

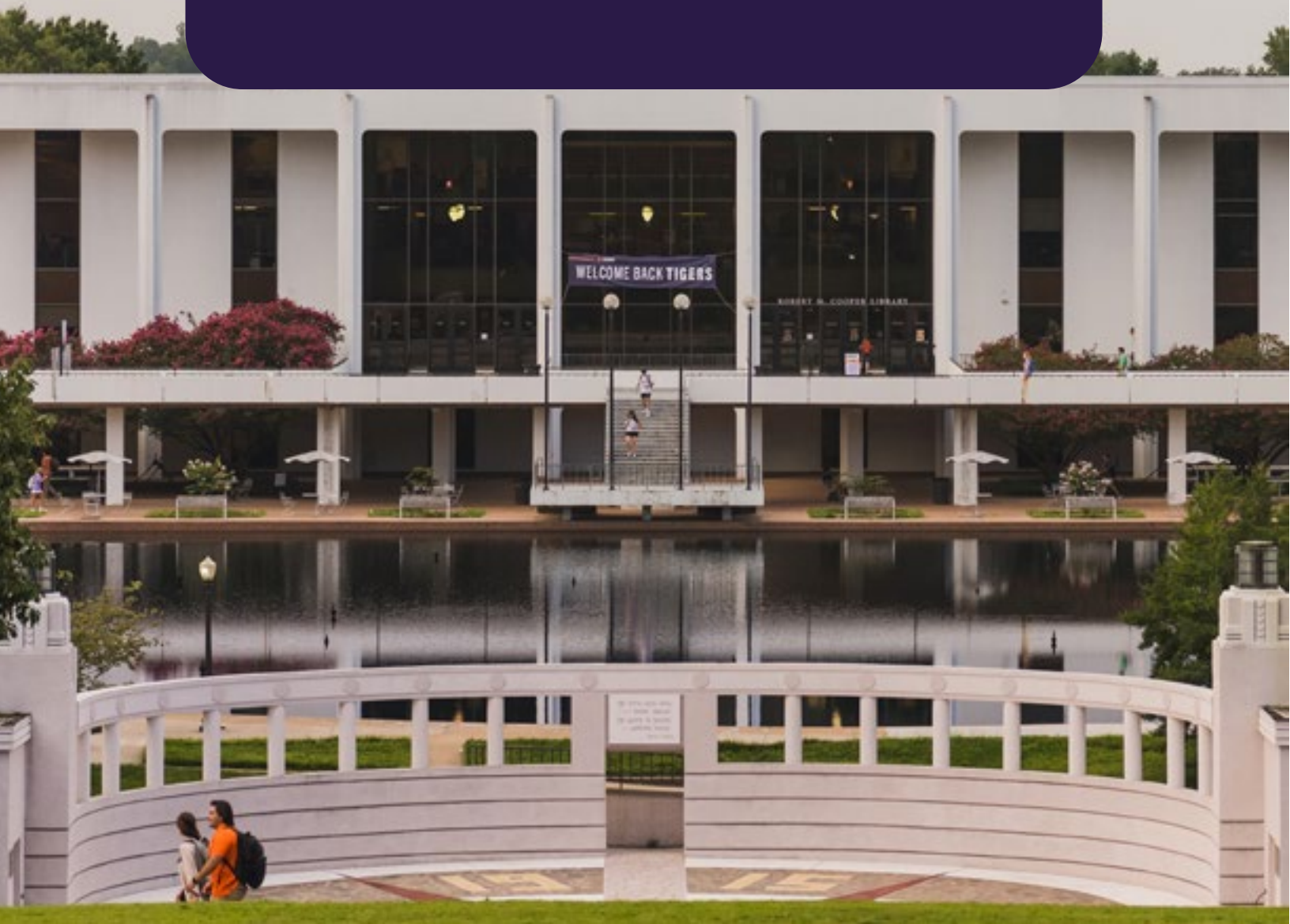


GRADUATE SCHOOL  
*Clemson® University*

# POLICIES & PROCEDURES

*Academic Year 2022–2023, **REVISED***

*Published Spring 2023*





# Purpose of this Handbook

All graduate students, as well as faculty and staff who work with graduate programs, are responsible for understanding and following policies and procedures set forth by the Graduate School. This handbook contains the policies and relevant procedures that affect the Graduate School as a whole. Students should review the handbook for the program they are enrolled in or interested in for more detailed department and program policies. These handbooks are accessible from each program's website (find a program [here](#)). If you are unable to locate a program's handbook, ask your adviser or the program coordinator; you *must* know your program's policies and procedures.

You are also subject to other Clemson University policies, which you will find in the [Policies section of the Student Handbook](#) hosted by Student affairs.

Other Universitywide policies, including the following topics, may be found by searching the webpages of the Registrar, the Office of Access and Equity, the Office of Research, and the Office of Sponsored Programs.

