



# Graduate School

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

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## **Graduate School Policies and Procedures**

**Approved by Graduate Council April 3, 2013**  
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The Rules outlined below describe the *minimum* standards, policies and procedures for all Graduate Programs that are under the auspices of the Graduate School at the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus. ***Individual Graduate Programs, Departments, Schools or Colleges may adopt more, but not less stringent rules and requirements***, and it is requested that the Graduate School be informed about such adjustments.

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## **ARTICLE I: ORGANIZATION**

### **Section 1. Role of the Graduate School**

Graduate education is a central component of the Mission of the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus (CU Denver). The Graduate School is one of several schools within CU Denver, and is responsible for overseeing, facilitating and enhancing the educational experiences and opportunities for all graduate students, as well as encouraging excellence in research, creative and scholarly work.

In accordance with this mission, the Graduate School leadership, together with the Graduate Faculty, plans, develops, approves, evaluates and administers Graduate Degree Programs (PhD, EdD and Master's degree programs). The Graduate School also ensures that Graduate Programs comply with, or exceed, the Graduate School's standards of excellence and execute sound academic administration as established by the Rules and Policies of the Graduate School and adopted by the University Board of Regents and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. In particular, the Graduate School is charged with maintaining high standards and quality of both the Graduate Programs and the Graduate Faculty. Other functions of the Graduate School include:

- developing and fostering multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and innovative programs;
- promoting collaborations that create unique opportunities for student learning, research and discovery;
- promoting a supportive environment for the graduate student community;
- providing a voice for graduate education in the University's strategic planning and outreach; and
- publishing a current Graduate School Student Handbook on the Graduate School website.

### **Section 2. Graduate Programs within the CU Denver Graduate School**

Not all post-baccalaureate programs at CU Denver fall under the auspices of the Graduate School. Programs that offer "professional" degrees that are independently accredited are overseen by their respective School or College.

For those Graduate Programs that fall under the auspices of the Graduate School, the relevant administrative responsibilities are distributed between the central Graduate School office and the home School or College. Briefly, **the Graduate School is responsible for:**

1. ensuring that all programs abide by the Rules and Policies of the Graduate School;
2. programmatic approval and periodic review;
3. maintenance of records of approved graduate coursework and approval of substantial changes to existing graduate programs;
4. final approval of add/drop forms following initial approval by the course instructors;
5. final approval of grade changes following initial approval by the course instructor;
6. degree audits;
7. thesis formatting;
8. certification of graduates from Master's and Doctoral programs;
9. student appeals not resolved within their home School or College; and
10. special processing forms, such as extensions for time-to-degree and student terminations.

**Administrative responsibilities that lie within the Schools and Colleges include:**

daily oversight and administration of the program;

1. recruitment of matriculating students;
2. approval of graduate courses for those Schools and Colleges with in-house curriculum committees, with copies forwarded to the Graduate School to ensure consistent academic standards are being applied across Schools and Colleges. The Graduate School forwards the approved courses to the Registrar;
3. add/drop forms approved by the course instructors before submission to the Graduate School;
4. grade changes approved by the course instructor prior to submission to the Graduate School; and
5. similar administrative responsibilities.

The graduate training Programs that currently fall under the auspices of the Graduate School are listed below, along with their home academic units:

<b>College</b>	<b>Doctoral Degrees</b>	<b>Masters Degrees</b>	<b>Graduate Certificates</b>
<b>College of Architecture and Planning</b>	1. Design and Planning	1. Historic Preservation (MS) 2. Urban Design (MUD)	
<b>College of Arts and Media</b>	1. Bioengineering 2. Civil Engineering 3. Computer Science and Information Systems (offered jointly with the School of Business) 4. Engineering and Applied Sciences	1. Bioengineering (MS) 2. Civil Engineering (MS) 3. Computer Science (MS) 4. Electrical Engineering (MS) 5. Mechanical Engineering (MS) 6. Engineering (MEng)	
<b>College of Liberal Arts and Sciences</b>	1. Applied Mathematics 2. Health and Behavioral Sciences 3. Clinical Health Psychology 4. Integrative and Systems Biology	1. Anthropology (MA) 2. Applied Geography and Geospatial Science (MA) 3. Communication (MA) 4. Economics (MA) 5. English (MA) 6. History (MA) 7. Political Science (MA) 8. Psychology: Clinical (MA) 9. Sociology (MA) 10. Spanish (MA) 11. Applied Mathematics (MS) 12. Biology (MS) 13. Chemistry (MS) 14. Environmental Sciences (MS) 15. Integrated Sciences (MIS) 16. Humanities (MH) 17. Social Sciences (MSS)	
<b>College of Nursing</b>	1. Nursing		

<b>School of Business</b>	1. Computer Science and Information Systems (offered jointly with the College of Engineering and Applied Science)		
<b>School of Education and Human Development</b>	1. Education and Human Development (PhD) 2. Leadership for Educational Equity (EdD) 3. School Psychology (PsyD)		
<b>School of Medicine</b>	1. Cancer Biology 2. Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development 3. Clinical Science 4. Computational Bioscience 5. Human Medical Genetics and Genomics 6. Immunology 7. Integrated Physiology 8. Microbiology 9. Molecular Biology 10. Neuroscience 11. Pharmacology 12. Rehabilitation Science 13. Structural Biology and Biochemistry	1. Biomedical Science and Biotechnology (MS) 2. Clinical Science (MSCS) 3. Genetic Counseling (MS) 4. Modern Human Anatomy (MS) 5. Palliative Care	1. Clinical Translational Science 2. Assistive Technology Studies 3. Palliative Care
<b>School of Pharmacy</b>	1. Pharmaceutical Sciences 2. Toxicology		
<b>School Public Affairs</b>	1. Public Affairs	1. Criminal Justice (MCJ)	
<b>Colorado School of Public Health</b>	1. Biostatistics 2. Epidemiology 3. Health Services Research	1. Biostatistics (MS) 2. Epidemiology (MS) 3. Health Services Research, Policy and Administration (MS)	
<b>Graduate School</b>	1. Biomedical Sciences Program* 2. Medical Scientist Training Program (MD/PhD)*		

\* Entry umbrella programs that lead to admission into one of the PhD programs listed under the School of Medicine.

The following dual degree programs are offered by the Graduate School or in partnership with a professional graduate degree program:

Dual Degree Program	Participating Schools/Colleges
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Economics (MA) and Mathematics (MS)	MA and MS administered by the Graduate School
Economics (MA) and Finance (MS)	MA administered by the Graduate School; MS administered by the Business School
Political Science (MA) and Business Administration (MBA)	MA administered by the Graduate School; MBA administered by the Business School
Economics (MA) and Public Administration (MPA)	MA administered by Graduate School; MPA administered by the School of Public affairs

### **Section 3. Governance and Administration of the Graduate School**

The Graduate School at UC Denver is jointly administered by:

- the Dean of the Graduate School (hereafter referred to as the Dean),
- the Graduate Council,
- the Graduate Programs, and
- the Faculty of the Graduate School.

#### **i. Dean of the Graduate School**

The Dean of the Graduate School is the chief academic and administrative officer of the Graduate School, appointed by the Chancellors and reports directly to the Provost. The Dean is responsible for the application of the Rules and Policies of the Graduate School and the overall coordination and effectiveness of Graduate School Programs. Acting in conjunction with the Graduate Council, the Dean's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- ensuring compliance of all Graduate School Programs with standards for Graduate Faculty appointment, student admission, and graduation requirements;
- advancing, developing and promoting awareness of graduate education;
- overseeing substantial curriculum and curricular revisions of Graduate Programs, including the approval of new degree programs in consultation with the Graduate Council, and substantial course changes as appropriate;
- overseeing the periodic review of established Graduate Programs independently or in conjunction with accreditation processes;
- approving revisions to the Rules that update information, resolve ambiguities, promote clarity, or ensure compliance with mandates from the State or the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. The Dean will inform the Graduate Council of such actions;
- promoting cooperative relationships among Schools, Departments, and Programs; including interdisciplinary initiatives;
- working in collaboration with the Vice Chancellor of Research to ensure that graduate education at CU Denver is consistent with and supportive of the goals of the CU Denver Strategic Plan regarding research, education and creative work;
- enhancing and supporting a diverse campus through assistance in the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty and student body;
- providing academic support to Graduate Program Directors and Advisors;
- providing information on internal and external fellowships and grants available to support graduate students and providing training in the preparation of such applications;
- planning and monitoring the Graduate School budget, the allocation of resources and fundraising for the Graduate School;
- providing general oversight and supervision of all aspects of the Graduate School; and
- carrying out other duties as may be assigned by the Provost.

## **ii. Associate and Assistant Deans**

Associate and Assistant Deans support the mission of the Graduate School by overseeing two broad categories of graduate education: 1) Academic Affairs and 2) Admissions and Student Progression. Whereas, either an Associate or an Assistant Dean can fulfill each of these responsibilities, appointment to either position is based upon the individual's qualifications.

