



## Graduate School

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
**ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS**

### **Graduate School Policies and Procedures**

**Approved by Graduate Council April 2013**

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Web: [graduateschool.cuanschutz.edu](http://graduateschool.cuanschutz.edu)

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The *Policies and Procedures* outlined below describe the *minimum* standards, requirements, and procedures for all graduate programs that are under the auspices of the Graduate School at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. Individual graduate programs, departments, schools or colleges may adopt more stringent policies and requirements, but not less, unless approved by the faculty Graduate Council. It is requested that the Graduate School be informed about such adjustments. Exceptions can be made in individual cases by request of the program and approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

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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 Anschutz Medical Campus. The Graduate School is one of several Schools within CU Anschutz, and is responsible for overseeing, facilitating and enhancing the educational experiences and opportunities for all graduate students and postdocs, as well as encouraging excellence in research, creative and scholarly work.

In accordance with this mission, the Graduate School leadership, together with the faculty Graduate Council representing the graduate faculty, plans, develops, approves, evaluates and administers graduate degree programs (PhD and several master's programs) and graduate certificate programs. The Graduate School also ensures that affiliated graduate programs comply with, or exceed, the Graduate School's standards of excellence and execute sound academic administration as established by the *Policies and Procedures* of the faculty Graduate Council in accordance with policies of 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:

- supporting the development of and promoting and fostering multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and innovative programs;
- promoting collaborations that create unique opportunities for student and postdoc learning, research and discovery;
- promoting a supportive environment for the graduate student and postdoc community; and
- providing a voice for graduate education and postdoctoral training in the University's strategic planning and outreach.

### **Section 2. Graduate School Affiliated Programs**

Not all programs at CU Anschutz fall under the auspices of the Graduate School. Programs that offer independently accredited professional degrees can be overseen by their respective school or college, while master's and doctoral programs that are not accredited by outside agencies require affiliation with the Graduate School. Independently accredited graduate degree programs can, however, choose to affiliate with the Graduate School in which case they need to follow policies approved by the Graduate Council.

For Graduate School-affiliated programs the relevant administrative responsibilities are shared between the Graduate School and the home school or college.

#### **Administrative responsibilities that lie within the Graduate School**

For affiliated programs the Graduate School is responsible for:

1. ensuring that all programs abide by the *Policies and Procedures* of the faculty Graduate Council and executed by the Graduate School;
2. programmatic approval and periodic program review;
3. maintenance of records of approved graduate coursework and approval of substantial changes (more than 10% credits of required courses) to existing graduate programs;
4. final approval of add/drop forms after the official enrollment deadline has passed, following approval by the course instructors;
5. final approval of grade changes following approval by the course instructor;

6. degree audits;
7. final thesis and dissertation formatting checks;
8. certification of graduates from affiliated master's and doctoral programs as well as Graduate School certificates
9. developing comprehensive and program-specific recruitment and marketing plans to support enrollment and admissions;
10. student appeals not resolved within their home school or college; and
11. leaves of absence, special processing forms, such as extensions for time-to-degree and student terminations.

### **Administrative responsibilities that lie within the schools and colleges**

Individual school and colleges are responsible for:

1. continuous oversight and administration of the program;
2. recruitment of students
3. matriculating students
4. approval of graduate courses for those schools and colleges with in-house curriculum committees, with copies forwarded to the Graduate School to ensure that consistent academic standards are applied across schools and colleges. The Graduate School forwards the approved courses to the Registrar;
5. add/drop forms approved by the course directors before submission to the Graduate School and the Registrar.
6. grade changes approved by the course director prior to submission to the Graduate School and the Registrar.
7. Please contact the Graduate School if more information is needed.

All PhD programs at CU Anschutz, must be affiliated with the Graduate School and follow these *Policies and Procedures*. For master's and other graduate degrees and certificates, Graduate School affiliation is required if these programs are not regularly reviewed by an accrediting agency. The Graduate School website ([graduateschool.cuanschutz.edu](http://graduateschool.cuanschutz.edu)) lists *all* graduate degree programs and certificates. Those programs that are affiliated with the Graduate School are labeled accordingly.

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

The Graduate School is jointly administered by:

- the Dean of the Graduate School,
- 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 (hereafter referred to as the Dean) is the chief academic and administrative officer of the Graduate School, appointed by the Chancellor and reports directly to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs. The Dean is responsible for the application of the *Policies and Procedures* of the Graduate School and the overall coordination and effectiveness of Graduate School in supporting 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 *Policies and Procedures* that update information, resolve ambiguities, promote clarity or ensure compliance with mandates from the State, the University of Colorado, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, or the Higher Learning Commission. The Dean will present modifications and adjustments to the Graduate Council and request approval by majority vote.
- 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 Anschutz is consistent with and supportive of the goals of the campus Strategic Plan with respect to research, education and creative work;
- enhancing and supporting a diverse campus through assistance in the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty, researchers and student body;
- providing academic support to graduate program directors and administrators;
- 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 assigned by the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs.

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

Associate and Assistant Deans support the mission of the Graduate School by overseeing four broad categories: 1) Academic Affairs, 2) Recruitment and Marketing, 3) Admissions and Student Progress and 4) Postdoctoral Affairs and Career Development. Associate Deans will normally have doctoral degrees and faculty appointments in one or more academic Departments, allowing an interaction with Program faculty on a peer basis. Assistant Deans will normally have graduate degrees, including doctorates, relevant to their responsibilities.

- a. The responsibilities of the Associate or Assistant Dean include, but are not limited to:*
- helping faculty develop graduate programs and assisting in the development of new degree programs and certificates;
  - overseeing the functions of admissions, and student progress officers;
  - building programmatic bridges between programs, schools and colleges;
  - introducing collaborative initiatives with local private sector entities;
  - assisting with marketing and the development of targeted recruitment and retention plans;
  - monitoring graduate faculty appointments;
  - facilitating graduate program reviews;
  - identifying fellowships and providing assistance to student applicants;



- overseeing postdoctoral affairs;
  - overseeing career services and career counseling;
  - coordinating with graduate student organizations;
  - coordinating outreach activities with campus entities to enhance diversity and inclusion; and
  - carrying out other responsibilities assigned by the Dean.
- b. *The responsibilities of the Graduate School officers for admissions, recruitment and student progress 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 communications for application and constituent management systems;
  - communicating and coordinating with the Registrar's Office(s), Bursar's Office, Student Health Promotions Office, Security/Badging Office, Financial Aid and the Office of International Affairs (OIA) on graduate student issues;
  - maintaining records of all stages of student progress, including:
    - monitoring compliance of Graduate School *Policies and Procedures* regarding registration, time limits for completing exams, and degree completion;
    - checking and approving the Application for Candidacy and composition of all final, comprehensive examination and thesis defense committees, including graduate faculty appointment for committee members.;
    - reviewing final theses and dissertations for compliance to Graduate School standards and approval;
    - authorizing students for graduation;
  - representing the Graduate School on planning committees for graduation ceremonies.
  - overseeing the Student Academic Honor and Conduct Code and Academic Grievance process; and
  - carrying out other duties assigned by the Dean.

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

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

The faculty Graduate Council advises the Dean on matters related to the development, coordination and evaluation of Graduate School programs and *Policies and Procedures*. The Graduate Council consists of the Dean (who serves as chair and non-voting member) and graduate faculty representing Graduate School programs from the CU Anschutz schools and colleges. Faculty members who represent a particular school or college on the Graduate Council are appointed by the leadership of the affiliated Graduate Programs. The Graduate Council also includes one student representative appointed for a one (1) year term, normally a member of the Graduate Student Council. Working in conjunction with the Dean, the Graduate Council develops policies consistent with the Laws of the Regents of the University of Colorado. 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. In selected cases, some discussion and voting might have to be conducted virtually to expedite processes. Two-thirds

attendance by the Graduate Council membership will constitute a quorum.

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

- reviewing and approving proposals for new graduate degree programs (doctoral, master's and dual degree programs) and graduate certificate programs.
- 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 *Policies and Procedures* with the exception of minor policy 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 Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs on appeals of decisions made by the Dean (the Dean shall be excused during these discussions); and
- carrying out other duties requested by the Dean.

The Graduate Council consists of the Dean, and

- One (1) faculty representative from each affiliated degree-granting program
- One (1) graduate student representative
- 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 when necessary 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 non-conflicted appointments to the ACAC on a case-specific basis, as the need arises.

