

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Academic Policies and Procedures for All Graduate Students

Course Numbering

Graduate courses are numbered at the 500 or 600 level. Some 500-level courses may be cross-listed with 400-level courses. Courses number 600 or higher are Graduate level only.

Grading

All grades earned will apply to the grade point average (GPA).

Grades of C- or below will not apply toward program completion.

A maximum of two C grades will apply toward program completion.

Academic Standing

Grade Point Average: A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 must be maintained throughout the program. If students falls below the minimum cumulative GPA, they will be placed on probation.

Academic Review: Review of academic standing occurs at the end of each term (Fall, Spring, and Summer).

Academic Probation: If students placed on academic probation raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 or higher, they will be returned to good Academic Standing. If not, they will be dismissed from the program. Probation letters will come from the Registrar's Office. The letter will be signed by the Registrar, the Dean, and the Graduate Coordinator.

Repeatability of Coursework: Students may repeat courses upon availability. The better grade will be the grade used in the cumulative GPA calculation.

Dismissal: Students may be dismissed for academic reasons upon recommendation and approval of the Dean. Students on academic probation who do not achieve the 3.0 minimum cumulative GPA during the next academic term will be dismissed from the Graduate program. Dismissal letters will come from the Registrar's Office. The letter will be signed by the Registrar, the Dean, and the Graduate Coordinator.

Readmission to the Graduate Program: Students may be readmitted to the Graduate program when approved by the Graduate Council or advisor. To be readmitted, students must meet all application requirements at the time of readmission specified for the program. The student must submit a Graduate Readmit Form.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals

If a Graduate student is identified as having a cumulative grade point average lower than 3.0, the Dean's Office will initiate protocols and procedures for appeal.

If the students fail to provide an acceptable explanation, the student may be dropped from the Graduate program. Then the students would have to reapply for admission to the University and into the Graduate program. Readmission to the Graduate program is not guaranteed.

The Department may exercise its discretion in determining whether to (a) allow the student's Graduate advisor to help them update the

student's Graduate degree completion plan, or (b) recommend the student complete an application for a Leave of Absence.

Graduation

The candidate must meet all SMSU program requirements as specified in the Academic Catalog in effect at the time that the Program Plan was approved by the Graduate Advisor of the degree program. The advisor and the Registrar will certify that all requirements have been met.

The candidate must file a Graduation Application for Graduate Students with the Registration and Records Office.

[See A-010, "Graduation" policy]

Websites

Each department offering a Graduate program maintains a website with the most current information on the program.

Elective Professional Development Courses/Non Degree Status/Microcredentialing/Adult Education (AE)

These courses will be assigned a specific number and do not fulfill SMSU Graduate degree requirements.

Academic Honesty

Graduate students will follow SMSU's Academic Honesty Policy (see A-032).

Non-Specified Policies

Anything not specified in these policies and procedures will be governed by university policies and procedures.

Recommended Contact Hours

A recommended number of contact hours per credit for lecture is 15:1 and 45:1 for practica. If there is a governing body that recommends something specific, that should be followed.

Transfer Credits and Petitions

A limited number of credits earned from another accredited institution may be accepted for credit toward a Graduate degree as SMSU.

Transfer Credits Allowed: The total number of transfer credits allowed is determined by each program. No more than nine (9) semester hours of credit may be transferred into a SMSU Graduate program. Exceptions include the Content Area Emphasis in the Masters of Education which allows the transfer of no more than eighteen (18) semester hours of credit from content courses recognized by a concurrent enrollment content area. There may be additional exceptions per articulation agreements.

Accredited Institutions: The transferring institution must be accredited for granting Graduate degrees.

Official Transcripts: An official transcript must be on file in the Graduate Office. The course credits required to graduate, including transfer credits, were earned within seven years from the date of the first graduate course applied to the graduate degree (See, "Statute of Limitations").

A Graduate transcript must include:

- Student's complete scholastic record
- Official seal of the granting institution
- Signature of the issuing officer

Petition Process

An official petition form, available on the SMSU website, must be submitted with the petition.