*The responsibilities of the Associate or Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs include, but are not limited to:*

- helping to develop interdisciplinary Graduate Programs and assisting in the development of new degree programs;
- building bridges between the Denver and the Anschutz campuses;
- introducing collaborative initiatives with local industry and bioscience companies;
- monitoring Graduate Faculty appointments;
- facilitating periodic Graduate Program reviews;
- identifying fellowships and providing assistance to students applying for them;
- overseeing career services and training by providing study and career counseling, training for Teaching Assistants, and organizing career days;
- coordinating outreach and pipeline activities with the Office(s) of Diversity and Inclusion; and
- carrying out other duties as may be assigned by the Dean.

*The responsibilities of the Graduate School officers for Admissions and Student Progression include, but are not limited to:*

- overseeing the admissions process by:
  - coordinating, with IT administrators, access to the on-line application system;
  - conducting the final admission approval for all students admitted to the Graduate School, including verification of all official admission documents, and where appropriate, verifying immunization records, processing background checks and authorizing student IDs;
- coordinating with the Registrar's Office(s) and the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) Office on graduate student issues;
- overseeing student progress by maintaining records of all stages of student progress, including:
  - monitoring compliance of Graduate School Rules regarding registration, time limits for completing exams, and degree completion;
  - checking and approving the Application for Candidacy and appropriate composition of all final, comprehensive examination and thesis defense committees;
  - reviewing final theses and dissertations for compliance to Graduate School standards and approval; and
  - authorizing students for graduation and representing the Graduate School on graduation planning committees;
- overseeing the Student Academic Honor and Conduct Code and Academic Grievance process; and
- carrying out other duties as assigned by the Dean.



### **iii. The Graduate Council and Related Committees**

#### **a. Graduate Council**

The Graduate Council advises the Dean on matters relating to development, coordination, and evaluation of Graduate School programs. The Graduate Council consists of the Dean (who serves as chair) and Graduate Faculty from the constituent Schools and Colleges. The faculty member(s) who represents a particular School or College on the Graduate Council is (are) appointed either by the Graduate Executive Committee of the School or College that they represent or by a process outlined in the bylaws of the School or College. All faculty members are appointed for three (3) year terms, unless agreed to otherwise by the Dean. The Council also includes one student representative from each campus appointed for one (1) year terms. Working in conjunction with the Dean, the Graduate Council develops its own procedural rules consistent with the Laws of the Regents and other Graduate School Rules. The Graduate Council convenes at least once per semester, and more often as necessary, to conduct business related to the interests of the Graduate School and the Graduate Programs. Two-thirds attendance by the Council membership will constitute a quorum.

The role of the Graduate Council is to assist the Graduate School in:

- reviewing and approving proposals for new graduate degree programs (including PhD, EdD, Masters and joint degrees);
- providing assistance in reviewing substantial modifications to existing Graduate Programs;
- assisting the Dean in academic and strategic planning for the Graduate School;
- approving changes to the Graduate School Rules with the exception of minor rule changes made by the Dean [as outlined above in Section 3 (i)];
- periodically reviewing the services provided by the Graduate School and making recommendations for changes;
- making recommendations to the Provost on appeals of decisions made by the Dean (the Dean shall be excused during these discussions); and
- carrying out other duties as may be assigned by the Dean.

The Council consists of the Dean, and

- 9-14 faculty representatives from the Denver and Anschutz Campuses, in approximate proportion to their students in Graduate School programs.
- 1 student representative from the Programs at the Denver Campus
- 1 student representative from the Programs at the Anschutz Medical Campus
- Graduate School Associate/Assistant Deans (non-voting, ex officio members)

#### **b. Academic Conduct and Appeals Committee (ACAC)**

The Graduate Council, in collaboration with the Dean, establishes a faculty committee known as the Academic Conduct and Appeals Committee (ACAC). The ACAC is convened to review cases of honor code misconduct or student academic grievances that have not been resolved by the graduate program or the School or College in which the graduate program resides. The ACAC will consider appeals as they occur and forward its recommendations to the Dean. The ACAC consists of at least three (3) Graduate Faculty members selected from multiple Schools or Colleges affiliated with the Graduate School. Cases investigating student conduct (including honor code violations) also include

student representation on the ACAC. The Dean will make appointments and re-appointments to the ACAC on a case-specific basis, as the need arises.

**c. Graduate Executive Committees (GEC)**

Each School or College with a Graduate Program within the Graduate School will constitute a Graduate Executive Committee (GEC), or charge an existing committee with similar responsibilities. In general, these committees consist of the Graduate Program Directors of all programs within the School or College that are affiliated with the Graduate School. Schools and Colleges are encouraged by the Graduate School to include student membership on GECs. The student members are excluded from discussions about individual faculty members or students. The Chair of each GEC is either a member of that committee or is chosen from senior faculty outside of the committee (a Department Chair would be an example). These committees constitute the working groups that deal with graduate education issues.

The specific duties of the School/College-specific GEC include, but are not limited to:

- developing and maintaining rules and policies specific to the Graduate Programs within their respective School or College.
  - Any specific rules adopted by the School or College must be at least equivalent to, and may not be less stringent, than the Rules, Policies and/or requirements of the CU Denver Graduate School. All School/College-specific rules must be compiled within a document readily available to faculty, staff and students and must be forwarded to the Graduate School;
- overseeing and reviewing issues related to curricula for the programs housed within the School or College (unless the School or College has a different faculty committee that evaluates graduate curricula);
- aiding in the development and review of proposals for new and existing Graduate Programs and courses, either within or offered jointly by their respective School or College. Such recommendations should be forwarded to the Graduate Dean and Graduate Council for approval; and
- establishing admission standards, academic program standards, procedures for examinations and requirements for theses in conjunction with their constituent graduate programs and in accordance with the Rules and Policies of the Graduate School.

**d. Graduate School Advisory Board (GSAB)/Budget Planning Council (BPC)**

The Dean may convene a "Graduate School Advisory Board" (GSAB) at his or her discretion to discuss Graduate School initiatives, policies, national trends impacting graduate education, and other issues for which the Dean requires a formalized means of receiving input and sharing ideas. The Dean will Chair the GSAB, the membership of which is comprised of one (1) representative from each School and College that houses Graduate Programs under the auspices of the Graduate School. Fifty percent attendance will constitute a quorum. Ideally, Board members will have leadership experience in graduate education within their respective Schools and Colleges, such as Associate Deans, or serve as members of the Schools and Colleges GECs. The GSAB, or a subset of its membership, will also serve as Graduate School's Budget Planning Council (BPC) when such work requires deliberations by the BPC.

#### **Section 4. Monitoring of the Graduate Faculty Appointments**

Appointments to the Graduate Faculty of the Graduate School are based on standards developed by the Graduate Council and approved by the Dean. An appointment to the faculty of the Graduate School is required in order to serve as either the mentor or primary advisor of a student, to serve on a thesis or examination committee, or to serve as a program or course director. A Graduate Faculty appointment is required to designate the overall grade for a graduate level course. An appointment to the Graduate School Faculty is not required in order to be a “guest lecturer” in a graduate-level course.

Graduate Faculty appointments are of two types “Regular” and “Special”. A “Regular” appointment to the Graduate Faculty, as defined below, is available to those who have a faculty appointment either at CU Denver, an affiliated institution (such as National Jewish Health; The Children’s Hospital; University Hospital; Denver Health, and the Veterans Administration), and/or an affiliated program. “Special” graduate faculty appointments, as defined below, can be offered to individuals, such as faculty outside of the CU System, and/or professionals from industry and non-profit institutions, whose expertise is considered critical for a Program’s activities (such as contributing to a graduate course), for membership on student committees, and other similar educational needs of the program.

Nominations for membership to the Graduate Faculty are initiated by the Program Directors (or Department Chairs) of the Graduate Programs in which the faculty member will serve as either the mentor or primary advisor, teach, and/or participate on examining committees. Any CU Denver faculty member may request to be nominated by a Graduate Program Director (or Department Chair). *However, individuals enrolled as students in a degree program are not eligible for Graduate Faculty membership in the same program.*

##### **i. Regular Appointments**

Appointment as a Regular member of the Graduate Faculty is a privilege extended to those who qualify through their research, teaching and mentoring/advising ability, and demonstrated commitment to graduate education. Regular membership generally shall be limited to “rostered” faculty members of CU Denver or its affiliated institutions. ***Faculty holding Regular graduate faculty appointments are able to serve as primary mentors and dissertation chairs for PhD and/or Master’s students.***

It is anticipated that faculty who hold Regular graduate faculty appointments will also be considered part of the “core” training faculty for their graduate training Program. *However, for those Programs in which a subset of Regular graduate faculty serve as the “core” training faculty, the nomination form should indicate whether the requested Regular faculty appointment is to be considered part of the “core” training faculty, designated as “IN” or not, designated as “OUT”.* The differences in responsibilities for the “IN” and “OUT” Regular Graduate Faculty are to be defined by the individual Graduate Program(s) that requires this distinction.

