

GRADUATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Graduate students have higher expectations placed upon them than undergraduate students. These expectations are in the areas of scholarship, participation, leadership, and integrity. Graduate coursework is designed to advance students personally and professionally and produce scholars, researchers, and practitioners educationally empowered as critical thinking citizens and agents of innovation, opportunity, and change.

For more information on policies and procedures concerning graduate study at CMU, please refer to the [Graduate Policies and Procedure Manual](#).

Graduate Degree Requirements

Credits in a master's degree program should be designated minimally at the 500 level. The student's Graduate Advisor, in consultation with the student's Graduate Committee or Graduate Program Director/Coordinator, should approve all courses applied to graduation requirements.

Up to nine credit hours of course work completed as a non-degree student may be credited subsequently to a degree program with the approval of the Graduate Program Director/Coordinator in consultation with the student's Graduate Advisor and the program's Graduate Committee.

Note: Upon prior written permission of the instructor, the academic advisor, and the department head, a currently enrolled undergraduate student may take up to six 500-level graduate credit hours and apply them to an undergraduate degree in addition to a graduate degree.

Doctoral Degree Requirements

A minimum of 60 credit hours is required for doctoral degrees. Additional graduate hours may be required as specified by individual programs.

The doctoral degree requires a culminating activity in the form of a dissertation, practicum, research project, or capstone experience. In addition, some programs require a qualifying examination for advancement to candidacy approximately midway through the program and may require an oral defense at the completion of the program. Refer to academic departments for specific culminating degree requirements or to find out if a qualifying examination is necessary.

Doctoral programs also require a formal paper and oral presentation in defense of the culminating activity. In the case of programs requiring a qualifying examination, eligibility to take the exam is determined by the Program Director/Coordinator, based on the completion of program specific policies. Examinations are graded as Pass/Fail as determined by members of the student's Graduate Committee. The result of the exam are forwarded to the Director of Graduate Studies.

Other criteria and requirements for doctoral programs may exist. Refer to specific guidelines for each graduate program.

Doctoral coursework should be a learning experience for both the student and the faculty member. The nature of doctoral coursework is to expand the boundaries of known knowledge and to create and explore new ideas, processes, artistic endeavors, or other scholarly works that engage members of the discipline. In this process of exploration, the doctoral student is expected to engage in a scholarly project in their field or

conduct research that contributes to existing bodies of knowledge at a professional level. This effort should include taking what the student knows, incorporating new material and ideas, and advancing the field. Students should produce scholarly works acceptable to the professional communities in their fields as a result of doctoral coursework and other requirements.

Masters Degree Requirements

A minimum of 30 credit hours is required for master's degrees. Additional graduate hours may be required as specified by individual programs.

In 3+2 (or similar) programs, credit used for the graduate portion of the program, should minimally be at the 500 level.

Master's degrees require a culminating activity(ies) in the form of a thesis, practicum, research project, capstone experience and/or comprehensive exam. In addition, some programs require a qualifying examination for advancement to candidacy approximately midway through the program and may require an oral defense at the termination of the program. Refer to academic departments for specific culminating activity requirements.

Coursework progressing toward the master's degree should illustrate students' commitment toward mastery of a subject beyond the level expected of an undergraduate student. This mastery should be evidenced in the student's attendance, participation in discussions, mentoring of others, research quality, and general interactivity within their field of study. Students in a master's program should be able to assess the quality of research articles in their field, interpret analyses of data, and evaluate the validity of arguments from a variety of sources. In addition, writing at the master's level should be noticeably advanced compared to that of the undergraduate level. These advances should take the form of engaging the body of literature on a topic, scholarly writing to include literature reviews, appropriate formatting, and extensive analysis of sources of information. As a result of master's coursework, students should possess the ability to explore, manage and converse regarding information in the field with the integrity necessary for consistency with other professional peers.

Graduate Certificate Requirements

Graduate certificates contain a minimum of 6 credit hours.

Graduate certificate programs may be embedded within graduate degree programs, but such certificates are not automatically awarded upon the completion of a graduate degree. Students must apply to have the certificate awarded.

Graduate certificates are not required to address all graduate-level student learning outcomes, but are required to address some of the institutionally established outcomes.

Dual-listed Courses

Undergraduate courses may not be taken for graduate credit. Within undergraduate courses that are dual-listed (for example 460/560), the graduate student is expected to perform at a higher level and complete more extensive and challenging academic work than the undergraduates in the same course.

Note: At least 70 percent of a student's master's degree program must be in courses that are at the 500 level and not dual listed. All courses in the doctoral program must be at the 500 level or above.

