program.

### Recency of Credit

 The student has three years from the date of admission to the certificate program to complete the certificate. In addition, no course older than three years at the time of completion may be used.

### Completion of Graduate Certificate

In order to be processed for completion of a graduate certificate program, students must obtain formal admission into the graduate certificate program by the end of the add/drop period in the semester in which the student registers for the final course in the certificate program (see Certificate Program Admission Requirements above). In addition, students nearing completion of a graduate certificate program must file an application for completion ([Graduate Certificate Completion Form](#)) with the office that offers the program. The Graduate Certificate Completion form should be filed by the time that the student is registering for the final course in the certificate program, and such forms must be filed no later than the end of the semester in which the student enrolls in the last course required for the certificate program.

The [Graduate Certificate Completion Form](#) should be submitted to the department office that offers the graduate certificate program so that the required courses can be listed and final grades can be verified. The certificate program director's approval signature signifies that requirements have been met according to the program of study and university policies. A college review and approval signature is required before the completion form is submitted to the UCF College of Graduate Studies for final verification, processing, and release of the certificate. Students will only be processed for completion of a graduate certificate if they have previously submitted a certificate application form, have been formally admitted to the program, and have filed a Graduate Certificate Completion form. Students must be enrolled in the semester in which the Graduate Certificate Completion is submitted.

# UCF Graduate Program Requirements

Policy: 09-3

## Master's Program Policies

### Program Requirements

The program requirements for a master's degree may include core and elective courses, seminars, independent study, directed research, and thesis research.

- A minimum of 30 semester hours of post-baccalaureate, graduate work (5000-level or higher) is required and must be taken as part of an approved graduate program of study. Some programs require more than the minimum of 30 hours because of the nature of the discipline and the standards of the associated profession.
- At least half of the credit hours used to meet program requirements must be at the 6000 level.
- Only graduate-level work with a grade of "C-" or higher may be used to satisfy degree requirements.
- For the master's degree, at least 24 semester hours of core and elective courses must be earned exclusive of thesis and research.
- In no case will the number of thesis hours in excess of the amount required by a program be counted toward degree completion.
- At least 50 percent of the credits offered for the degree must be in a single field of concentration.
- A research report, capstone course, comprehensive exam, or other culminating experience that demonstrates that graduate students have engaged in independent learning is required in a nonthesis option master's program. An explanation of how the culminating experience promotes independent learning is required in each program's curricular description.

### Independent Study Hours

Independent study (XXX 6908) may be taken for a total of no more than six semester hours.

### Thesis Enrollment Requirement

After completion of regular core and elective courses, Master's level students may be considered full-time if they enrolled for at least three semester credit hours of thesis each semester



continuously (including summers) and until successful defense and graduation. This requirement does not negate other regulations regarding full-time enrollment or the requirement that all graduate students be enrolled in the term in which they graduate. (See Registration in Term of Graduation in the *Graduate Catalog*.) Students who wish to enroll in part-time hours should consult their adviser.

## **Doctoral Program Policies**

The primary objective of doctoral study is to educate students to a point of excellence in conducting, disseminating, and applying scholarly research, with the explicit goal of making original, substantive contributions to their degree discipline. The advanced nature of doctoral education requires student participation, debate, evaluation, and discussion of diverse ideas and approaches. Careful analysis, independent research, and greater understanding and application of ideas are also expected.

## **Program Requirements**

The doctoral degree program requirements will consist of core and elective courses, seminars, directed and doctoral research, independent study, and dissertation research.

- Each doctoral program of study will include a minimum of 72 semester hours of graduate credit beyond the baccalaureate degree or a minimum of 42 semester hours of graduate credit beyond the master's degree; these graduate credits must be taken as part of an approved graduate program of study. Some programs require considerably more than the minimum of 72 hours because of the nature of the discipline and the standards of the associated profession.
- All graduate credit in a doctoral program must be at 5000 level or higher.
- At least one-half of the credit hours used to meet program requirements must be in 6000-level or 7000-level courses, including the allowed number of research and dissertation hours.
- Only graduate level credit with a grade of "C-" or higher may be used to satisfy degree requirements.
- A university-wide minimum of at least 27 hours of formal coursework exclusive of Independent Study (XXX 6908) is required for all doctoral programs; some programs require a greater number of formal coursework hours.
- A university-wide minimum of at least 15 hours of dissertation credits is required for all doctoral programs, although some programs require a greater number of dissertation hours. In no case will the number of dissertation hours in excess of the amount required by a program be counted toward degree completion.