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

Appointments to the Graduate Faculty of the Graduate School are based on standards developed by the Dean and approved by the Graduate Council. An appointment to the faculty of the Graduate School is required to serve as either the mentor or primary advisor of a student, to serve on a thesis/dissertation or examination committee, or to serve as a program or course director. According to the Colorado Council on Higher Education, course directors or primary instructors must hold a degree at least one higher than those to which the students that are taught aspire. Alternatively, they should hold a terminal degree in the field (such as PhD, MD, JD, MBA, MFA etc.). A graduate faculty appointment is also required to determine the overall grade for a graduate level course. An appointment to the graduate faculty is not required to be a guest lecturer in a graduate-level course, but is required to serve on milestone examination, thesis and dissertation committees.

There are two types of Graduate Faculty appointments: Regular and Special. A **Regular** appointment to the graduate faculty, as defined below, is available to those who have a faculty

appointment at CU Anschutz, an affiliated institution (such as National Jewish Health; The Children's Hospital; University Hospital; Denver Health, and the Veterans Administration) and/or an affiliated graduate program. **Special** graduate faculty appointments, as defined below, can be offered to individuals, such as faculty outside of the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, and/or professionals from industry and non-profit institutions, whose expertise is considered essential 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 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 serve on examining committees. Any University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver) or CU Anschutz 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. Please see the Quick Reference Table on the Graduate School web site for Membership requirements. ***Faculty holding Regular graduate faculty appointments are able to serve as primary mentors and dissertation chairs for doctoral and/or master's students, unless otherwise noted by the appointing graduate program.***

Faculty who hold Regular graduate faculty appointments are eligible to become members of additional graduate programs at CU Denver and CU Anschutz upon approval by the program director of the additional programs. Program directors should notify the Associate/Assistant Dean when an existing Graduate Faculty member is joining another Graduate Program. It is anticipated that faculty who hold Regular graduate faculty appointments will also be considered as a core training faculty for their graduate program.

Privileges of Regular graduate faculty include:

- directing (teaching and assigning grades in) graduate courses;
- serving on and chairing comprehensive and final thesis or dissertation examination committees (doctoral and master's level);
- serving on academic and administrative Graduate School committees;
- participating in activities for Program(s) in which the faculty member is appointed;
- voting on graduate faculty issues; and
- supervising thesis/dissertation research (doctoral 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 should either hold an earned doctoral degree or equivalent or have demonstrated other attainments that qualify them for membership by demonstrating experience in training PhD students. 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. Instructional 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. Faculty members with other types of appointment can also be considered for Regular appointments, the guiding criteria being the stability of the appointment for the sake of training a PhD student. It is also possible to have master's-only Regular appointments by prior arrangement with a master's program and approval of the Graduate Council.

Graduate Programs are strongly encouraged to express their expectations regarding the service of Graduate faculty as primary mentors for a doctoral or a master's thesis. Expectations could include, for example, requiring faculty members to share, in a mentor/mentee agreement, their mentoring style and work/study expectations with those students who request their mentorship.

#### *Term of Appointments*

Regular and Special graduate faculty appointments will be considered permanent until the faculty member or nominating program requests termination of the appointment. Upon retiring from CU Anschutz, faculty members will retain their Regular or Special appointment only until those graduate students whom they are either supervising as the primary mentor, or upon whose thesis/dissertation advisory and exam committee they serve, complete the requirements for their degree. If Regular graduate faculty members will continue to serve a graduate program after leaving CU Anschutz Medical Campus for other reasons, they may transition to a Special graduate faculty appointment, with the articulated support of a program.

#### **ii. Special Appointments**

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

Privileges of Special graduate faculty members 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 doctoral program;
- with the approval of the program director, co-chairing the final exam or thesis defense committees for students pursuing a master's or doctoral degree with a Regular graduate faculty member;
- with the approval of the program director, serving as a co-mentor or co-primary advisor for students pursuing a master's or doctoral degree with a Regular graduate faculty member;
- serving on academic and administrative Graduate School committees; and
- participating in activities for specific programs for which the faculty member was

appointed.

### *Qualifications Required*

It is recommended (not required) that Special members of the graduate faculty shall hold a doctoral degree or terminal degree appropriate to their respective discipline or shall have made other scholarly contributions or acquired substantial work experience in the respected discipline that qualify them for membership. Nominees for Special faculty appointments shall present a CV demonstrating evidence of their expertise appropriate for this appointment. Each program may elect to impose additional criteria that exceed Graduate School requirements.

### *Term of Appointment*

As with Regular graduate faculty appointments, Special appointments are considered permanent unless the faculty member is no longer affiliated with CU or the initiating program director indicates to the Graduate School that the appointment should be terminated. The Graduate School will periodically request that program directors confirm whether the roster of Regular and Special graduate faculty members appointed through their program should still be considered graduate faculty members.

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

All appointments to either the Regular or Special graduate faculty must be reviewed by the Dean or the Dean's designated approval officer. In cases where Regular appointments are requested for faculty members whose qualifications are in doubt, the Dean will have final approval and might seek clarification from the nominating program. The materials required for a new or a renewal appointment include:

- 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); These forms can be found on the Graduate School website.
- for Regular and Special faculty appointments, the Program must indicate whether the faculty member is approved for serving as a primary mentor for a doctoral and/or master's student;
- a current curriculum vitae.

New applications must be submitted at least two weeks in advance of anticipated participation in teaching research supervision or student examinations. Appointments will not be approved retroactively to cover these activities. Applicants who are denied an appointment to the Graduate School may appeal to the Graduate Dean for a re-assessment of their application. With the concurrence of the Graduate Dean, the status of a Regular or Special member may be revoked upon the recommendation of the Program that nominated the faculty member. If necessary under special circumstances as a disciplinary action, the Graduate Dean can also revoke an appointment without a Program's agreement.

## **ARTICLE II: GRADUATE EDUCATION**

Most graduate degree, certificate and credential programs that are affiliated with the CU Anschutz Graduate School are non-professional programs (e.g. not MD or DDS) that are offered on the Anschutz Medical Campus or an affiliated institution. In addition, there are dual-degree programs for which both degrees are awarded simultaneously.

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

As outlined in Article I, and prior to the Board of Regents and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's approval, the Graduate School, together with the faculty Graduate Council, evaluates and approves proposals for new graduate programs (doctoral, master's and graduate certificates and credentials) to ensure that the programs can be effective, adhere to established standards and requirements. This process also helps with campus-wide awareness of and input into program creation.

According to CU Regents Policy 4J, all existing graduate degree programs (doctoral and master's) must undergo in depth reviews every five to seven years. Program reviews are overseen by the office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs in collaboration with the Graduate Dean.

**Modular Master's Programs** allow the inclusion of up to two Graduate School approved University of Colorado Graduate Certificates into a master's program that uses the courses as required courses or electives for the master's degree. To earn a master's degree that is built on two graduate certificates, students will have to apply for and obtain admission from the program that accepts the graduate certificates plus earn the credits that remain to fulfill the graduation requirements of the specific master's program. The current seven (7)-year limit for completing a master's degree will also apply to students pursuing a modular master's degree. graduate certificates (consisting of 12 or more credits) can also be earned in modular fashion by earning specific graduate credentials (6 or more credits) that are designated for this purpose by the intended certificate program.

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

The periodic review of existing graduate degree programs (master's and doctoral) is required by University of Colorado Regents Policy 4J and CU Academic Policy Statement 1019. To accomplish this task, every five to seven (5-7) years, the Graduate School will provide to the graduate programs that are up for review, application, admission and graduation data for the previous three to ten (3-10) years from the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE). The Graduate School will convene meetings with program directors and their support staff to discuss the mission, optimum enrollment, outcomes, recruiting and student completion, and other parameters related to their programs. A report of the findings of the review, along with any recommendations for enhancements, will be submitted to the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, which will, possibly after requesting additional information/clarification, pass the review on to the University System and Board of Regents

### **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 submitted to the Graduate School for discussion at the Graduate Council. Especially programs that require a substantial financial commitment from the originating school/college or Central Administration are advised to discuss their plans first with the appropriate chair, dean or the EVC for Academic and Student Affairs. If such support is not available, it will not be worthwhile composing a new Program proposal.

Guidelines for new proposals are posted on the Graduate School website.  
Proposals should:

- address how the proposed program fulfills all the requirements of the CU Anschutz Graduate School and the school or college in which it will reside;
- document how proposed dual degrees meet the requirements of both schools (if two independent colleges are involved) and both degree programs
- explain the prospective employment opportunities for students who will graduate in the new program;
- address any overlap or potential conflict of the proposed program with an existing graduate program at CU Anschutz;
- demonstrate that the department and school or college is willing to commit sufficient resources (faculty, administrative and financial) to develop and sustain the proposed program; and
- address the ability of the program faculty to mentor student research in the discipline or program area.