- [FERPA and FERPA training \(requires Clemson login\)](#)
- [EEOC/affirmative action](#)
- [Title IX](#)
- [Anti-harassment and nondiscrimination](#)
- [Plagiarism](#)
- [Research compliance training](#)
- [Copyright and patent issues](#)
- [Research policies](#)
- [Mandated reporting of abuse or neglect of a minor](#)

## About changes in Graduate School policy

Generally, you are subject to the policies in effect when you first matriculate into your graduate program. Minor changes in policy that will not affect your progress toward a degree may be implemented immediately when that is determined to be in the best interest of students and/or the University or if the changes are required by a legislative or regulatory body. These changes, along with all other *substantive* changes, will be noted in the "Changes to Graduate School Policy, Annotated" page(s) of this handbook.

We strongly recommend that you consult the most current version of the handbook (linked [here](#)) each time you need a policy reference to ensure that you are accessing the most current information.

Graduate School academic policies are created and revised via a shared governance process that begins with the Graduate School's Advisory Committee, moves to the Graduate Council and ends with approval by the provost's Academic Council. If you have questions about policies or how they are created or revised, call the office of the dean of the Graduate School at 864-656-4172 or email [Dena Smith, executive assistant to the dean](#).

### **Identifying recent changes to Graduate School policy**

An annotated table of changes made to the handbook since 2015, when it was first published as PDF document, is located at the end of this document.

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# Part 1: Application and Admission<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1. Admission Requirements

### **The Graduate School's academic admission requirements**

Faculty in the admitting programs recommend students for admission to the Graduate School after they have assessed each prospective graduate student's potential. Each graduate program maintains a graduate program handbook that describes admissions expectations specific to that program.

Applications are evaluated by faculty of each program. Programs have significant discretion in determining admission standards and class size based on factors such as the availability of academic advisors, financial support, laboratory space, and student distribution within interest areas. The Graduate School works with program faculty and their recommendations for admission in finalizing admissions decisions. Neither an academic record exceeding minimum requirements, nor satisfactory scores on standardized tests, nor professional expertise alone will assure an applicant's admission in this competitive environment. Rather, the overall record must indicate the strong likelihood that you will complete graduate study successfully.

#### ***Previous degrees***

You must hold at least a bachelor's degree from an approved institution whose scholastic rating is satisfactory to the University, or an equivalent degree from an institution outside the U.S. operating under the [Bologna process](#) whose scholastic rating is satisfactory to the University, to be admitted to the Graduate School. Some doctoral programs require a master's degree also. You must provide proof that you hold all required degrees (or will have received them by the time of your matriculation into Clemson) by submitting a copy of your transcript as described below. Any exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Graduate School and specifically and clearly noted in the respective program handbook, program webpage, and admissions materials.

#### ***Transcripts***

Unofficial transcripts showing proof of required degrees are acceptable for an offer of admission and are required by the Graduate School to accept an applicant. Once you are admitted, you must arrange for final, official transcripts showing conferral of all required degrees to be sent directly to Graduate Admissions from the issuing institution in a sealed envelope or another secure transmission process. Final, official transcripts must be received within the first semester of your enrollment, or your account will be frozen, preventing registration for future classes.

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1. Admission policies approved 25 April 2008.

## Previous academic work (transfer credit)

You may request that your advisory committee consider that up to 12 credit hours of coursework from another accredited institution may be applied to a Clemson master's degree; up to 48 credit hours may be transferred to a Clemson doctoral program. Courses graded on a pass/fail basis will not be transferred to Clemson University. For more detailed information, see [Transfer credit](#) in the Academics section of this handbook.

No courses from a partial-term session or enrollment period will be considered. Courses applied toward another degree may not be considered for transfer (see [Independence of graduate degrees](#)). Your advisory committee and program faculty have discretion over what courses (if any) will be transferred from another accredited institution so long as they conform to the stated guidelines above.

## English language proficiency

If English is not your native language, you will be required to demonstrate competence in English by presenting one of the following:

1. a satisfactory score on the TOEFL exam; or
2. a satisfactory score on the IELTS exam; or
3. a satisfactory score on the PTE Academic exam; or
4. documentation of having received a previous undergraduate or graduate degree from a U.S. institution or an institution where the language of instruction was English; or
5. completion of the ELS level 112 course.

Any TOEFL, IELTS, or PTE Academic exam score more than two years old will not be accepted. Any waiver of language proficiency requirements must be requested by the department and approved by the dean of the Graduate School using the [Request for English Proficiency Waiver](#) form.

## Programs' admission requirements and recommendations

### *Standardized tests*

The Graduate School encourages programs to use holistic evaluation of applicants' information in making admissions decisions. Programs have complete discretion concerning whether they require standardized test scores. Where standardized test scores are considered as one factor in the admissions process, programs may not use cutoff or minimum scores as an initial screening tool or as a requirement.