Faculty who hold Regular graduate faculty appointments are eligible to become members of other Graduate Training Programs at CU Denver upon approval of the Program Director. Program Directors should notify the Associate/Assistant Dean when an existing Graduate Faculty member is joining another Graduate Program. Furthermore, faculty members who have Graduate Faculty appointments within the CU System (i.e., Boulder, Colorado Springs) may apply for Graduate

Faculty status with Graduate Programs at CU Denver by submitting the “[Intercampus Graduate Faculty Application](#)” along with a current biosketch or curriculum vitae. The intercampus faculty appointments may be “Regular” or “Special” depending on the interaction of the faculty with the graduate program.

Privileges of Faculty who hold Regular graduate faculty appointments include:

- directing (teaching and assigning grades in) graduate courses;
- serving on and chairing comprehensive and final thesis or dissertation examination committees (PhD, EdD and Master’s level);
- serving on academic and administrative Graduate School committees;
- participating in program activities for the specific Program(s) in which the faculty member is appointed;
- voting on issues coming before the Graduate Faculty; and
- supervising thesis/dissertation research (PhD, EdD and Master’s level) as a mentor or as the primary advisor if so noted on the Graduate Faculty appointment form.

### *Qualifications Required*

Regular members of the Graduate Faculty shall hold an earned doctoral degree or equivalent, or shall have demonstrated other attainments that qualify them for membership. It is possible that an applicant who has strong and well-documented performance in some, but not all, areas (teaching, research and other scholarly activity) may receive a Regular Graduate Faculty appointment. Tenure-track faculty members with professional degrees (MD, DDS, DVM, others) could be nominated for regular graduate faculty appointments with documentation of qualifications to train students for PhD or other earned doctorates from the Graduate School.

### *Term of Appointments*

Regular graduate faculty appointments will be considered permanent, until the faculty member of nominating program requests termination of the appointment. Upon leaving CU Denver or its affiliated institutions, the faculty member will retain their Regular appointment only until the graduate student(s) whom they are either supervising as the primary mentor, or upon whose thesis/dissertation advisory and exam committee they sit, complete the requirements for their degree.

## **ii. Special Appointments**

Special appointments to the CU Denver Graduate School may be granted to CU Denver faculty (rostered or non-rostered) or other individuals who do not qualify for an appointment as a Regular faculty member, but who will participate in the education of graduate students at CU Denver either by serving on examination and thesis/dissertation committees, or as a major participant (e.g. course director) in teaching of a graduate course. *Special faculty members cannot serve as the chair of a PhD exam or dissertation committee (although they can be a member of these committees) and cannot be the sole primary mentor or advisor of a PhD student.* Furthermore, a Special faculty member needs the approval of both the Program Director and Dean to chair an exam or a Master’s thesis committee, or serve as the primary mentor of a student enrolled in a Master’s program. Special faculty cannot vote on issues requiring approval by the Graduate Faculty.

Privileges of Faculty who hold an appointment as a Special member include:

- directing (teaching and assigning grades in) graduate courses;

- with the approval of the Program Director, serving on final exam or thesis defense committees for students pursuing a Master's Degree;
- with approval of the Program Director, serving on comprehensive and dissertation exam committees for students in a PhD program;
- with the approval of the Program Director and Dean, chairing the final exam or thesis defense committees for students pursuing a Master's Degree;
- with the approval of the Program Director and Dean, serving as a mentor or primary advisor for students pursuing a Master's Degree;
- serving on academic and administrative Graduate School committees; and
- participating in program activities for the specific program(s) for which the faculty member was appointed.

### *Qualifications Required*

As with Regular members, Special members of the Graduate Faculty shall hold a doctoral degree or the terminal degree appropriate to their respective discipline, or shall have made other scholarly contributions that qualify them for membership. Nominees for Special faculty appointments shall present evidence of their expertise appropriate for this appointment and/or teaching activities. Each program may elect to impose additional criteria that exceed Graduate School requirements.

### *Term of Appointment*

The initial period of appointment, as well as reappointment, if necessary, will normally be for up to five (5) years, although shorter time periods may be requested. If the appointment expires before the completion of the thesis, the faculty member must re-apply for renewal of their appointment within 5 years.

### **iii. Nomination and Approval of Graduate Faculty Appointments**

All appointments to either the Regular or Special Graduate Faculty must be reviewed by the Dean's office. The material required for a new or a renewal appointment includes:

- a nomination form that indicates whether the application is for a Regular or a Special appointment and that is signed by the nominating Program Director (or Department Chair); form located at: [Graduate Faculty Appointment Form](#)
- for Regular faculty appointments, the Program must indicate whether the faculty member is approved for serving as a primary mentor for a PhD and/or Master's student;
- for Regular faculty appointments, those Programs that maintain "IN" and "OUT" training faculty distinctions must indicate whether the faculty member is to be included in the "IN" or "OUT" Graduate Faculty list;
- for Special Graduate Faculty appointments, a letter of support from either the Director of the Graduate Program or the Department Chair that summarizes the nominee's expertise, and outlining his or her anticipated level of involvement in activities associated with graduate education such as mentoring, teaching, and serving on examination committees; and
- a current biosketch or curriculum vitae.

New applications must be submitted well in advance of anticipated participation in teaching, or research supervision or student examinations. Appointments will not be approved retroactively to cover these activities. An applicant who is denied an appointment to the Graduate School may appeal to the Graduate Council for a re-assessment of his or her application if s/he believes that his

or her credentials were evaluated inadequately. The status of a Regular or Special member may be revoked upon the recommendation of the Program Director who nominated the faculty member with the concurrence of the Dean.

## **ARTICLE II: GRADUATE EDUCATION**

The majority of programs that fall under the auspices of the CU Denver Graduate School are independent degree programs that are offered on either or both campuses (Denver Campus and Anschutz Medical Campus) or an affiliated institution. In addition, there are a number of dual-degree programs in which students complete the majority of the coursework for each degree [as outlined in Section 2 (iii) and 3 (iv)] and both degrees are awarded simultaneously.

### **Section 1. Review and Approval of Programs**

As outlined in Article I, the Graduate School, together with the Graduate Council, evaluates and approves proposals for new Graduate Programs (PhD/EdD and Master's degree programs) to avoid duplications, ensure that the Programs are effective and that they maintain high standards. All new Graduate Programs (PhD/EdD and Master's Programs) must be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Council as outlined below in Section 1 (ii). Furthermore, all existing Graduate Programs must undergo external reviews every seven years, according to [Regent's Policy 4J](#), which are overseen by the Associate Vice Chancellor (AVC) for Academic Planning in association with the Dean's office. (Under special circumstances, program reviews can be postponed by one year upon approval by the AVC and the Graduate Dean). To avoid duplication of effort and where appropriate, such program reviews are performed as an adjunct to the review of the Program for accreditation, or during a review of the Department, School or College.

#### **i. Procedures and Criteria for Reviewing and Revising Existing Graduate Programs**

The review of existing graduate training Programs follows the Provost's Academic Program Review Policy dated July 1, 2010. Program reviews occur in two phases. Initially, in consultation with the AVC for Academic Planning, the Dean, or Associate Dean, notifies the Director of the Graduate Program, as well as the Dean of the School/College, of an upcoming review of the Program at least six (6) months in advance of the review date. The Graduate School also provides instructions to the Program Director regarding the materials required for inclusion into their "self-study" document. After review by the Associate Dean, the Program's self-study document is forwarded to the AVC for Academic Planning for submission to the reviewers at least four (4) weeks prior to the site visit. The review team pays particular attention to compliance with standards outlined by accrediting organizations, overall academic excellence, the quality of administration of the Program, as well as the impact and overlap of the Program with other Graduate Programs at CU Denver. Following the site visit, the self-study document is also evaluated by an internal Program Review Panel (PRP), as defined in Provost's Policy dated July 1, 2010. The PRP prepares a written evaluation of the program based upon the self-study document, the external reviewers' report, and other information as necessary.

The PRP report is forwarded to the AVC for Academic Planning, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Dean of the home School/College (if applicable), and the Program Director. The Program must develop an "implementation plan" to address any recommendations made by the external reviewers and the PRP. Any progress towards implementing the PRP recommendations is reported in an Annual Progress Report that is forwarded to the Dean's office, and which is required for three (3) years following the Program review.

## **ii. Procedures and Criteria for Developing and Approving New Degree Granting Graduate Programs. (see [Regent Policy 4J](#))**

Recommendations for new degree-granting Graduate Programs are initiated within an appropriate School or College; Department/Program/Division or the Graduate School and are forwarded to the AVC for Academic Planning and to the Dean of the Graduate School. The proposal should address, in part:

- that the proposed Program fulfills all the requirements of the CU Denver Graduate School and the School or College in which it will be housed;
- if the proposal is for a dual degree, it must outline the requirements of both schools and both degrees and describe how the proposal satisfies both sets of requirements;
- the employment market for students who will graduate from the new Program;
- any overlap or potential conflict of the proposed Program with an existing Graduate Program at CU Denver;
- that the Department and School or College are willing to commit sufficient resources (faculty, administrative and financial) to develop and sustain the proposed Program; and
- the ability of the Program faculty to mentor student research in the discipline or Program area.