Grades

Grades of "A," "B," "C," "D," and "F" are used and computed in the GPA. Other marks used are "I" (incomplete); "W," (withdrawn); "NC," (no credit); and "P" (passing). At the discretion of graduate programs, Pass/Fail (or "P/F") grades may be allowed for research, practicum, and thesis courses. Grades of "I," "W," "NC," and "P" are not counted in determining GPA. Courses for which "C," "D," "F," "I," "W," or "NC" grades are awarded shall not count in graduate degree programs and shall not satisfy program deficiency requirements.

Incomplete ("I") grades are temporary grades given to a student only in an emergency case and at the discretion of the instructor.

At the end of the semester following the one in which an "I" is given, the "I" becomes the grade that is submitted by the instructor to the Registrar's Office. If the instructor does not submit a grade by the deadline for that semester, the grade becomes an "F." For example, a grade of "I" given spring semester should be addressed by the end of the following fall term unless a longer term is specified by the instructor.

Extension of the time to complete work may be made in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the instructor. A student with an "I" grade, however, may not change the "I" by enrolling in the same course another semester, except in the case of thesis and dissertation courses, which require continuous enrollment while progressing toward the degree. Grades can be changed, using the Special Grade Report, within the first two weeks of the semester following the receipt of the original grade by the Registrar's Office.

GPA Requirement

Students must have a GPA at least a 3.0 to graduate.

Students may not apply coursework with a grade of "C" toward graduation requirements for a graduate program. Students may have the option to repeat a course for grade improvement to a "B" or better, depending on individual program guidelines.

As allowed by specific program requirements, students may repeat a maximum of two different courses at the graduate level for up to 6 credit hours. No course may be repeated more than once, except in the case of thesis and dissertation courses, which require continuous enrollment while progressing toward the degree. When a course is repeated, the highest grade earned is computed into the student's GPA. All attempted courses and grades remain in the academic record but are not computed in the overall average. In these cases, transcripts will contain a statement indicating the grade point average has been re-computed and stating the basis for re-computation.

Students with a cumulative grade point average of less than 3.0 are placed on academic probation. Students have one semester to improve to good standing. Two semesters of probationary status may result in dismissal from the graduate program.

Transfer of Graduate Credit

Upon approval, up to 30% of the credit hours required for a graduate degree may be transferred from another accredited institution. Individual programs may have more stringent transfer limits. Please consult the individual program for specific limits.

Requests for credit to be transferred toward a graduate degree are reviewed by the appropriate program Graduate Admission Committee. Recommendations are then reviewed by the Department Head and sent

to the Registrar for review and documentation. The desired transferred credit should represent graduate-level work relevant to the degree being sought with course content and level of instruction resulting in student competencies at least equivalent to those of currently enrolled students at CMU as determined by the program's Graduate Admission Committee.

Dismissal from Program

Students may be dismissed from a degree program for the following reasons:

- The student earns a "D" or "F" in a course.
- The student is placed on probation for a second time.
- The student fails to maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA for two semesters.
- The student fails the written and/or oral comprehensive examination or its approved equivalent as specified by specific program requirements.
- The student submits an unsatisfactory thesis, practicum paper, or culminating activity.
- The student exceeds the time allowed for completion of the program prior to completing all degree requirements.
- The student has not maintained a "B" or better in all credit-bearing courses.
- The student violates the criteria or procedures in this manual or set forth by the department in its graduate handbook.
- The student fails to behave in a professional manner, this includes instances of academic misconduct.
- The student fails to make satisfactory progress on the remedial terms specified in a formal letter of probation.
- The student on probation for earning a "C" earns a "C" in a second course.
- The student is found to have committed research misconduct by the Office of Sponsored Programs. (see Section Section XII.)

Students are notified of their dismissal in a written letter from the Graduate Program Director/Coordinator after the director has consulted with the student's Graduate Committee and the Academic Department Head. The letter will specify the date and exact reason for dismissal and copy will be sent to the Director of Graduate Studies and the University Registrar. Appeals of dismissal follow the Appeals Process outlined in the [Graduate Policies and Procedure Manual](#)

Program Time Limits

Master's degree students have six calendar years from the date of first registration in a Colorado Mesa University graduate program to complete the program. At the end of the fifth year or after 10 semesters, the Graduate Program Director/Coordinator should notify students that they have one academic year or two semesters to complete their program requirements.

Doctoral students have 10 calendar years from the date of first registration in a Colorado Mesa University graduate program to complete the program. At the end of the eighth year or after 16 semesters, the Graduate Program Director/Coordinator should notify students that they have two academic years or four semesters to complete their program requirements.

Students may submit a written request for a time extension to their advisor and the Graduate Program Director/Coordinator, which should be

approved by the Academic Department Head and Director of Graduate Studies. Departments or programs may set shorter time requirements.