Proposals that are favorably reviewed by the Graduate Council will be routed through the Office of Academic and Student Affairs for approval by University System office and the CU Board of Regents and implementation in accordance with policies established by the Regents of the University of Colorado (Regent Policy 4J).

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

The development of new educational tracks/sub-plans (as defined by CU-SIS) within existing approved graduate programs requires review and approval by the school/college dean and approvals by the Graduate Council. Tracks/subplans must share 1/3 of course work with the “parental/general” degree program and must require the same number of total credits as the parental/general program. Program representatives are expected to present the proposal to the Graduate Council for discussion. The Graduate Council may vote to approve the proposal, reject the proposal, or postpone voting pending the review of revisions or additional requested materials. New tracks/subplans within existing approved graduate programs only require approval by the Graduate Council; they do not require Regent approval.

### **iv. Procedures for Developing and Approving New Graduate Certificate and Graduate Credential Programs**

It is possible for graduate certificates (12 or more credits) or graduate credentials (6 or more credits) to be created entirely within the home school or college or to be created in affiliation with the Graduate School. In either case, it is advised that the Graduate School be informed of the program details so that information can be included in broad outreach efforts and on the Graduate School web site. Direct application for credential and certificate programs as discrete entities is also possible through online applications.

For graduate certificates and credentials to be reviewed and approved by the faculty Graduate Council, formal proposals should be submitted to the Graduate School. The proposal forms can be found on the Graduate School website ([Graduate Certificate Proposal Form](#) and [Graduate Credential Proposal Form](#)).

The Proposal should be accompanied by a brief statement of support from the relevant department chair and school/college dean confirming agreement with and support of creation of the proposal.

If the proposal is a collaboration between units, all chairs and deans should signify their agreement.

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

Proposals for new courses are reviewed and approved by the curriculum committee of the school or college. If CU Denver courses are involved Curriculum Oversight Steering Committee must also approve. After approval by the committee(s), the proposal should be forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School for incorporation into Graduate School records. Individual new courses or course modifications do not require Graduate Council approval unless they represent a substantial departure from the nature of the Program.

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

It is expected that departments and programs will inform the Graduate School to discontinue the listing of 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 active. Graduate programs that list courses that have not been taught for five (5) years should justify why such courses should continue to be listed.

### **Section 2. Admissions**

Students may be admitted to a graduate degree program as either regular degree students (if they meet the requirements/criteria of the graduate program and the Graduate School), or as provisional degree students (if they do not meet the program's and/or school's requirements). Procedures and requirements for admission to graduate certificate and graduate credential programs are different from those of degree programs and are outlined separately below.

The application for matriculating into a Graduate Degree Program is completed online and can be found on the website of Graduate Programs and the Graduate School. 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 was enrolled before. The selected graduate Programs will evaluate the application and interview students they might 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. The Graduate School will confirm the applicant's credentials, including authenticating transcripts, and 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:

- Hold a bachelor's, master's and/or doctoral degree from an accredited school/college or university or demonstrate completion of work equivalent to the bachelor's, master's and/or doctoral degree awarded at CU Denver or CU Anschutz, though individual exceptions to this can be made if supported by the graduate program and approved by the Graduate School.
- Have a cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.00 or higher (A is equal to 4.0) or a GPA of 3.00 or higher in twelve (12) credits 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; lower GPA averages can be considered for provisional or regular admission with specific justification by the program. Official transcripts from all higher education institutions attended must be provided before enrollment. Programs wishing to accept official transcripts from only previous doctoral degrees (e.g. PhD, MD, DDS) must have this exception approved by the Graduate Council.

- Fulfill the discipline/program specific prerequisites.

International students must meet all of the requirements above. In addition, applicants whose credentials include credits from a college or university outside the USA (not earned as part of a semester abroad program) must also provide:

- 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 an approved transcript evaluation service. Approved credential evaluators include Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc. ([ECE](#)) or World Education Services ([WES](#)). Transcript evaluations from any other educational credential evaluators would need to be reviewed and approved by the Office of International Affairs.
- Financial and other documents as required by the CU Denver | Anschutz International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) Office to process immigration documents.
- A certified English translation of all academic records and references that are not issued in English.

Evidence of proficiency in English as defined in the University policies and enumerated at the CU Denver/Anschutz Office of International Affairs. *Schools or Colleges, or individual Graduate Programs may require higher standards.*

## 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. Programs shall a) **inform the domestic students in the official admissions letter** that they have been admitted provisionally, for international student this notification may not be included in the admission letter, but the student should be alerted through independent communication. b) specify **in this notification** which requirement(s) the student will have to meet, and in what time frame, to obtain regular admission and c) complete and submit the provisional admissions form to the Graduate School. (see details below)

On the Graduate School provisional admissions form, the graduate program director should outline the rationale to support the provisional admission. The form must include a description of the conditions that the student must meet in order to become a Regular degree student. In addition to earning a GPA of at least 3.0 on six (6) or more credits, programs can require that a student enrolls in a specific course to make up for knowledge gaps/prepare for upcoming course work. **It is the task of the graduate program to verify that the requirements for further coursework have been met before the student can be fully admitted.**

The admission of the applicant as a provisional degree student requires the approval of the Graduate School. At the end of the specified provisional period, the program director should review the performance of the provisional degree student and propose to the Graduate School either a) the regular admission of the student, if the conditions have been met, or b) dismissal from the graduate program to which they were provisionally admitted, or c) propose an extension of the provisional status for one more semester. In consultation with the program director, the Graduate School will notify the student whether the indicated requirements have been met and that the student's status has been converted to that of a regular student, or that the student failed to meet the requirements. In case a program is not confident that it is indeed a good match for a specific student, before dismissing the students, the program might encourage the student to discuss with the Graduate School if there might possibly be another program to which the student could transfer.

### **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 Partially Concurrent Bachelor's/Master's Degree Programs (e.g. 4+1 Programs)**

Partially concurrent bachelor's/master's programs (4+1 programs) 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 bachelor's/ master's degree program but will not be formally admitted to the Graduate School until they have earned their undergraduate degree. Standards for admission and eligibility to move into a 4+1 program should be specified in each department's or program's approved program guide.

Students participating in a bachelor's/master's (4+1) option must:

- fulfill all credit requirements of both the graduate and undergraduate program. The graduate program may choose to allow up to twelve (12) credits to count toward both the graduate and undergraduate degree. 4+1 programs may be approved to allow more than twelve (12) credits to count toward both the graduate and undergraduate programs if the master's program requires more than thirty (30) credits. The program director may decide how many graduate level courses may count toward both degrees, but no more than 40% of the master's program.;
- petition to the graduate program allowing this option *before* enrolling in 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 to Degree Programs**

Students who were previously admitted to a graduate program but who did not complete that degree program can be readmitted to the same degree program at the discretion of the program. The following requirements must be satisfied before being readmitted:

- clarify the students' status with the graduate program and Graduate School to determine their eligibility to return and pursue the same degree;
- before deadlines have passed for the term in which a student expects to return to CU

Anschutz, and before the maximum course enrollment numbers have been reached, the student should submit an abbreviated application and application fee to the specific graduate program for approval of readmission;

- meet any admission requirements required of new matriculants (i.e., official transcripts for coursework taken during absence, background checks, immunizations, etc.)

Programs are under no obligation to readmit the student. Students who have not been registered for more than one (1) year [i.e., three (3) terms] at CU Denver or CU Anschutz must reapply to the program and supply updated information and academic credentials. However, programs have the discretion to decide to readmit a student after periods longer than a year without undergoing the full, formal reapplication process. Such readmissions are accomplished in consultation with the Graduate School. Students seeking readmission should consult the program director before applying.

#### **vi. Graduate Credential or Graduate Certificate Programs**

Students can apply for graduate certificates (minimum 12 credits) and graduate credentials (minimum 6 credits) in three ways, depending on the program.

- One is to use the credits earned while pursuing a graduate degree and apply to be granted a certificate or credential in addition to whatever degree is earned. With program approval, the same credits can be used for both the credential/certificate and the degree requirements
- A second method is to enroll as a non-degree graduate student and take the courses specified by the program. Upon successful completion of the required and elective courses students can apply to be awarded the graduate certificate or graduate credential.
- A third method is available if the originating school or college lists the credential or certificate for direct applications in Slate.

Requirements for applications to graduate credential or graduate certificate programs are less extensive than for graduate degree programs and can vary by program.

Certain graduate credentials can be “stacked” to earn graduate certificates. Similarly, certain certificates can be applied toward earning a master’s or doctoral degree, though entering the degree program requires an additional formal application to and acceptance by the degree program. Students should check beforehand with the originating school or college to find out what Credentials and Certificates can be stacked.