Upon receiving a proposal for a new Graduate Program, the AVC for Academic Planning solicits the opinion of an external expert who is asked to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed program. The external reviewer submits his or her report to the AVC for Academic Planning who makes it available to the Program Director and the Dean of the Graduate School, who forwards the proposal to members of the Graduate Council for review at their next meeting, at which time Program representatives present the proposal to Council for discussion. Council may either vote to approve the proposal, reject the proposal, or postpone voting pending the review of additional requested materials. Proposals that are favorably reviewed are then routed through the AVC for Academic Affairs for implementation in accordance with policies established by the Regents of the University of Colorado ([Regent Policy 4J](#))

## **iii. Procedures and Criteria for Approving New Tracks in Existing Degree-Granting Programs**

The development of new educational "tracks", or "subplans" (as defined by CU-SIS), within existing approved Graduate Programs requires review and approval by the Graduate Council and approval by the Dean. Proposals for new tracks/subplans within existing Programs are submitted to the Dean, who forwards the proposal to the Graduate Council for review at their next meeting. Program representatives are expected to present the proposal to Council for discussion. Council may either vote to approve the proposal, reject the proposal, or postpone voting pending the review of additional requested materials. New tracks/subplans within existing approved Graduate Programs only require approval by the Graduate Council; they do not require Regental approval.

## **iv. Procedures and Criteria for Developing and Approving New Graduate Courses**

Proposals for new courses are reviewed and approved by the GEC, or curriculum committee, of the School or College and then forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School to ensure consistent academic standards are being applied across all Schools and Colleges. If so approved, the Graduate Program offering the course shall provide to the Graduate School with information as are required to ensure accurate records. If the Dean considers that there are significant issues not addressed in

creating new courses, he/she will contact the Program Director and the appropriate Dean of the School/College, for further clarification.

#### **v. Procedure for Removing Courses That Have Been Discontinued**

It is expected that departments and programs will inform the Graduate School to discontinue listing any courses that will no longer be taught. The Graduate School will periodically review the status of all courses in the Graduate School to determine whether they are still being offered. Graduate Programs that list courses that have not been taught for five (5) years must justify to the Graduate School why such courses should continue to be listed.

### **Section 2. Admissions**

A student may be admitted to the Graduate School as either a Regular degree student (if they meet the requirements/criteria of the Graduate School and the Graduate Program in which they wish to enroll), or as a Provisional degree student (if they do not meet the Program's and or School's requirements).

The application for matriculating into a Graduate Program is completed online at: [Graduate School Application](#). In addition to the online application, letters of recommendation (in English) are required, as are official transcripts from all Colleges, Schools and Universities in which the student has ever enrolled. Individual Graduate Programs evaluate, interview and select the students they want to admit, including those who will be admitted provisionally. A letter of offer from the Graduate Program to an applicant must include a statement indicating that admission to the University and the Program is pending final approval by the Graduate School and/or the Admissions Office. The Graduate School confirms the applicant's credentials, including authenticating transcripts, verifies the GPA calculations, and also determines whether the student meets the general requirements of the Graduate School and the specific requirements of the selected Program. The Graduate School also performs a background check and collects the immunization records (where required).

#### **i. Admission to Regular Degree Status**

Students are admitted into the Graduate School as Regular degree students on recommendation of the program provided they meet the following criteria:

1. hold a baccalaureate or Master's degree from an accredited College or University, or demonstrate completion of work equivalent to the baccalaureate or Master's degree given at CU Denver.
  - a. Applicants whose credentials include studies or coursework at a College or University outside the USA (not taken as part of a semester abroad program) must include original transcripts and documentation in English (or certified English translation) of the transcript as evaluated by the CU Denver Office of International Affairs;
2. have an undergraduate grade point average of 3.00 or better ("A" is equal to 4.0) or a 3.00 or better GPA in twelve (12) credit hours or more of a partially completed Master's degree program. Applications from individuals who attended a College or University that does not issue grades or a GPA will be evaluated by the Graduate School on a case-by-case basis; lower GPA averages are possible with specific justification by the program;
3. have adequate preparation to enter graduate study in the chosen program as demonstrated by their performance in the GRE or an appropriate substitute [e.g., MCAT, an earned MS/MA or PhD from a School in the USA, compensating scholarly experience as judged by the



program, or completion of at least twelve (12) credit hours of transferable graduate-level coursework from an accredited College or University in the USA). Although the Graduate School recommends that applicants take the GRE or other standardized test, it is not a requirement for admission as a Regular degree student if the admitted student meets the first and second criteria listed. However, some Graduate Programs may require that all applicants take the GRE or an equivalent; and

4. meet any additional requirements (such as particular undergraduate coursework) for admission as established by the Program.

International students must meet ALL of the requirements above and also must provide:

5. original transcripts and documentation in English (or a certified English translation) of the completion of a Bachelor's degree, Master's degree or the equivalent as evaluated by the CU Denver Office of International Affairs;
6. financial and other documents as required by the International Student and Scholar Services Office to process immigration documents;
7. a certified English translation of all academic records and references not in English, and
8. evidence of proficiency in English as defined in the University policy [Official Measures of English Language Proficiency for Admission of International Students](#) (effective July 1, 2012) by satisfying one of the following criteria:
  - a. the applicant is a citizen of a country whose official language is English, which includes Australia, Belize, Botswana, Canada (except Quebec), Commonwealth Caribbean, Ghana, Great Britain, India, Ireland, Kenya, New Zealand, Nigeria, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, and Zimbabwe; or
  - b. the applicant obtains a composite score of 75 or above on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL, iBT) (minimum subscores of 15 in Reading, 14 in Listening, 19 in Speaking, and 20 in Writing) or a composite score of 6.5 or above on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (minimum subscores of 5.5 in each area). ***Schools or Colleges, or individual graduate programs may require higher standards on these tests;*** or
  - c. the applicant has graduated from the University of Colorado Denver's ESL Academy; or
  - d. the applicant has graduated with a bachelor's degree or higher from a foreign institution where the language of instruction was English. (The applicant must provide a letter from the home institution verifying this information if the language of instruction is not clearly indicated on the official academic transcript.); or
  - e. the applicant has graduated with a bachelor's degree or higher from a US accredited school abroad where the language of instruction was English. (The applicant must provide a letter from the home institution verifying this information if the language of instruction is not clearly indicated on the official academic transcript.); or
  - f. the applicant has earned a bachelor's degree in the US or has successfully completed a minimum of 2 semesters (a minimum of 30 credits) of full-time study in a master's program at an accredited institution in the US and obtained a "B" (3.00) cumulative GPA or higher.

Additional requirements and documentation may also be required.

## **ii. Admission to Provisional Degree Status**

A Graduate Program that wishes to admit an applicant who does not meet the criteria for admission as a Regular degree student can petition the Graduate School to admit the applicant as a Provisional degree student. On the provisional form that accompanies the student's admission documents, the graduate Program Director outlines the rationale to support such an admission. The form must include a description of the conditions that the student must meet in order to become a Regular degree student. The admission of the applicant as a Provisional degree student requires the approval of the Dean. Based on the requirements of the Graduate Program and the recommendations of the graduate Program Director, the Dean will make a determination and advise the Program Director and the student of the conditions that the student must satisfy in order to be transferred from Provisional to Regular status. The Dean, in consultation with the Program Director, will also determine the time period (1 or 2 semesters for full-time students and a maximum of 4 semesters for part-time students) in which these conditions must be met. Provisional students are subject to the same standards of performance required of Regular degree students, plus any other requirements imposed by Program faculty as conditions of admission. At the end of the specified probationary period, the Dean, in consultation with the Program Director will review the performance of the Provisional degree student. Provisionally admitted students must either have satisfied the requirements for conversion and be admitted to Regular degree status or be dismissed from the Graduate Program to which they were provisionally admitted. The Graduate School will notify both the Program Director and the student whether the indicated requirements have been met and the student's status has been converted to that of a Regular student, or if the student failed to meet the requirements and has been dismissed.

## **iii. Admission to Dual Master's Degree Programs**

Qualified students may be recommended for admission to an approved dual degree Program upon meeting the qualifications of admission to the Graduate School and both Graduate Programs.

## **iv. Admission to Concurrent Bachelor's/Master's Degree Programs**

There are several Graduate Programs that offer undergraduate students the opportunity to begin graduate work while they are completing their undergraduate degree in that discipline. Highly qualified undergraduate students may be recommended for admission to a concurrent or articulated Bachelor's/Master's degree program usually at the end of their sophomore or the beginning of their junior undergraduate year. Such students are not formally admitted to the Graduate School. Standards for admission as well as eligibility to remain in the Program are specified in each department's approved program guide.