## **Candidacy**

### **Admission to Candidacy**

A student must demonstrate his or her readiness for the Ph.D. program by successfully completing the candidacy examination before admission to full doctoral status and enrollment into dissertation hours. The Candidacy Examination should be taken when the student is nearing the end of coursework. The exam is administered by the members of the student's dissertation advisory committee or another appropriate committee appointed by the program. External committee members of the dissertation advisory committee are not appointed until after the

student has passed the Candidacy exam. The admission to candidacy will be approved by the program director and the college coordinator and forwarded to the UCF College of Graduate Studies for status change. Only after admission to candidacy may a student register for doctoral dissertation hours (XXX 7980).

Doctoral students admitted to candidacy are expected to enroll in dissertation hours and to devote full-time effort to conducting their dissertation research and writing the required dissertation document. Students in doctoral candidacy must continuously enroll in at least three hours of dissertation course work (XXX 7980) each semester (including summer) until the dissertation is completed.

### **Candidacy Examination**

The purpose of the Candidacy Examination is for the student to demonstrate a strong foundation of knowledge within the specific discipline, and the ability and preparation to conduct independent scholarly research. The committee may examine a broad range of appropriate capabilities, including theory, bibliography, research methodology, and the evaluation of preliminary research, when appropriate. The examination must have a written component; it also may include an oral defense of a written report or dissertation proposal. All written examination materials will be kept in the student's file in the program.

### **Dissertation Defense**

The dissertation defense is an oral presentation and defense of the written dissertation describing the student's research. The advisory committee will evaluate and judge the dissertation defense. Successful students must demonstrate that they are able to conduct and report original independent research that contributes substantially to the discipline in which they study.

## Withdrawal Policy

Withdrawal for each term begins after "Late Registration and Add/Drop" ends. Students may withdraw from a class and receive the notation of "W" until the date noted in the "Academic Calendar" of the *Schedule Web Guide*. A student may withdraw from courses using myUCF at <https://my.ucf.edu>, or by visiting the Registrar's Office (Millican Hall 161), certain college advising offices, or a Regional Campus records office. Students may withdraw by fax at 407-823-5652. Faxed requests must be received by 5:00 p.m. on the last day to withdraw and must include the student's identification number, the course(s) to be dropped, and the student's signature. Students also may send a written request to the Registrar's Office by mail (to P.O. Box 160114, Orlando, FL 32816-0114). This letter must be time-stamped or postmarked before the published withdrawal deadline and must include the student's identification number, the course(s) to be dropped, and the student's signature. Students seeking to withdraw in person must sign the request and must provide photo identification. The official date of withdrawal is the date the university receives the withdrawal request. Requests received by mail are processed using the postmark as the official date of withdrawal.

Withdrawing from classes may have financial aid, NCAA eligibility, or international Visa consequences. Students should seek appropriate advisement prior to withdrawing from a class.

A student is not automatically withdrawn from a class for not attending, nor can an instructor withdraw a student from a class. Upon request the instructor will provide the student with an assessment of the student's performance in the course prior to the last day of withdrawal.

No withdrawal is permitted after the deadline except in extraordinary circumstances such as serious medical problems. Unsatisfactory academic performance is not an acceptable reason for withdrawal after the deadline. Students seeking to petition for a late withdrawal should consult the College of Graduate Studies (MH 230). At the time of the request, the College of Graduate Studies will ascertain from the instructor whether the student was passing or failing the course. If the student was passing, a "WP" will be recorded on the student's permanent record; if failing, a "WF" will be entered. Medical and late withdrawals normally are for all courses taken in the semester.

Students who seek late withdrawal because they are ill must apply for the withdrawal within six months of the term from which the withdrawal is sought. Students seeking a late withdrawal because of medical conditions must follow the medical withdrawal procedure. The student's physician provides the university with the appropriate medical information, using the forms available in the Office of Academic Services. A medical withdrawal must be for all classes in the term.

If a medical withdrawal is approved, a "WM" will be recorded for each course. Students who receive a medical withdrawal may be placed on hold until the university can determine that the student is ready to return. If a medical withdrawal is not approved, the request may be approved as a late withdrawal and grades of "WP" or "WF" will be recorded. A grade of "WF" will affect the calculation of the student's grade point average.

Following the close of Late Registration and Add/Drop each term, students withdrawing from courses will incur both grade and fee liability. Students with circumstances determined by the university to be exceptional and beyond their control may apply for a cancellation of enrollment and the elimination of fee liability. Exceptional circumstances include, but are not limited to sickness, death, involuntary call to military service, or administrative errors created by the University. Students must submit a petition and all supporting documentation for a late Drop of courses to the College of Graduate Studies (Millican Hall 230; 407-823-2766) within six months of the end of the semester for which the late Drop is sought.

If a student withdraws from a course while an alleged academically dishonest act is under consideration, and the case is not subsequently resolved in favor of the student, the university reserves the right to assign the appropriate grade for the course.