#### **vii. Changing Degree Programs**

Students who are currently enrolled in a graduate program and who want to change programs must be accepted by the new program to which they would like to transfer and complete appropriate forms. A Program Transfer Form can be found on the Graduate School website. This form should be used only if a student is *transferring between programs that are both administered by the Graduate School*; to transfer from a Graduate School program to a program not administered by the Graduate School or vice versa additional documentation (possibly including a new application) may be required. Students should consult with the new program and the Graduate School for details.

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

#### **Graduate Course Definition**

- 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 or equivalent (**no pass/fail** or S/U, unless by special exception of the Graduate School; Spring and Summer term 2020 were exceptions due to coronavirus adjustments);
- 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 Anschutz may enroll in graduate level courses at other campuses within the University of Colorado System (CU System); credit hours earned within the CU System will *not* be subject to the policies of transfer credits. They are referred to as “**resident credits**” similar to the credits that a student might earn at CU as a non-degree seeking student.

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

The minimum number of credit hours required for earning a master’s degree is thirty (30). Many programs require more than 30 credits. If the program includes a thesis, research paper or internship 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 fifteen (15) credits of the minimum thirty (30) credits of coursework required for the master’s degree.

While it is expected that most of this coursework will be at the graduate level (5000 and above), some graduate programs may allow up to two 4000 level undergraduate courses (maximum of 6 credits). Of those at least one must be from outside the program’s discipline (different program four letter prefix) to count towards the graduate degree. Grades in all courses must be a “B minus” (B-) or better to count toward the degree unless the program specifies more stringent requirement. In rare cases the program might make the case to the Graduate School for accepting a single “C” or “C+” grade as long as the GPA remains above 3.0 (see Section 6). This should be approved by the program director in consultation with the Graduate School.

#### **ii. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree (minimum requirements)**

The minimum required credit hours for a doctoral degree is thirty (30) credits of coursework, all of which must be at the graduate level (5000 and above) and meet program requirements, plus at least thirty (30) dissertation/research credits. In special cases, credit hour adjustments can be made with formal approval by the Graduate Council. ***All students should check the specific requirements of their programs.*** Graduate level coursework from an earned master’s degree may be applied toward a doctoral degree with program approval; similarly, coursework of a doctoral degree may be applied toward a master’s degree with program approval. Grades in all courses must be a “B minus” (B-) or better to count toward the degree unless the program specifies more stringent requirement. In rare cases the program might make the case to the Graduate School for accepting a single “C” or “C+” grade as long as the GPA remains above 3.0 (see Section 6). This should be approved by the program director in consultation with the Graduate School.

#### **iii. Professional Doctorate Degrees (minimum requirements)**

The minimum number of credit hours required for earning a professional doctorate degree affiliated with the Graduate School is fifty-five (55), though programs can require more credits. At least 30 credits should be didactic/course-based credits. Programs created after January 2021 that propose to require fewer than 55 credits should provide specific justification at the time of the program proposal.

If a program includes a thesis, dissertation, research paper or internship as the culminating

requirement, work for the thesis/research paper must count for at least 25% of the credits (14 for a 55 credit program), unless specified otherwise by individual Programs and approved by the Graduate Council.

While it is expected that most of this coursework will be at the graduate level (5000 and above), some professional doctorate programs may allow up to two 4000 level undergraduate courses (maximum of 6 credits). Of those undergraduate courses at least one has to be from outside the Program's discipline to count towards the graduate degree. Grades in all courses must be a "B minus" (B-) or better to count toward the degree unless the program specifies more stringent requirement. In rare cases the Program might make the case to the Graduate School for accepting a single "C" or "C+" grade as long as the GPA remains above 3.0 (see Section 6).

#### **iv. Graduate Credentials and Graduate Certificates**

Graduate credentials require six (6) or more course credits and graduate certificates require twelve (12) or more course credits. Neither require a cumulative examination, capstone project or thesis unless specified by the originating program. Grades in all courses must be a "B minus" (B-) or better to count toward the degree unless the program specifies more stringent requirement. In rare cases the program might make the case to the Graduate School for accepting a single "C" or "C+" grade as long as the GPA remains above 3.0 (see Section 6). Students who want to earn concurrently two graduate certificates with overlapping course requirements may count only *one* course (maximally three credits) for both graduate certificates. A course that has been credited for two graduate certificate programs must not be counted again for an unrelated graduate degree, regardless of whether that degree is earned concurrently with the graduate certificate or sequentially. For graduate credentials, no courses can be counted doubly toward two credentials.

#### **v. Requirements for Dual Degrees**

Students can, with written approval of both degree programs, earn two graduate degrees concurrently outside of an approved dual degree program. Ideally, policies and requirements for such combination have previously been worked out by the two programs through an *official* application to the Graduate Council for a dual degree program. In that case, the student will have to follow the requirements and guidelines that are posted for this dual degree program. However, if a student desires a combination of two programs that have not yet developed an official dual degree Program, this individualized approach is possible provided *both* programs agree in writing on a) the conditions/courses that have to be fulfilled to earn both degrees, that the required courses include at least 50% of the course work that would normally be required for each program, i.e. courses with that program's prefix, and c) which of the 12 credits will count towards both degrees.

For master's programs that require each 30 credits for graduation, the minimum required credits for earning two master's degrees concurrently is 48 credits, and more if one or both of the individual master's programs require more than 30 credits for graduation. The two concurrently earned graduate degrees must be awarded at the same time, but lower level program completions (master's degrees, certificates and credentials) may be recognized prior to the completion of a shared/conjoined/overlapping doctoral degree. Furthermore, each of the two partner programs must develop and share with the students and the Graduate School a clear plan for the requirements that students have to fulfill should they, at some time, decide to earn only one of the two degrees.

Of note: For all dual degree master's programs, regardless of the number of credits that are required

for graduation, no more than 40% of credits of the program that requires the higher number of graduation credits may be used for dual counting. All decimal numbers may be rounded up.

#### **vi. Adding a Graduate Certificate or Graduate Credential to a Graduate Degree**

Students may wish to earn a graduate certificate concurrently with their graduate degree. Such a certificate can a) be composed of courses that are required for the degree program (integrated or stacked graduate certificate program) or b) may not share overlapping credits (free-standing graduate certificate program) No course that has been counted toward any prior degree, undergraduate or graduate, can be counted again in a graduate certificate program or for a graduate credential. If a student is enrolled in two graduate certificate programs concurrently, and these graduate certificates share one course, this one course, and only one course maximum, may be counted towards both graduate certificates if both graduate certificates are earned in the same semester. In a graduate certificate program, one course may be on the 4000 level

In any case, the addition requires approval from the student's mentor (if a PhD or professional doctorate), the degree program director, and the certificate program director. Students must complete the Intent to Complete a Graduate Certificate Form (posted on the Graduate School's website), which requires signatures from all approving authorities. The Graduate School will add the certificate to the student's program plan in CU-SIS.

Of note: graduate credential and certificate programs allow enrollment by all qualified students. To be visible to potential applicants outside a related degree program and outside the university, graduate credential and certificate programs have to be specifically coded in the Slate admissions software. To assure sufficient visibility of the Graduate Credentials and Graduate Certificate programs and facilitate the desired student recruitment, programs and schools/colleges that offer graduate credential and graduate certificate programs are encouraged to verify that these opportunities are appropriately listed in Slate.

### **Section 4. Transfer Credits**

A transfer credit is any credit that a student earned at another accredited institution *outside* of the CU System. The maximum amount of transfer credits that may be applied toward a master's degree at CU Anschutz is twelve (12) (or 40% if the program requires more than thirty (30) credits) for master's programs or thirty (30) hours of coursework for PhD degree programs (individual programs may have more restrictive limits).

Coursework that has been applied towards an undergraduate degree or another *completed* graduate degree on the same level (e.g., MA to MS) **cannot** be accepted for transfer credit. Specifically, master's courses applied to one completed master's degree may not be applied to another master's degree; however, graduate level coursework (5000 level or above) completed for a master's degree may be applied toward a doctoral degree with program approval. Also, credits earned in a graduate certificate program, that have *not* also been applied to a graduate degree program may be applied to a graduate degree program with program consent. Note that appropriate graduate courses completed over and above the requirements for another graduate degree, *i.e.* that have not been included in the application for candidacy for the other degree, can be considered for transfer credit at the discretion of the program.