Students participating in a Bachelor's/Master's option must:

- fulfill all of the normal credit requirements of both the graduate and undergraduate programs;
- petition to the Graduate Program allowing this option *before* taking any graduate level courses, and be advised by both undergraduate and graduate advisors; and
- apply and be admitted to the graduate program in the next regular semester (fall or spring) following the completion of the undergraduate degree.

## **v. Readmission of Former Students**

Students who were previously admitted to a Graduate Program but who did not complete that degree program and who have not been registered for more than one (1) year [i.e., three (3) terms] at CU Denver must reapply to the Program supplying updated information and academic credentials. The

following requirements must be satisfied before being readmitted:

- clarify their status with the Graduate Program and Graduate School to determine their eligibility to return and pursue the same degree;
- submit an application and application fee to the Graduate Program for approval before enrollment levels are met or deadlines have passed for the term in which they expect to return to CU Denver; and
- meet any new admission requirements required of matriculants (i.e., background checks, immunizations, etc.)

However, the Program is under no obligation to readmit the student, and the student should consult with the Program Director before applying.

#### **vi. Changing Programs**

Students who are currently enrolled in a Graduate Program and in good academic standing (i.e., GPA of 3.00 or better) and who want to change Programs or major departments must complete the appropriate application forms and be accepted by the new Program into which they are transferring. The Graduate School maintains a current form for such transfers; [Request for Transfer Form](#).

### **Section 3. Degree Requirements**

#### **i. Master's Degree (minimum requirements)**

The minimum number of credit hours required for a Master's degree is thirty (30). While it is expected that most of this coursework will be at the Graduate level (5000 and above), some Graduate Programs may allow specific undergraduate courses that are outside the specific discipline of their program to count towards the graduate degree and must be approved by the Program Director. Regardless, at least 24 credit hours of those required for completion of the Master's program must be at the graduate level (5000 and above) and undergraduate credits cannot exceed 20% of total credit hours required. Furthermore, undergraduate courses within the same discipline as the Graduate Program cannot be credited towards a graduate degree. If the program has a thesis, research paper or internship option as the culminating requirement, the thesis/research paper must count for three to six (3-6) credits, unless specified otherwise by individual programs. Independent study coursework cannot exceed 20 percent (6 credits) of the 30 credits of coursework required for the Master's degree.

#### **ii. Doctoral Degree (minimum requirements)**

The minimum number of credit hours required for a PhD degree is thirty (30) credits of coursework, all of which must be at the Graduate level (5000 and above) and thirty (30) dissertation credits. For the EdD program, the minimum credit hours required is thirty-nine (39) credits of coursework and fifteen (15) credits of dissertation. *(All students should check the specific requirements of their Program, since some Programs have adjusted their credit hour requirement to meet national standards)*. Graduate level coursework taken for a Master's degree may be applied toward a doctoral degree with Program approval; likewise, coursework taken for a completed doctoral degree may be applied toward a concurrent or subsequent Master's degree with Program approval.

All courses that count towards the minimum requirements for a PhD and at least 80% of the courses for a Master's degree must be at the graduate level. Graduate-level courses are:

- directed by a Regular or Special member of the Graduate Faculty (although individuals without Graduate Faculty membership can be guest lecturers);
- graded on the A-F system (not pass/fail); and

- offered within a Degree Program at the 5000 level or above.

With the approval of the Program Director, students enrolled in Graduate Programs at CU Denver can undertake graduate level courses at other campuses within the University of Colorado system (CU System); these credit hours are earned within the CU System will not be subject to the rules of transfer credits.

### **iii. Dual Master's Degree Programs**

For existing approved dual degree programs a student may earn two Master's degrees concurrently under the following conditions:

1. The dual degree option shall require a minimum of 1/2 of the course work in both of the two programs (some individual dual Master's programs may require more than 1/2 the course work of either or both of the Master's programs to be completed). The additional credits required to earn a Master's may be applied to both degrees with the concurrence of each program, subject to the limitations given below:
  - a. The student must satisfy the core requirements of both Master's Programs.
  - b. In cases where both Master's Programs require the same course in the core, the common course shall not count toward the core requirements of both degrees.
  - c. The Directors of the component Programs will determine appropriate substitutes so that a student takes enough courses to satisfy the quantity of core courses for each Program;
2. The student must satisfy all completion requirements in both Programs, unless specifically waived for dual degree students; and
3. The Dual Master's degrees must be awarded simultaneously.

### **iv. Combining Two Master's Degrees**

Students wishing to earn two Master's degrees that are not part of an approved dual degree Program must 1) apply and be accepted into both Programs, and 2) satisfy all requirements of both degree Programs. In some cases, individual courses may be used to satisfy requirements in both Programs; however, no more than twelve (12) credit hours of courses may be applied to both degrees.

## **Section 4. Transfer Credits**

Transfer credit refers to any credit earned at another accredited institution either in the USA or abroad, or credits earned as a non-degree student within the CU system. Graduate courses taken while the student was enrolled in a Graduate Program anywhere in the CU System, or an institution with established Memoranda of Understanding with CU Denver, fall outside the limits for transfer credits.

For students who obtained graduate course credits while they were enrolled in a Graduate Program at a University in the USA, or students who earned credits within the CU System as a non-degree student, the number of course credits that can be transferred to CU Denver will be determined by the graduate Program Director on a case-by-case basis (subject to the limits described at the bottom of this paragraph). In the case of students who performed coursework at institutions outside the USA, the graduate Program Director shall provide a recommendation to the Graduate School listing the courses that they accept for transfer and will also provide documentation including an independent evaluation by the Office of International Affairs to support the recommendation. The Graduate School Dean will evaluate the recommendation of the Program Director regarding the transfer of credits from foreign institutions and make a determination on a case-by-case basis. The

maximum amount of transfer work that may be applied toward a graduate degree at CU Denver is twelve (12) hours of coursework (or 40% if the program requires more than 30 hours) for Master's degree programs; nine (9) hours of coursework for the EdD program; and thirty (30) hours of coursework for PhD degree programs (individual programs may have more restrictive limits).

Coursework accepted for transfer credit must not have been applied towards an undergraduate degree or another graduate degree of the same level (e.g., MA to MS). Specifically, Master's courses applied to one completed Master's degree program may not be applied to another Master's degree program; however, graduate level coursework (5000 level or above) taken for a Master's degree may be applied toward a doctoral degree with Program approval. Likewise, coursework taken for a completed doctoral degree may be applied toward a concurrent or subsequent Master's degree with Program approval.

All courses accepted for transfer must:

- be graduate level (5000 or above);
- have a "letter" grade (courses in which the grading is either satisfactory/unsatisfactory or pass/fail are not accepted);
- have a grade of "B minus" or better (individual programs may require a "B" or better for transfer credit and/or may require a B or better in the core classes of the particular discipline);
- be validated by the Program Director if not taken within seven (7) years of the PhD comprehensive exam or the Master's final exam, if applicable, to ensure that the course content is still considered current; and
- be transferred prior to the semester in which the PhD comprehensive or Master's final examination, if applicable, is taken.

Credit cannot be transferred until the student has established a satisfactory record of at least one term of enrollment at the CU Denver and earned a minimum 3.00 GPA. Transferred courses do not reduce the residency requirement but may reduce the amount of work required at CU Denver for the degree.

## **Section 5. Enrollment Requirements**

Students entering graduate studies are expected to hold a baccalaureate or Master's degree from an accredited College or University, or demonstrate completion of work equivalent to a baccalaureate or Master's degree given at CU Denver, as detailed in Article II, Section 2. Under unusual circumstances, students may not have completed all requirements for their baccalaureate degree upon matriculation into the graduate training Program. In such cases, the student will have until the end of the first semester of enrollment in the Graduate Program to complete all baccalaureate degree requirements. Students who fail to complete all baccalaureate degree requirements by the end of their first semester in the Graduate Program will be placed on leave of absence pending completion of their undergraduate degree requirements.

### **i. Master's Degree Enrollment Requirements**

The minimum number of credit hours required for a Master's degree is thirty (30). Enrollment for a minimum of five (5) credits is required to be eligible for financial aid and full-time status. Master's students should aim to finish the degree in two (2) years with full-time enrollment and seven (7) years with part-time enrollment. The minimum enrollment requirement at CU Denver for Master's students is two semesters of full-time scholarly work beyond the attainment of the bachelor's degree.

## **ii. Doctoral Degree Enrollment Requirements**

The minimum number of credit hours for a PhD degree is thirty (30) credits of coursework, all of which must be at the Graduate level (5000 and above) and thirty (30) dissertation credits. The EdD program requires a minimum of thirty-nine (39) credits of coursework and fifteen (15) dissertation credits. The minimum enrollment requirement at CU Denver for doctoral students is six (6) semesters of full-time scholarly work beyond the attainment of a bachelor's degree. Two (2) semesters of enrollment credit may be allowed for an earned Master's degree from another institution; however, at least four (4) semesters of credit must be earned for work performed while enrolled at CU Denver.