A course description (syllabus preferred) must be submitted with the petition.

Transfer credits must be approved by the appropriate SMSU instructor, Graduate department, and the Dean.

Upon petition, departments may approve additional transfer credits as long as it does not exceed the 9 credits.

International Transfer Credit

Course credits toward a Graduate degree may be transferred from those international institutions with which SMSU has entered into a formal transfer agreement.

Students who wish to transfer Graduate level credits to SMSU from accredited international universities must submit their transcripts to an approved foreign credential evaluation service.

Credits from other international institutions with Graduate degree programs but which SMSU has not entered into a formal transfer agreement, must be approved by the Department and Graduate Council, or the Department and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

All other transfer credit criteria apply.

Full-Time Status and Normal Load

Full-Time Graduate Course Load: Each program shall determine the number of credits required for a student to be classified as full time for purposes other than Financial Aid. For financial aid, a minimum of five graduate credits are needed for full-time status.

Graduate Student Maximum Load Limit

A Graduate student may enroll in a maximum of 12 credits per semester.

Students may apply to their Department for an exception to the maximum load limit in unique and specialized circumstances, for example: an upcoming enlistment in the U.S. military service.

If a student is granted an exception to the maximum load limit, the 3.0 (B) grade point average (GPA) still applies.

Overloads will not be granted when a student's grade point average (GPA) is below 3.0 (B).

Overload requests must be approved by the student's Advisor and either the Program Director or the Department Committee.

The auditing of graduate courses does not count in the student's maximum load limit.

Policy on Leave of Absence

Graduate students who have begun coursework in a University Graduate program may apply for a Leave of absence of one or more continuous semesters at the Office of the Registrar.

An application for a Medical Leave of Absence should be made before the beginning of the upcoming semester. Examples of a Medical Leave of Absence include, but are not limited to: the death of a family member requiring arrangements and/or estate/executor responsibilities, miscarriage or difficult birth requiring continuing medical and/or psychological intervention, or a life-threatening accident or illness for the graduate student or an immediate family member.

An application for a Military Leave of Absence should be made before the beginning of the upcoming semester. Examples of a Military Leave of Absence include, but are not limited to: deployment of a member of the US National Guard, enlistment, or draft into a branch of the US military service. In specific situations, such as an upcoming 18-month deployment, a Military Leave of Absence may be granted or extended.

Requests for leaves of absence other than medical or military will be referred to the Graduate Council for review and recommendation.

To resume Graduate studies after a leave of absence, the student must notify the Director of Graduate Office.

Statute of Limitations

Course Completion Requirements: The student must complete all course credits earned toward a Graduate degree within a seven-year period from the date of the first enrollment in an applicable graduate-level course, including any required comprehensive exams, Thesis paper, or required research project.

This seven-year time limit includes courses taken at other Graduate degree-granting institutions and transferred to SMSU for credit toward a Graduate degree.

Recourse/Remediation: If a Graduate degree is not completed within a seven-year time period, the following avenues of recourse/remediations may apply:

Course credits that have expired (are older than seven years) must be retaken for credit; this includes any transferred credits that are older than seven years.

In the case of compelling circumstances, such as an official leave of absence for medical causes from military service, refer to MN statute.

In the case of compelling circumstances, the student would request an extension through the appeal process when not meeting the seven-year completion timeline.

Graduate Grade Appeals Process

Graduate students are afforded the right to appeal grades awarded. SMSU's academic appeals process will apply to all graduate students and can be found at G-005 [link to]

Policy Notes

For specific policies of Departments with Graduate Programs refer to Graduate Department websites.

The Graduate Programs at SMSU are committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and education opportunities in compliance with all Minnesota State and Federal policies.

List of other policies to consider

Internships and Professional Practicum [A-008]

Graduation [A-010]

Commencement [A-011] - Graduate degrees are not mentioned.

Graduation with Honors [A-014]

Final Examination [A-023]

Student Advisement [A-024]