To be eligible for transfer, courses must:

- be at the graduate level (5000 or above);
- have a letter grade (courses in which the grading is either satisfactory/unsatisfactory or pass/fail are not accepted, except for Spring-Summer terms 2020, for which the Graduate Council has granted a waiver to this requirement);
- have a grade of B minus (B-) or higher (individual programs may require a B or higher for transfer credit and/or may require a B or higher in the core classes of the particular discipline);
- be validated by the program director if the credits were not earned within the last seven (7) years before applying to the degree program (exceptions are possible by agreement of the program director and Graduate School).
- be transferred prior to the semester in which the student takes the doctoral comprehensive exam or master's final examination.

Graduate program directors independently or in conjunction with other academic advisors, determine what courses will be accepted for transfer. Transfer credit requests must be accompanied by an official transcript with transcript key and credits that have been earned at a university that uses quarter credits will be converted to semester credits. International transfer credits require official translated transcripts *and* transcript evaluation from the Office of International Admissions. Credits can be transferred only after a student has established a satisfactory record of at least one term of enrollment at CU Denver or CU Anschutz with a minimum GPA of 3.00 (B).

The Graduate School reviews transfer credit requests to ensure all eligibility requirements are met and transmits the request to the Office of the Registrar Transfer Articulation Team for posting. Note that transfer credits do not contribute to a student's graduation GPA.

#### Resident Credits:

Credit hours earned within the CU System will *not* be subject to the policies of transfer credits. They are referred to as “**resident credits**” similar to credits that a student might have earned at CU as a non-degree seeking student. The maximum number of Resident Credits that can be adopted by a graduate degree program is decided by the program. Adopted resident credits count towards the students program GPA.

## Section 5. Enrollment Requirements

Students entering any graduate program are expected to hold a bachelor's or master's degree from an accredited college or university. Exceptions to this requirement for demonstrating completion of work equivalent to a bachelor's or master's degree earned at CU Denver or CU Anschutz are possible by petition from the program to the Graduate School. If these exceptions are to be a policy of the program, the policy should be discussed and approved by the Graduate Council. It is the prerogative of the program to select the assessment format that will establish if prior work/degree equivalency applies. Students who have not yet completed all requirements for their bachelor's degree may obtain program permission to matriculate into a graduate program. In such cases, students will normally be required to finish their undergraduate training by the end of the first semester of enrollment in the graduate program to complete all bachelor's degree requirements. Students who fail to complete all bachelor's 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.

## **Requirements for full-time enrollment:**

### **Registrar:**

- To be considered full time in the CU System, students must be enrolled for a minimum of *five* didactic credits or *one* dissertation, thesis or candidacy credit. These requirements apply to all semesters.

### **Financial Aid:**

- To be eligible for financial aid, students have to be enrolled for a minimum of *three* didactic credits or *one* dissertation, thesis or candidacy credit. Full-time status for financial aid purposes is a minimum of 5 credits. More credits could increase the amount of available loan funds. These requirements apply to all semesters.

### **Veteran & Military Student Services (VMSS):**

- Full-time/part-time status is reported to the VA according to University of Colorado policy.

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

The minimum number of credit hours required for a master's degree is thirty (30). Master's degrees must be completed in seven (7) years regardless of full-time or part-time enrollment. The minimum residency requirement at CU Anschutz for master's students is two semesters of full-time scholarly work beyond the attainment of the bachelor's degree.

Students who left a program for an extended time (> seven years) without having earned a degree can reapply to that program or a different program. If the course work is still valid (verification required) and if the students' old GPA was 3.0, student can, with program permission, continue their studies. Alternatively, dependent on the program, the program may require that the student enrolls with a completely new start. In this case, old coursework and grades (GPA) will not count towards the newly started graduate program. Exceptions to these time limits are possible with the agreement of both the program director and Graduate School.

### **ii. Doctor of Philosophy Degree Enrollment Requirements**

The minimum number of credit hours for earning a PhD is thirty (30) credits of coursework, all of which must be at the graduate level (5000 and above) and thirty (30) dissertation credits, unless otherwise approved by the Graduate Council and specified here.

- The PhD in Nursing requires thirty (30) credits of coursework and eighteen (18) credits of dissertation.
- The PhD in Clinical Health Psychology requires only six dissertation credits to the unusually high number of) didactic, practicum and other credits.

The minimum residency requirement at CU Anschutz for doctoral students is six (6) semesters of full-time scholarly work (didactical and dissertation credits) 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 in the advanced degree program while enrolled at CU Denver or CU Anschutz. Up to four (4) semesters of credit (30 credit maximum) may be allowed for a master's degree earned at CU Denver or CU Anschutz. Rare exceptions to these limits require approval by both the program director and the Graduate School Dean.



### iii. Professional Doctorate Degree Enrollment Requirements

The minimum number of credit hours for earning a Professional Doctorate affiliated with the Graduate School is 55, with at least 30 of those credits in didactic coursework. Exceptions to these minima must be approved by the Graduate School and Graduate Council at the time of the Program proposal. The minimum residency requirement at CU Anschutz for doctoral students is six (6) semesters of full-time scholarly work (didactical and dissertation credits) 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 Anschutz. Up to four (4) semesters of credit (30 credit maximum) may be allowed for a master's degree earned at CU Denver or CU Anschutz. Rare exceptions to these limits require approval by both the program director and the Graduate School Dean.

### iv. Leave of Absence

Students who need to leave a graduate program for a period of time (up to one (1) year) should consult their program directors for guidance on a Leave of Absence (LOA). Personal LOAs are reviewed and approved entirely through the program and the Graduate School; medical LOAs are managed through the CU Anschutz Student Outreach and Support Office in collaboration with the program and the Graduate School. An approved LOA pauses the student's academic record and automatically extends the time limit for completing a degree by the equivalent amount of time that the student spends on leave. Requests for LOA that exceed one (1) year may be approved with sufficient justification to the Dean of the Graduate School. Students who do not return from their approved LOA will be considered to have withdrawn from their program and will either be required to formally re-apply for admission, or, at the discretion of the program, may be re-admitted through an expedited process.

## Section 6. Grades and Quality of Graduate Work

To maintain satisfactory academic progress, advance to candidacy and earn a graduate degree, credential or certificate ***students are required to maintain a minimum overall Program GPA of 3.00 (B) for all graduate credits required for the degree. This requirement also applies to undergraduate (i.e., 4000 level) courses that may be accepted for the graduate degree.*** All courses, including the limited 4000 level (undergraduate) courses accepted for graduation, must be graded with a letter grade.

*Of note:*

- a) The Graduate School distinguishes between program GPA and university GPA. A required or elective course that a student failed (i.e., earned a B minus or less) will not be included in the program's application for candidacy and will not count towards the program GPA. However, the failed course will be included in the Registrar's calculation of the university GPA. Due to this distinction, a student's program and university GPA can be different. For students who seek access to further training (PhD, MD. etc.) only the university GPA might be taken into account.
- b) Students can enroll in program related courses as non-degree seeking students, and these resident credits can then be adopted by the corresponding degree program. However, the Registrar will list these non-degree credits as having been earned in a *prior* semester, i.e., before the degree program was started. While the *degree program* can recognize/adopt these credits for the degree, the Registrar *does not* included them in the university GPA that a student earned in the degree program. This omission is important for students who are aiming

for further training in highly competitive programs after completion of their graduate degree, and these students might want to point out in their application letters why their real GPA is not reflected on the transcript (i.e., because the Registrar does not include in its GPA calculation credits that have been earned before program entry).

Failure to maintain a 3.00 Program GPA will result in the student being placed on academic probation. Courses completed with grades below the letter grade of B- (GPA 2.7) may not be applied toward fulfillment of the requirements for any graduate (doctoral or master's) degree, credential or certificate within the Graduate School. Students who earn a letter grade less than B- in a course that is required for graduation in a specific program will have to re-enroll in that course to earn the passing grade, as defined by the Program (i.e. B- or higher). Students who earned a grade below B- in an elective course can choose an alternative course to earn the required number of credits. Students should have no more than three attempts to pass a course (including withdrawals) without program approval. All grades, including the failing grade for the course, will be listed in the student's University of Colorado transcript and will be included in the cumulative graduate GPA. Grades in all courses must be "B minus" (B-) or better to count toward the degree unless the program specifies more stringent requirements. If a program can, in selected cases, justify accepting a grade of "C" or "C+" for graduation, and provided the student's program GPA still is 3.0 or higher, an exception can be made. The Graduate School should be notified of all exceptions. Thus, by counting only the student's grades of B- or better, a student will have to have earned a minimum program GPA of 3.0 to earn the degree, but might hold a cumulative University of Colorado GPA below 3.0.