## **iii. Leave of Absence**

Students who need to leave CU Denver Graduate Programs for a period of time should determine with their Program Directors whether a petition for leave of absence is required for up to one (1) year. If approved by the Program Director and the Dean of the Graduate School, a copy of the Leave of Absence form is forwarded to the Registrar's Office. The original is retained in the student's file. Approved leaves of absence do not automatically extend the time limits for earning a degree, but they may be cited as supporting documentation to request an extension if needed. Requests for leaves of absence that exceed one (1) year will not be approved unless the Program Director provides the Dean with a compelling justification why such action should be approved. Students who are absent for longer than one (1) year will be considered to have withdrawn from the Program and will be required to reapply for admission and be considered with all other applicants.

## **Section 6. Grades and Quality of Graduate Work**

To maintain satisfactory academic progress, advance to candidacy, and earn a graduate degree, *students are required to maintain a minimum GPA of "B" (3.00) for all graduate courses taken while in Graduate School, which includes any undergraduate (i.e., 4000 level) courses that may be required for the graduate degree.* Failure to maintain a 3.00 GPA will result in the student being placed on academic probation, as defined below. Courses in which grades below "B-" (2.7) are received may not be applied toward fulfillment of the requirements for any graduate (PhD or Master's) degree. Courses required by the degree-granting program in which the student receives a grade below B- must be retaken in order to achieve a B- or better grade. *However, all grades received, including repeat courses, will appear on the student's transcript and will be included in the GPA calculation, but only one course enrollment may be counted towards graduation credits.*

Grades received in transferred courses and grades earned while a student was classified as a non-degree student are not included in calculations of the GPA, although the credit earned is applied to the program requirements.

An in-progress (IP) grade is given for thesis or dissertation hours until the final approved thesis/dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School office. Once a grade has been received, it will be included in the student's cumulative GPA.

For other courses, the course Director will assign a letter grade, an Incomplete (I), or an IP (for thesis or multi-semester graduate level course) grade. IP grades are changed to final letter grades when the student completes the required work. A grade of "I" is automatically changed to an "F" after one (1) year unless a grade change is initiated by the course Director. However, no other grade

changes are allowed by the Graduate School; i.e., students are not allowed to perform additional work for a course already completed in order to have their grades improved. Should a student enter military service before completing a course and an "I" is reported, this grade may be carried on the records for the duration of the student's service, provided arrangements have been made with the Graduate Program and the Dean. Credit by examination is not allowed for graduate students. However, Programs may allow a student to challenge and "test out" of a given course in which the student will have to participate in a test to prove his/her familiarity with the course content; students do not register or receive credit for a course in which they have "tested-out" and the program will require the student to take a different course or an elective. In all cases, the student must meet the minimum credit requirements for the degree.

Any coursework taken at CU Denver that was taken more than seven (7) years prior to applying for candidacy for either a Master's or PhD degree, or course credits transferred from another institution (as described in Section 4 above), must be evaluated and deemed to be current by a process determined by the Director of the Graduate Program in which the student is enrolled. The Director of the Graduate Program must maintain a file summarizing the decisions for each student to ensure that the validation process is applied consistently to all students. The Director will advise the Graduate School in writing that such courses have been validated for a particular student prior to the student's advancement to candidacy.

Each CU Denver Graduate Program will make available (either on-line, hard copy or both) a handbook containing specific guidelines for measuring satisfactory academic progress. These guidelines may differ from the Graduate School-wide standards *only if they are more stringent than the Graduate School's minimum standards outlined in this document*. In such case, the Program-specific standards will supersede the Graduate School standards. In addition, the Program handbook should contain guidelines for measuring satisfactory academic progress in all activities not covered by the Graduate School grading, examination, and probation policies. Such activities might include, but are not limited to, preliminary examinations, clinical competencies, and research activities or skills not reflected in course grades, and vacation and leave of absence policies and procedures. Students may be directed to a website where an electronic version of the current handbook is published in lieu of receiving a printed version of the handbook. Changes to the Rules and Policies of a Graduate Program that are not a consequence or a requirement of an external entity (such as an accrediting body) and that specifically affect academic progression or academic requirements, only apply to students who enter the Program after the change has been made.

### **Section 7. Academic Probation and Dismissal**

When a student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.00 (some Graduate Programs may require that a higher GPA be maintained), the student must be notified by the Graduate School, and copied to the Program Director, that they have been placed on academic probation. (The GPA is calculated using all graduate-level work attempted while enrolled in the Graduate School, including any 4000-level undergraduate courses that are required for the graduate degree.) The student will have two (2) semesters if they are enrolled as a full-time student, or four (4) semesters if part-time, in which to raise his or her cumulative GPA (calculated using Graduate Level courses only) to at least 3.00 (or greater if required by the particular Graduate Program). The Graduate Program also may impose special conditions on a probationary student in addition to the raising their GPA. The Program Director must forward these conditions in writing to both the student and the Dean.

If students on probation do not obtain a GPA of at least 3.00 (or greater if required by the Program) within two (2) semesters [four (4) semesters if part-time] of being placed on probation, they will be subject to immediate dismissal upon the recommendation of the Program Director and concurrence of the Dean. The student may also be subject to immediate dismissal if s/he does not meet any special conditions imposed by the Program for moving from probationary to regular status. If there are extenuating circumstances, however, the Program Director may petition the Dean for an extension of the probationary time period. The Dean will make the final decision on dismissal. Students who are placed on academic probation and subsequently dismissed from a Graduate Program by the Graduate School will be officially notified by the Dean. Such notifications will include the reasons for dismissal and a disclosure of the right of appeal.

Some programs may have additional requirements not related to the student's GPA. If the student fails to meet the standards established by the Graduate Program, s/he will be placed on academic probation. These criteria will be monitored by the specific Graduate Program. If the Program places a student on academic probation, the Program must notify the student and the Graduate School of the requirements for the student to return from probationary to regular status. In such cases, the Program will be responsible for monitoring the performance of the student until s/he is either returned to regular status or dismissed from the program. At the end of the probationary period, if not before, the Graduate Program must advise the Graduate School of the outcome of the student's probationary period and can recommend to the Dean whether or not the student should be dismissed. It is the responsibility of the Graduate School to dismiss a student.

Any student who is dismissed from the Graduate School following unsuccessful academic probation or failure to meet his or her program's guidelines for satisfactory academic progress may reapply for admission to the same or a different graduate program after one (1) year. However, the Program is under no obligation to readmit the student, and the student should consult with the Program Director before applying.

*Students who feel they are in need of University Support Services for any reason should see the [student services website](#).*

## **Section 8. Student Academic Honor and Conduct Code, Academic Grievances, Misconduct and Appeals**

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of personal integrity and professional ethics as detailed in the [Graduate School Academic Honor and Conduct Code](#). Students who do not meet these standards of integrity and ethics, or who violate the honor code may be placed on disciplinary probation by the Dean upon the recommendation of the Academic Conduct and Appeals Committee (ACAC). Generally, procedures for matters involving academic misconduct should emphasize due process, which should include, at a minimum, notification to the student regarding the alleged violation, an opportunity for the student to gather information in order to properly respond to the allegation, and an impartial hearing to be conducted by the ACAC. The honor code, committee guidelines, and appeal process are on file in the Graduate School office and available in the Graduate School Student Handbook, as well as [online](#). The Schools or Colleges in which Graduate Programs are housed, or individual Graduate Programs themselves, may have additional policies and/or requirements for student conduct.



### **i. Academic Grievances**

Students who feel that they have been treated unfairly or outside of normal programmatic/departmental policies, may file a grievance with the Graduate School in accordance with grievance procedures outlined in the Student Handbook and [posted online](#). If a School, College or Graduate Program has established its own procedures to consider academic grievances, then the student must follow these procedures before they can submit a grievance to the Graduate School.

The designation *academic grievance* covers those problems related to academic issues. Such issues are distinguished from *academic ethics* cases and *disciplinary cases* for which separate procedures exist. Included within academic grievance cases are faculty, program, departmental, College or School (including Graduate School) policies affecting individual student prerogatives; deviations from stated grading procedures (excluding individual grade challenges); unfair treatment and related issues. Policies and procedures governing the filing of an academic grievance are available in the Graduate School and [online](#).

### **ii. Academic Misconduct**

The Academic Conduct and Appeals Committee (ACAC) has responsibility for reviewing and resolving cases of honor code misconduct or student academic grievances unless the School or College in which the Graduate Program resides has established its own policy [see Article I Section 3 (iii) b]. For those Schools and Colleges that have their own academic misconduct policies and procedures, and which meet the standards of due process, such Schools and Colleges will have the original jurisdiction in cases involving honor code misconduct or student academic grievances. For such Schools and Colleges the ACAC may act as an appellate review board for the final action taken by the School or College and will forward their recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

## **Section 9. Admission to Candidacy**

### **i. Master's Degree**

Students who wish to earn a Master's degree must first become candidates. After completing or registering for all program-required coursework, students must file an Application for Candidacy with the Graduate School no later than the posted candidacy/graduation deadline during the semester in which they plan to have their degrees conferred. This form is included in the Master's degree graduation information available on the [Graduate School website](#).