### **In-Progress (IP) and Incomplete (I) Grades**

All graduate courses must be graded with a letter grade. An In-Progress (IP) grade is assigned for thesis/project/dissertation or internship hours until the final approved thesis/project or dissertation grade is submitted to the Graduate School. An incomplete grade (I) should only be assigned if a) the majority of course work has already been completed and b) of the cause for a student's inability to complete the required work is outside the student's control (disease, passing of a family member, etc.) the failure to complete the work in time is due to causes outside a student's control. (In all other cases, students should be encouraged to withdraw from the course so as not to impact their GPA. Courses from which a student withdraws after the add/drop date are graded with W). Incomplete work must be completed in one academic year, though programs can impose shorter time limits. Unless a grade change is made by the course director the Registrar automatically changes an I to a failing letter grade (F) after one (1) year, unless a grade change is initiated by the course director. If a student enters military service before completing a course and an I is reported, this grade may be carried on for the duration of the student's service, provided this service requirement has been communicated to the Graduate Program and the Graduate School.

Credit by examination is not allowed for graduate students. **[RECONSIDER PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENTS AT November MEETING?]** However, programs may allow a student to challenge and test out of a given course to prove their 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 enroll in a different course or an elective. In all cases, the student must meet the minimum program credit requirements to earn the degree.

Any credits earned more than seven (7) years prior to applying for candidacy for either a master's

or doctoral degree must be evaluated and deemed to be current by a process determined by the graduate program in which the student is enrolled. This process should be documented and consistent for all students. The graduate program records this decision with the Graduate School by submitting the Course Validation Form (one for each validated course) with the Application for Candidacy.

## **Section 7. Admission to Candidacy**

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

Students who wish to earn a master's degree must apply for candidacy. 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 available on the Graduate School website.

All required program approval signatures must be obtained before the Application for Candidacy Form is submitted to the Graduate School for final approval and filing. An approved form certifies that a student's coursework is a) satisfactory, all courses have been graded with at least a B minus or better and the Program GPA is at least 3.0 b) that the listed courses are compliant with the program curriculum. The Application for Candidacy Form will serve as the student's degree audit.

### **ii. Doctor of Philosophy Degree**

Students must apply for admission to candidacy for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree at least two (2) weeks before taking the comprehensive examination. The Candidacy Form is available on the Graduate School web site. The program director must approve the completed application form before submission to the Graduate School for final approval and filing. *Students may not participate in the comprehensive examination if on probation, i.e., have a program GPA less than 3.00 for all graduate courses, or before they have completed or registered for all non-thesis coursework required by the program.*

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

### **iii. Professional Doctoral Degree**

Students who wish to earn a professional doctorate degree must apply for candidacy. 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 available on the Graduate School website.

All required program approval signatures must be obtained before the Application for Candidacy is submitted to the Graduate School for final approval and filing. An approved form certifies that a student's coursework is a) satisfactory, all courses have been graded with at least a B minus or better and the program GPA is at least 3.0 b) that the listed courses are compliant with the program curriculum. The Application for Candidacy Form will serve as the student's degree audit.

## **Section 8. Thesis/Dissertation Requirements**

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

Students who are enrolled in a program that requires a thesis must conduct their thesis work under the supervision of a thesis advisor, and, in some instances, an advisory committee. 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. Master's students who conduct thesis work must register for a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of fifteen (15) credit hours of their program's thesis course over the course of their training, unless specified otherwise by their specific master's program. Students should be registered in at least one (1) didactic course or thesis credit in any regular semester (Fall or Spring) when they are conducting thesis work; the program may or may not require enrollment for a student to conduct thesis work during the summer. This requirement specifically applies to master's programs and does not affect doctoral requirements.

The thesis that is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the master's degree must meet the formatting criteria outlined in the Formatting Guide for Theses and Dissertations available on the Graduate School website. Substantive contributions to research and writing of chapters by other persons should be explicitly acknowledged, either in an Acknowledgement section or in the appropriate chapters. The graduate program or the Graduate School, at the discretion of the program, conducts the final review of master's thesis for proper formatting. The thesis should be reviewed by a committee of at least three (3) graduate faculty members, and approved by a majority, regardless of whether the program requires an oral defense. The final, formally approved master's thesis must be submitted to ProQuest by the Graduate School's published deadline for the term in which the student will graduate unless an extension is approved by the Graduate School. ProQuest allows embargoing public access to thesis content, but because the scholarship contained in theses is publicly supported, the Graduate School restricts the period of embargo to two (2) years. Under special circumstances the leadership of the master's degree program can approve longer embargo periods or extension of existing embargoes.

Any In Progress (IP) grades must be changed to a final letter grade by the program in conjunction with the final thesis submission to the Graduate School. These grade changes are made in accordance with the relevant program/college/school/campus grade change process, which may include final approval and submission by the Graduate School at the request of the student and program director.

### **ii. Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation**

A dissertation is based upon original research and is expected to demonstrate mature scholarship and critical judgment, as well as familiarity with the tools and methods of research. The work must be conducted and presented on a subject approved by the student's dissertation advisor and the Dissertation Advisory Committee. The research must meet any 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 doctoral degree and must meet the formatting criteria outlined in the Formatting Guide for Theses and Dissertations available on the Graduate School website. Substantive contributions to research and writing by other persons should be explicitly acknowledged, either in an Acknowledgements section or in the

appropriate chapters. The Graduate School or the graduate program conducts the final review of dissertations for proper formatting. The final, formally approved dissertation must be submitted to ProQuest, with the completed Dissertation Approval Form, by the Graduate School's published deadline for the term in which the student will graduate unless an extension is approved by the Graduate School. ProQuest allows embargoing public access to dissertation content, but because the scholarship contained in dissertations is publicly supported, the Graduate School restricts the period of embargo to two (2) years. Under special circumstances the leadership of the PhD degree program can approve longer embargo periods or extension of existing embargoes. The thesis must be approved by a majority of the defense committee members, plus the student's advisor, if that person is not part of the defense committee.

*a. Doctoral 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 by 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 Examination Committee, programs have the flexibility to permit or prohibit the student's advisor to serve as Chair of the Dissertation Advisory and Dissertation Examination Committee(s).* The Dissertation Advisory Committee will serve an advisory function to the student, and together with the dissertation advisor 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 a dissertation.

***All Doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy must meet with their Dissertation Advisory Committee at least once per year***, although some programs may require – and the Graduate School encourages – more frequent 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 satisfactory progress has been made since the previous meeting. For programs that use the Graduate School electronic records programs (e.g. GAIA) to track student progress, the committee members will complete the Predoc Progress Report, which will be sent to the student, all committee members, program director, program administrator and Graduate Dean (or designee). In case of a non-satisfactory performance, the examination report should include suggestions on how the student's productivity can be improved. If students fail to meet at least *once* in twelve (12) months with their Dissertation Advisory Committee, the program should 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 should not be permitted to register for subsequent semesters.* Once the student is in compliance with this policy, registration can be permitted.

*b. Doctoral Dissertation Registration*

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

The purpose of comprehensive examinations is to determine whether students are prepared to

proceed to the independent scholarship portion of their doctoral studies. Students should not have earned more than ten (10) hours of dissertation credit prior to their comprehensive exam, so that the majority of their required dissertation credit hours are completed following their comprehensive exam. Following the comprehensive exam, students should register for dissertation credits each semester to maintain an active status.

After the student has earned the thirty (30) minimum dissertation credits, individual Programs may permit students to enroll in only one (1) credit hour of dissertation per term, though typically programs require more during Fall and Spring terms. Any number of dissertation credits fulfills the full-time enrollment status for financial aid purposes. Students may register for up to ten (10) credit hours of dissertation in a single semester; enrollment for additional credits beyond ten (10) credit hours requires the Graduate Dean's approval.

International students who register for only one (1) credit in a semester and who need to maintain their full-time status on an F-1 or J-1 visa need to apply for a reduced course load through CU Denver/Anschutz International Student Services, and section of the Office of International Affairs. Under certain circumstances this registration allows foreign students to register for less than full-time credits while maintaining their visa status. Students who are unable to register for these minimum required credits because of extenuating personal circumstances should apply for a Leave of Absence as explained in Article II, Section 5 (iv) above.

Doctoral students who have passed their comprehensive exams and are not on academic leave must register continuously for dissertation credit hours in an academic year (Fall and Spring semesters) while working on their dissertations. Students who do not enroll for three (3) consecutive semesters will, in agreement with the graduate program, be discontinued from the Graduate School (i.e. inactive student status). Non-enrolled students must not use campus and faculty resources.

#### *c. Off-Campus Status for Doctoral Students*

If, in the course of their dissertation research, students plan to perform their thesis work or study out-of-state, and thus will not use campus facilities or faculty time, they may request **off-campus status** for purposes of registering for three (3) credits of dissertation.