The student's advisor and Program Director must approve the completed application before submission to the Graduate School for final approval and filing. An approved form certifies that a student's coursework is satisfactory and that the Program curriculum described in the Application for Candidacy meets all of the requirements of both the Graduate School as well as the particular Graduate Program and that the student is a candidate for the degree. *Students cannot take their final culminating examination if they are on academic probation, i.e., have a GPA less than 3.00 for all graduate courses taken including any 4000-level undergraduate courses that may be required for the graduate degree.*

### **ii. Doctoral Degree**

Students must apply for admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree at least two (2) weeks before taking the comprehensive examination. The Candidacy form is included in the PhD Comprehensive Examination information available on the [Graduate School website](#). The student's advisor and Program Director must approve the completed application form before submission to the Graduate

School for final approval and filing. *The student cannot take the comprehensive examination if on probation, i.e., have a GPA less than 3.00 for all graduate courses taken, or before they have completed or registered for all non-thesis coursework required by the program.*

Before being admitted to candidacy, doctoral students must complete at least two (2) semesters of enrollment at CU Denver, complete or register for all program-required, non-dissertation coursework, and pass the comprehensive examination. (See policy on Enrollment Requirements, Section 5.)

## **Section 10. Examinations**

All Master's degree students must successfully complete a final examination or a cumulative scholarly thesis or project in which proficiency in the knowledge and skills comprising the degree program must be demonstrated. All doctoral degree (PhD/EdD) students must successfully complete both a comprehensive exam and a thesis/dissertation defense. Graduate programs may require additional examinations for students to meet the requirements for the degree. Such requirements will be monitored by the Graduate Program. *Students must be registered at the time they undertake either the comprehensive or final examinations or their dissertation defense.* Students who choose to perform these examinations or defend their thesis on a date that falls between semesters, (between Fall and Spring; Spring and Summer, or between Summer and Fall) must register for the semester immediately after their exam/defense.

### **i. Master's Degree Final Examination/Thesis Defense**

Master's students must complete all requirements for the degree including a final examination, a cumulative professional project, or a thesis defense. Students must be registered for at least one (1) course during the semester in which they take their comprehensive exam, defend their thesis, or present their final project. If the student has already completed the required hours of thesis work and all other coursework, and is not registered for any other courses, then they must register for one (1) credit in the appropriate Candidate for Degree course (e.g., AMC: CAND 6940 or NURS 6940; Denver: CAND 5940) for the semester. It is anticipated that students will only enroll in this course for their final semester, but conditions may require enrolling for an additional term. Students registered for the Candidate for Degree course will be considered full-time for financial aid and enrollment verification purposes.

The final examination/thesis defense is conducted by a committee consisting of at least three (3) members of the Graduate Faculty. The Chair of the committee must be a member of the degree-granting Program. Graduate Programs with a limited number of Graduate Faculty members can petition the Dean for an exception to this requirement so that only two (2) members of the Graduate Faculty are required for examinations of Master's students in their program(s).

The student's final examination/defense committee and the examination schedule must be approved by the Program Director before being submitted to the Graduate School for final approval and filing. The Graduate School must be notified using the appropriate forms at least two (2) weeks before the exam. These forms are included in the [Master's degree graduation information](#). Specific Graduate Programs may have additional requirements for registering/scheduling the exam.

The examinations may be oral, written, or both, or may consist of an evaluation of a cumulative professional project. Unless the examination format is only a written proposal, all members of the committee must be present for the oral examination, although a minority of members, but not the

Chair or the student, may participate by interactive video. In the event of an *emergency* that prevents *one* (1) faculty committee member from attending the exam, the exam can proceed with the faculty members who can attend, and the student will schedule a separate meeting with the absent faculty member at an alternate time. A majority of the examination committee members must vote for one of the following examination outcomes: a) Pass; b) Conditional Pass; or c) Fail.

If a student receives a Conditional Pass, the examining committee will clearly define the requirements for the student to receive an unconditional passing grade and these requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the examination committee within four (4) months. Failure to satisfy these conditions will result in failure of the examination.

A student who fails the examination is subject to immediate dismissal from the Program on the recommendation of the Graduate Program Director and concurrence of the Dean. At the Program's discretion, a student who fails the examination may be allowed to retake the exam. The re-examination must be completed by the end of the next academic semester (excluding Summer). The original examination form noting the failure is signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School office. New examination forms will be generated when the examination is rescheduled. The student will be required to meet registration requirements and be registered during the semester in which the repeated exam is taken.

## **ii. Doctoral Degree Examination**

### **a. Preliminary Examination (or equivalent)**

Each Program is responsible for ensuring that students are qualified for doctoral study by successfully passing a preliminary examination. Graduate Programs that require students to have a Master's degree before they enter their PhD program may exempt the student from taking a preliminary examination. The content and format of the preliminary examination are determined by the individual Graduate Program. The results (Pass/Fail) of the preliminary examination must be reported to the Graduate School. A student who fails the examination is subject to immediate dismissal from the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the Program and concurrence of the Dean. At the Program's discretion, a student who fails the examination may retake the exam, the format and timeline of which is to be defined by the Program.

### **b. Comprehensive Examination (or equivalent)**

After completing or registering for all Program-required, non-dissertation coursework, and concurrent with applying for admission to candidacy, doctoral (PhD/EdD) students must take a comprehensive examination in their respective discipline. This examination will test a student's mastery of a broad field of knowledge, not merely the formal coursework that s/he has completed.

The examination committee shall consist of a minimum of three (3) Graduate Faculty members. A majority of the committee members, including the Chair, must be members of the degree-granting program. *The student's dissertation advisor, if already identified, may not chair the examination committee.* The student's comprehensive examination committee and the examination schedule must be approved by the Program Director before being submitted to the Graduate School for final approval and filing. The Graduate School must be notified on the appropriate forms at least two (2) weeks before the exam. These forms are included in the [PhD/EdD comprehensive examination information](#).

At the Program's discretion, the oral part of the comprehensive examination may be open to all members of the Program, after which the student shall meet with the examination committee in a closed session. This examination must be completed no later than the end of the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) year for full-time students, unless indicated otherwise in Program-specific guidelines.

All members of the committee must be present for the examination, although a minority of members, but not the Chair nor the student, may participate by interactive video. In the event of an *emergency* that prevents *one* (1) faculty committee member from attending the exam, the exam may proceed with the faculty members who can attend and the student will schedule a separate meeting with the absent faculty member at an alternate time. The examination form must be signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School Office. The student must receive votes from the majority of the examination committee for one of the following outcomes: a) Pass; b) Conditional Pass; or c) Fail.

If a student receives a Conditional Pass, the examining committee will clearly define the requirements for the student to receive an unconditional passing grade and these requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the examination committee within four (4) months. The committee Chair is responsible for monitoring the conditions and reporting their outcome to the Graduate School. Failure to satisfy these conditions will result in failure of the examination.

A student who fails the examination is subject to immediate dismissal from the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the Program and concurrence of the Dean. At the Program's discretion, a student who fails the examination may retake it once. The re-examination will be in the form designated by the committee and must be completed within twelve (12) months. The original examination form noting the failure is signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School office. New examination forms will be generated when the examination is rescheduled. The student will be required to meet registration requirements and be registered during the term in which the repeated exam is taken.

### **c. Final/Dissertation Examination**

After the dissertation has been completed, a final examination on the dissertation and related topics is conducted in two parts: an oral presentation of the dissertation research that is open to the public, and a closed examination conducted by the examining committee.

The Program Director will approve the student's final examination/defense committee and the examination schedule before being submitted to the Graduate School for final approval and filing. The Graduate School must be notified on the appropriate forms at least two (2) weeks before the exam. Forms are included in the [PhD/EdD graduation information](#). The Graduate School will send announcements of the examination to appropriate faculty members, and the signature form will be sent to the Program office to be placed in the student's file for use at the examination.

The dissertation defense committee shall consist of a minimum of four (4) Graduate Faculty members, except for the EdD program, which requires a minimum of three (3) Graduate Faculty members. A majority of the committee members, including the Chair, must be members of the degree-granting program. Other than for the EdD program, *the PhD student's dissertation advisor may not chair the examination committee*. The student must submit finalized draft copies of the thesis to the defense committee at least two (2) weeks before the examination date. Programs may require an earlier deadline.

All members of the committee must be present for the examination, although a minority of members, but not the Chair or the student, may participate by interactive video. In the event of an *emergency* that prevents *one* (1) faculty committee member from attending the exam, the exam can proceed with the faculty members who can attend and the student will schedule a separate meeting with the absent faculty member at an alternate time. The examination form must be signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School office. The student must receive votes from a strict majority of the examination committee for one of the following outcomes: a) Pass; b) Conditional Pass; or c) Fail.

If a student receives a Conditional Pass, the examining committee will clearly define the requirements for the student to receive an unconditional passing grade and these requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the examination committee within sixty (60) days of the defense. Under extenuating circumstances, the graduate Program Director may petition the Graduate School for additional time. If a student fails the examination, s/he may not continue in the program.

## **Section 11. Thesis/Dissertation Requirements**

### **i. Master's Thesis**

Students who are enrolled in a Program that requires a thesis must undertake their thesis work under the supervision of a thesis advisor, and in some instances, an advisory committee. Master's students who are enrolled in a Program or track that requires a thesis, must register for a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of six (6) hours of thesis work, unless specified otherwise by their specific Graduate Program. All research conducted for a Master's degree must meet all appropriate regulatory standards specified by federal, state, and local agencies regarding ethical research, animal use, human subjects, HIPAA and environmental safety. The thesis is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's degree and must meet the formatting criteria outlined in the CU Denver "[Style and Policy Manual for Thesis and Dissertations](#)" available on the Graduate School website. The Graduate School conducts the final review of Master's thesis for proper formatting. The final, formally approved Master's thesis must be submitted to the Graduate School, with the appropriate supporting documentation, within sixty (60) days of the thesis defense.

A grade of "In Progress" (IP) will be assigned for thesis hours in all semesters until the final approved thesis is submitted to the Graduate School office. The Graduate School will then obtain the final thesis grade, and all IP grades will be changed to this new grade.

### **ii. Doctoral Dissertation**

A dissertation based upon original investigation and showing mature scholarship and critical judgment, as well as familiarity with the tools and methods of research, must be written on a subject approved by the student's dissertation advisor and the Dissertation Advisory Committee. All research conducted for the PhD/EdD degrees must meet all regulatory standards specified by federal, state, and local agencies regarding ethical research, animal use, human subjects, HIPAA and environmental safety. The dissertation is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the PhD/EdD degrees and must meet the formatting criteria outlined in the CU Denver "[Style and Policy Manual for Thesis and Dissertations](#)" available on the Graduate School website. The Graduate School conducts the final review of dissertations for proper formatting. The final, formally approved dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School, with the appropriate supporting documentation, within sixty (60) days of the thesis defense.

#### **a. PhD Dissertation Advisory Committee**

After selecting a dissertation advisor, the student, in collaboration with his or her dissertation advisor, will choose a Dissertation Advisory Committee, subject to approval of the graduate Program Director. Although it is recommended that the Dissertation Advisory Committee be the same as the Dissertation Examination Committee, the two committees need not be identical. *Although the student's dissertation advisor may not chair the Comprehensive or Dissertation Examination Committees, Programs are given the flexibility to permit, or prohibit, the student's advisor to serve as Chair of the Dissertation Advisory Committee.* The Dissertation Advisory Committee will serve an advisory function to the student and dissertation advisor and will also monitor the student's progress towards completing the dissertation. The Dissertation Advisory Committee will determine when the student has made sufficient progress to begin writing his or her dissertation.

*All PhD students who have advanced to candidacy must meet with their Dissertation Advisory Committee at least once every year*, although some Programs may require – and the Graduate School encourages – a greater frequency of meetings. It is the student's responsibility to identify the best available time and schedule the meeting. The Dissertation Advisory Committee shall evaluate the student's progress to ensure that s/he has made satisfactory progress since the previous meeting. The Committee Chair will complete the [Dissertation Advisory Committee meeting form](#) summarizing the student's progress, or lack thereof, and send copies to the student, the primary mentor if not the Chair and the Program Director. In case of non-satisfactory performance, steps to be taken to rectify the situation should be suggested in the report. If a student fails to meet with their Dissertation Advisory Committee within the previous 12 months, the Graduate School will notify the student and dissertation advisor that the committee must meet within the next four (4) weeks. *Students who fail to have a Dissertation Advisory Committee meeting by the end of this four (4) week probationary period will not be permitted to register for subsequent semesters.* Once the student is in compliance with this rule, s/he will be permitted to register.

#### **b. PhD Dissertation Registration**

PhD students must register for a minimum of thirty (30) dissertation credit hours to complete the requirements for the PhD degree. *(Students are required to check with their specific Programs to determine if their thesis credit hour requirements differ from the minimum requirement of the Graduate School.)*

Students may register for a maximum of ten (10) hours of dissertation credit in any one semester. Prior to their comprehensive exam, it is recommended that students do not take more than ten (10) hours of dissertation credit so that the majority of their required dissertation credit hours are completed following their comprehensive exam. Following the comprehensive exam, students must register for a minimum of five (5) hours of dissertation credit in each Fall and Spring semester. If necessary, registration for other coursework can substitute for part of the required registration during the Fall and Spring semesters as long as the minimum of 5 hours is maintained. However, coursework credits will not apply toward the minimum requirement of 30 dissertation credit hours. Once a student has completed 30 dissertation credits, s/he needs to enroll for only one (1) credit in each Fall and Spring semester until a successful defense of his or her thesis. Some students who receive financial aid and/or a stipend may have to continue to register for five (5) credit hours in Fall and Spring, and three (3) credit hours in Summer, to ensure their status as full-time students

and ensure that retirement contributions are not withheld from their stipend. (However, the exception to this Rule is thesis/dissertation, for which one (1) credit hour is considered to be full-time). Foreign students who register for only one (1) credit in a semester and who need to maintain their status on an F-1 or J-1 visa may have to have their academic advisor complete a “Less Than Full-Time Enrollment” form that allows foreign students to register less than full-time and still have valid status. Students who are unable to register for these minimum credits because of extenuating personal circumstances should apply for a leave of absence as explained in Article II, Section 5 (iv) above.

A student (who is not on a leave of absence) who fails to register continuously for dissertation credit hours in an academic year (fall and spring semesters) after having passed the comprehensive examination may, at the discretion of the Program Director, be required to retake and pass the comprehensive examination in order to regain status as a student in “good standing” in the Graduate School.

A grade of “In Progress” (IP) will be assigned in all semesters until the final approved thesis/dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School office. The Graduate School will then obtain the dissertation grade, and all IP grades will then be changed to this final grade.

#### **c. EdD Dissertation Registration**

EdD students should consult the EdD Student Handbook provided by the program, and follow the dissertation credit schedule outlined in the handbook. Once fifteen (15) dissertation credit hours have been completed, students only need to register for one (1) credit per semester until successful defense of the dissertation.

#### **d. Off-Campus Status for PhD Students**

If, in the course of his or her dissertation research, a student plans to perform his or her thesis work or study out-of-state, and thus will not be utilizing campus facilities or faculty time, s/he may request off-campus status for purposes of registering for three (3) credits of thesis. Written requests must be received in the Graduate School office at least one (1) week before the semester begins. The request must be co-signed by the Program Director. Off-campus status cannot be extended to the last semester in which the thesis defense is to be taken and during which the student must register for at least five (5) hours of dissertation research unless the student has already registered for thirty (30) dissertation credits. (Program requirements may vary.)

### **Section 12. Time Limits for Completion of Degrees**

#### **i. Master’s Degree Time Limit**

Master’s students, whether enrolled full-time or part-time, have seven (7) years from matriculation (the semester of formal admission to the Graduate School) to complete all degree requirements, including the filing of the thesis with the Graduate School if the Program requires a thesis. Students who fail to complete the degree in this seven (7) year period are subject to termination from the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the Program Director and concurrence of the Dean. For a student to continue beyond the prescribed time limit, the Program Director must petition the Dean for an extension and include 1) reasons why the program faculty believes the student should be allowed to continue in the program and 2) an anticipated timeline for completion of the degree. Normally, extensions for time to degree are for one year or less, but under *rare* circumstances, a

second extension may be requested. The relevant forms can be found at [Extension of Time Limit form](#).

## **ii. Doctoral Degree Time Limit**

Doctoral students, whether enrolled full-time or part-time, must complete all degree requirements within eight (8) years of matriculation. Students who fail to complete the degree in this eight (8) year period are subject to termination from the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the Program Director and concurrence of the Dean. For a student to continue beyond the prescribed time limit, the Program Director must petition the Dean for an extension and include 1) reasons why the Program faculty believes the student should be allowed to continue in the Program and 2) an anticipated timeline for completion of the degree. Normally, extensions for time to degree are for one year or less, but under *rare* circumstances, a second extension may be requested. The relevant forms can be found as above.

Approved leaves of absence, as described in Article II, Section 5 (iv), do not automatically extend the time limits for earning a degree, but they may be used as a reason to request an extension, if needed.

## **ARTICLE III: AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES**

Amendments to these standing rules may be initiated by petition to the Dean from at least ten (10) members of the CU Denver Graduate Faculty and may be adopted upon majority consent of the Graduate Council and approval by the Dean. Upon consultation with the Graduate Council, the Dean may approve revisions to the standing rules that update information, resolve ambiguities, promote clarity, or ensure compliance with State or Colorado Department of Higher Education regulations.