### **iii. Professional Doctoral Degree**

Students who are enrolled in a professional doctorate program that requires a graduate apprenticeship must conduct their apprenticeship work under the supervision of a graduate apprenticeship mentor and an advisory committee. All work conducted for a professional doctorate 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. Professional doctoral students who conduct graduate apprenticeship work must register continuously in Fall and Spring terms, for the number of graduate apprenticeship credit hours specified by their program over the course of their training. Students should also be enrolled for at least one credit during summers, allowing them to take advantage of University resources.

A doctoral dissertation or report that is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the professional doctorate must explicitly acknowledge substantive contributions to research and writing of chapters by other persons, either in an Acknowledgement section or in the appropriate chapters. The doctoral dissertation or report should be reviewed by a committee of at least three (3)

graduate faculty members, and approved by a majority, regardless of whether the program requires an oral defense.

Any In Progress (IP) grades must be changed to a final letter grade in conjunction with the final submission of program requirements to the Graduate School. These grade changes are made in accordance with the relevant program/college/school/campus grade change process, which may include final approval and submission by the Graduate School.

## **Section 9. Examinations**

All master's degree students must successfully complete a comprehensive final examination and/or a cumulative scholarly thesis or project in which proficiency in the knowledge and skills comprising the degree program must be demonstrated. For program-specific requirements, students should consult the Program Handbook or inquire with the program director. All PhD students must successfully complete both a comprehensive exam and a dissertation defense. Professional doctorate students must complete a program-defined capstone which can include a thesis/dissertation, an internship report or other cumulative assessments. Graduate programs may require additional examinations or co-curricular requirements for students to meet the requirements for the degree. Such requirements will be monitored by the graduate program. *Students may not take their final examination if they are on academic probation, i.e., have a GPA less than 3.00 for all courses required for the graduate degree.*

### **i. Enrollment During Exam Semester**

Students must be registered at the time they undertake either the comprehensive or final examinations and their thesis or dissertation defenses. Students who choose to perform these examinations or defend their thesis or dissertation on a date that falls between semesters must register in the semester immediately following their exam/defense. If students have already completed the required hours of thesis or dissertation work and all other coursework and are not registered for any other courses, then they may register for one (1) credit in the appropriate Candidate for Degree course for the semester to acknowledge University resources used in evaluation of the final exam/defense (e.g., CU Anschutz: CAND 6940 or NURS 6940). It is expected that students will only enroll in this candidacy course for their final semester, but conditions may require enrolling for an additional term. Students registered for the Candidate for Degree course are considered full-time for financial aid and enrollment verification purposes.

### **ii. Master's Degree Final Comprehensive 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.

The final examination/thesis defense is conducted by a committee consisting of at least three (3) members, at least 2 of whom must hold a graduate faculty appointment and must constitute a majority of voting members. The chair of the committee must be a member of the degree-granting program and have a graduate faculty appointment. To ensure independent evaluation of students' examinations, no voting member of the committee should have undue influence over another member of the committee. Undue influence could include, but is not limited to direct employment (e.g. a postdoc employed by a faculty member), familial relationships or financial relationships. Any potential conflicts should be disclosed to the student, the committee and the Graduate School by committee members.

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 on the Exam Request Form. The Graduate School must receive the Exam Request form by published deadlines. Graduate programs may have additional requirements for registering/scheduling the exam.

Final examinations may be oral, written, or both or may consist of an evaluation of a cumulative professional project. Unless the examination format is a written proposal only, the student and all members of the committee must be present for the oral examination. Participants may attend either in person or by interactive video unless program requirements are more restrictive. The primary faculty advisor's participation is determined by the program, if that person is not already part of the committee. 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 are able to attend. The student must schedule a separate meeting with the absent faculty member at an alternate time. If the original chair must be absent, a replacement must be designated by the program. A majority of the examination committee must vote for one of the following outcomes: a) Pass; b) Conditional Pass; or c) Fail. All members of the committee must sign the exam report form to document their individual vote and the form, with original signatures or certified electronic signatures, must be returned to the Graduate School in hard copy or high-quality scan within a week from the date of the exam.

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 the 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 program on the recommendation of the Graduate Program Director and concurrence of the Graduate School 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 should be signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School. 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 when the repeated exam takes place. In practice, the outcome of this examination is considered by the advisor and/or committee when determining the grade for the student's summative scholarly activity course (thesis/project/internship/capstone, etc.). This grade must meet Graduate School and program minimum requirements, i.e. a B- or better, though programs may set a higher standard for the course associated with the final comprehensive examination/defense.

### **iii. Doctor of Philosophy Degree Examinations**

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

Each program is responsible for ensuring that students are qualified for PhD studies by passing a comprehensive examination or a combined preliminary and comprehensive examination. If a program evaluates students' preparedness with a separate preliminary examination, it must be administered equitably to all students, with the limited exception of programs that require a student to have a master's degree before entering doctoral training; a master's degree may exempt the



student from the preliminary examination but cannot exempt the student from the comprehensive examination.

*b. Comprehensive Examination (or equivalent)*

After completing or registering for all program-required, non-dissertation coursework, and concurrent with applying for admission to candidacy, PhD 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 has been 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 comprehensive examination committee. To ensure independent evaluation of students' examinations, no voting member of the committee should have undue influence over another member of the committee. Undue influence could include, but is not limited to direct employment (e.g. a postdoc employed by a faculty member), familial relationships or financial relationships. Any potential conflicts should be disclosed by committee members to the student, the committee and the Graduate School. The student's comprehensive exam committee and the examination schedule must be approved by the program director before being submitted to the Graduate School on the Exam Request Form. The Graduate School must receive the Exam Request Form by published deadlines. Individual graduate programs may have additional requirements for registering/scheduling the exam.

At the program's discretion, the oral portion 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 (3rd) year for full-time students, unless indicated otherwise in program-specific guidelines and communicated to the Graduate School

The student and all members of the committee must be present for the examination, either in person or by interactive video. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Graduate School. The primary faculty advisor's participation is determined by the program, if that person is not already part of the committee. 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 are able to attend. The student must 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. If the original chair must be absent, a replacement must be designated by the program. A majority of the examination committee must vote for one of the following outcomes: a) Pass; b) Conditional Pass; or c) Fail. All members of the committee must sign the exam report form to document their individual vote and the form, with original signatures or certified electronic signatures, must be returned to the Graduate School in hard copy or high-quality scan within a week from the date of the exam.

If a student receives a Conditional Pass, the examining committee must 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 should be signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School. The student will be required to meet registration requirements and be registered during the term in which the exam is repeated.

*c. Final/Dissertation Examination*

After the dissertation has been completed, a final examination on the dissertation and related topics is conducted in two (2) parts: an oral presentation of the dissertation research that is open to the public and a closed examination conducted by the examining committee, though the examination can also be public at the discretion of the program and agreement by the student and examining committee.

The final examination/defense committee is usually, but not necessarily, the same as the student's Dissertation Advisory Committee. The dissertation defense committee shall consist of a minimum of four (4) graduate faculty members, except for the Nursing PhD program, which require a minimum of three (3) graduate faculty members. A majority of the committee members, including the chair, must be graduate faculty members of the degree-granting program. With program approval, *the doctoral student's dissertation advisor may chair the examination committee*. To ensure independent evaluation of students' examinations, no voting member of the committee should have undue influence over another member of the committee. Undue influence could include, but is not limited to direct employment (e.g. a postdoc employed by a faculty member), familial relationships or financial relationships. Any potential conflicts should be disclosed by committee members to the student, the committee and the Graduate School.

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 on the Exam Request Form. The Graduate School must receive the Exam Request form by published deadlines. Graduate programs may have additional requirements for registering/scheduling the exam. The Graduate School will send announcements of the examination to appropriate faculty members, and the Exam Report/signature form will be sent to the committee chair and other program staff for completion at the examination.

The student must submit finalized draft copies of the dissertation to the defense committee at least two (2) weeks before the examination date. Programs/committees may require an earlier deadline. The student and all members of the committee must be present for the examination, either in person or by interactive video. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Graduate School. The primary faculty advisor's participation is determined by the program, if that person is not already part of the committee. 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 and the exam committee chair at an alternate time. If the original committee chair must be absent, a replacement must be designated by the program. A majority of the examination committee must vote for one of the following outcomes: a) Pass; b) Conditional Pass; or c) Fail. All members of the committee must sign the exam report form to document their individual vote and the form, with original signatures or certified electronic signatures, must be returned to the Graduate School

in hard copy or high quality scan within a week from the date of the exam.

If a student receives a Conditional Pass, the examining committee must 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 Directors may petition the Graduate School for additional time. If a student fails the examination, they may not continue in the Program unless a time extension is supported by the Program in writing.

#### **iv. Professional Doctorate Examinations**

If Professional Doctorate students must complete either a dissertation, project or internship, or both, the capstone event can be composed of a written document as well as an oral presentation and following defense. The examining committee should be composed of at least three members with graduate faculty appointments, including the chair who should have a Regular graduate faculty appointment. If the primary mentor for research or scholarship is not a faculty member of CU Denver or CU Anschutz or otherwise cannot hold a regular graduate faculty appointment, that person can co-chair the examining committee with a faculty member with a Regular graduate faculty appointment. To ensure independent evaluation of students' examinations, no voting member of the committee should have undue influence over another member of the committee. Undue influence could include, but is not limited to direct employment (e.g. a postdoc employed by a faculty member), familial relationships or financial relationships. Any potential conflicts should be disclosed by committee members to the student, the committee and the Graduate School.

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 on the Exam Request Form. The Graduate School must receive the Exam Request form by published deadlines. Graduate [programs may have additional requirements for registering/scheduling the exam. The Graduate School will send announcements of the examination to appropriate faculty members, and the Exam Report/signature form will be sent to the committee chair and other program administrators for completion at the examination.

The student must submit finalized draft copies of the dissertation or report to the defense committee at least two (2) weeks before the examination date. Programs/committees may require an earlier deadline.

The student and all members of the committee must be present for the examination, either in person or by interactive video. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Graduate School. The primary faculty advisor's participation is determined by the program, if that person is not already part of the committee. 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 and the exam committee chair at an alternate time. If the original committee chair must be absent, a replacement must be designated by the program. A majority of the examination committee must vote for one of the following outcomes: a) Pass; b) Conditional Pass; or c) Fail. All members of the committee must sign the exam report form to document their individual vote and the form, with original signatures or certified electronic signatures, must be returned to the Graduate School in hard copy or high-quality scan within a week from the date of the exam.

If a student receives a Conditional Pass, the examining committee must 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 directors may petition the Graduate School for additional time. If a student fails the examination, they may not continue in the program unless a time extension is supported by the program in writing to the Graduate School.

## **Section 10. 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) calendar 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. If a student leaves the program (i.e. becomes discontinued through formal withdrawal or non-enrollment), the time spent away does not count toward the time limit if the student is readmitted at a later date. 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 Graduate School Dean. For a student to continue beyond the prescribed time limit, the program director must petition the Graduate School 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 Extension of Time Limit Form is posted on the Graduate School website.

### **ii. Doctor of Philosophy and Professional Doctorate Time Limit**

Doctoral students, whether enrolled full-time or part-time, must complete all degree requirements within eight (8) calendar 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 Graduate School Dean. For a student to continue beyond the prescribed time limit, the program director must petition the Graduate School 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.

Extensions for time to degree are normally issued for one year or less, but under rare circumstances, a second extension may be granted. The Extension of Time Limit Form is posted on the Graduate School website.

Approved Leaves of Absence automatically extend the time limit for earning a degree by the equivalent amount of time that the student is on leave.

## **Section 11. Program Handbook**

Each graduate program will make available (on-line, hard copy or both) a handbook containing specific program requirements and guidelines. These guidelines may differ from the Graduate School standards if they are more stringent than the Graduate School's minimum standards outlined in the Graduate School's *Policies and Procedures*. In such cases, the program-specific standards

will supersede the Graduate School standards. In addition, *Program Handbooks* 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. 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 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 12. Academic Probation and Dismissal**

When a student's program GPA falls below 3.00 (some graduate programs may require that a higher GPA be maintained), the student will be notified by the Graduate School, with a copy to the program director, that they have been placed on academic probation. The program GPA is calculated using all graduate-level work attempted while enrolled in a Graduate Program, including any 4000-level undergraduate courses that might be required for the graduate degree. **All courses, including the limited 4000 level courses that the graduate program accepts for graduation, must be graded with a letter grade.** Students will have two (2) semesters if they are enrolled as a full-time student, or four (4) semesters if enrolled as a part-time student, to raise their cumulative program GPAs (calculated using program required and elective courses only) to at least 3.00 (or greater if required by the particular graduate program). All exceptions (time extensions) must be approved by the graduate program and the Graduate School. The graduate program may also impose additional conditions on probationary students in addition to the raising their GPAs. The program director must forward these conditions in writing to both the student and the Graduate School Dean. The Graduate School, in consultation with the degree program, reserves the right to waive the probation so as to allow students to continue to enroll in course work; graduate programs may also request probation for failure to meet other academic/program requirements.

If a student starts a new Graduate School-affiliated degree program after previously having been enrolled in a different program, their program GPA with respect to Graduate School requirements will start anew, and only grades earned while enrolled in the new graduate degree program will be considered in terms of their academic standing in the Graduate School. However, the cumulative University GPA on the official transcript will reflect the student's full course history while enrolled as a degree-seeking graduate student at the University of Colorado. Additionally, if a student begins a new program, the program director of the new program may accept courses and credits earned in the previous program. These courses must be listed on the Application to Candidacy when graduating from the new degree program and will count toward the student's program GPA. Only courses with a grade of a B- or higher may count toward a graduate degree.

If students on probation do not earn a program 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 Graduate School Dean. The student may also be subject to immediate dismissal if they do not meet any additional conditions imposed by the program for moving from probationary to regular status. If there are extenuating circumstances, the program director may petition the Graduate School 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. Such notifications will include reasons for dismissal and a disclosure of the Right of Appeal.

Any student who is dismissed from the Graduate School following unsuccessful academic probation or failure to meet a program's requirements for satisfactory academic progress may reapply for admission to the same or a different graduate program after one (1) year. However, the previous program is under no obligation to readmit the student and the student should consult with the program director before applying. If a program would like to admit a student before the 1-year time period, they may submit a request to the Dean of the Graduate School.

***Students who feel they are in need of University Support Services for any reason should see the Anschutz student services website within the Office of Student Affairs.***

### **Section 13. Student Conduct and Community Standards**

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of personal integrity and professional ethics. These expectations are articulated in the Graduate School Student Academic Honor Code and the University of Colorado Denver Code of Conduct, which applies to graduate students in programs on both campuses. These documents can be found on the Graduate School website. Each document also contains instructions on how to report violations and the processes by which those violations will be reviewed.

#### **i. Academic Grievances and Appeals**

Students who think that they have been treated unfairly or in violation of programmatic/departmental policies, may ask the Graduate School, usually the appropriate Assistant Dean or Associate Dean, to help mediate a resolution with the program, department or school/college. If a school, college or graduate program has established its own procedures to consider academic grievances, then students must follow these procedures. Only in cases where a graduate program resides *only* in the Graduate School is the Graduate School the place to seek redress for academic grievances as a first resort. *The Graduate School does not intervene in grade disputes, though suspensions and dismissals from affiliated programs can be appealed to the Graduate School (see "Academic Grievance and Appeals Process" on the Graduate School website).*

An academic grievance covers 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, department, college or school (including Graduate School) policies affecting individual student prerogatives; unfair deviations from stated progress evaluation procedures (excluding individual grade challenges); unfair treatment and related issues.

Only in cases where the Graduate School has processed a Suspension, Dismissal or Denial of Progress for a student in consultation with the graduate program, students have the right to appeal that decision to the Dean of the Graduate School. Procedures governing the filing of an appeal related to a suspension, dismissal or denial of progress are available on the Graduate School website.

## **ii. Academic Misconduct**

The Academic Conduct and Appeals Committee (ACAC) is responsible for reviewing and resolving cases of academic 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]. The ACAC is not a standing committee, but is convened as needed for specific cases and will be composed of at least three non-conflicted faculty members and one non-conflicted student in addition to the Graduate School Dean or the Dean's designate.

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 primary jurisdiction in cases involving honor code misconduct or student academic grievances. For such schools and colleges, students may ask the Graduate School to mediate further discussion of possible outcomes, normally through the relevant Assistant Dean or Associate Dean. ACAC may act as an appellate review board for the final action taken by the school or college in cases of academic conduct and will forward its recommendation to the Dean of the home school or college and the Dean of the Graduate School. Further details can be found in the Student Academic Honor Code.

## **ARTICLE III: AMENDMENTS TO THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Amendments to these standing *Policies and Procedures* may be initiated by petition to the Dean from an affiliated degree program and may be adopted upon majority consent of the Graduate Council. Upon consultation with the Graduate Council, the Dean may approve revisions to the standing *Policies and Procedures* that update information, resolve ambiguities, promote clarity or ensure compliance with State or Colorado Department of Higher Education regulations.