Once admitted to Clemson, you may not be required to take or retake any portion of any standardized exam. If you have an **approved** [form GS6 Bachelor-to-Graduate](#) (see [Combined bachelor's/graduate degree plan](#)), you may not be required to take any standardized test, as you are considered admitted upon approval of the form. You should refer to your program's [graduate program handbook](#) for more information about the admissions requirements and process for the program(s) you are interested in.

If your program requires a standardized test score (e.g., GMAT or GRE), that score must be submitted to Clemson University's Office of Graduate Admission directly from the administering agency.

### *Other documents*

If the program(s) you are applying to require letters of recommendation, a resume or CV, a personal statement, or other documents, these can be submitted or requested through our online application process. It is your responsibility to ensure all deadlines and requirements are met.

## Immunization requirements

Clemson University specifies basic health and immunization requirements for admission. You may find these requirements on the [Student Medical Services](#) webpage. The additional requirements below are set forth for graduate students.

All students at Clemson must present their immunization records, either through the MyHealth e-portal or in person, directly to Redfern upon arrival.

## Health insurance — mandatory

All domestic graduate students enrolled in nine or more hours on campus are required to be covered by some form of health insurance. Most international graduate students will be required to enroll in Clemson's student health insurance plan. Enrollment in the University's plan, administered by Redfern Health Center, will be automatic unless you are covered by other health insurance that meets certain requirements, and a waiver request is approved. If you do not submit the waiver request in a timely fashion, you will be billed for the University's plan.

The waiver request, current [mandatory health insurance requirements](#) for Graduate and International students, and [Student Health Insurance Plan](#) brochures for both mandatory and voluntary enrollees are available as PDF files. More helpful information about insurance and billing may be found [here](#). Once the waiver request form is submitted online, you will receive an email message that the request has been received. If the waiver is granted, the insurance company will send that information to Student Accounts, and the cost of medical insurance will be removed from your account. You will receive an email message indicating the decision on their request for a waiver.

International students will be billed as indicated in the [Student Health Insurance Plan](#) brochure for this insurance coverage with their tuition. This expense is included on the I-20 or DS-2019. International students who bring dependents are encouraged to purchase dependent health insurance separately at Redfern Health Center upon arrival.

## 1.2. The Application Process

[The application is available online](#). By following the three steps at this link, you'll set up a secure ApplyWeb account to complete your online application. Applications are valid for one year beyond the initial semester desired for enrollment, after which you would be required to submit a new application and pay the application fee at the rate in effect at the time of reapplication.

The type of application being submitted determines the application procedures to follow. Instructions and relevant deadlines for completing each type of application are included with the application.

The Graduate School website features a section for prospective students, "[Frequently Asked Questions](#)." If you need additional information, contact the Office of Graduate Admissions [via email](#) or call 864-656-3195.

## Dates and deadlines

You may submit your application at any time. However, most programs at Clemson have program-specific deadlines. Refer to your program's graduate program handbook for dates and deadlines.

### *International students*

Typically, the University requests that international students' applications are **completed** no later than April 15 for Fall semester enrollment, September 15 for Spring semester enrollment, and February 1 for

summer enrollment because international students must consider that additional steps, including receipt of necessary immigration documentation from the University (DS-2019 or I-20 forms), require that the financial certification process be complete before issuance of these forms. Forms I-20 and DS2019 are normally completed by the Office of International Services by July 1, October 15, and April 1 for registration in the fall, Spring and summer semesters, respectively, to allow the international student adequate time to secure a visa.

### 1.3. Special Applicant Categories

The online application for all following special applicant categories uses the same [online application portal](#) as typical applications.

#### Non-degree seeking-students

A non-degree-seeking student is any individual who does not seek to attain a graduate degree or certificate credential. Non-degree-seeking students may only become candidates for graduate degrees by first applying to, and being admitted into, a degree program. Taking courses as a non-degree-seeking student does not provide any guarantee that you will be accepted into a degree program. You may accrue a maximum of 12 credits in non-degree-seeking status. If you, as a non-degree seeking student, subsequently matriculate into a graduate degree program, that program may — at its discretion — accept up to a maximum of 12 credit hours you earned as a non-degree student to be applied towards the Clemson University graduate degree into which you are subsequently admitted.

#### Seniors (undergraduate)

A Clemson University senior with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above may apply to enroll in any graduate course, subject to approval by the department offering the course and the Graduate School. Approval is required prior to registration and may be requested via [form GS6 Request for Senior Enrollment in Graduate Courses](#). Your total course workload for the semester must not exceed 18 hours, and your cumulative graduate credits earned as a senior must not exceed 12 semester hours.

##### ***Combined bachelor's/master's degree***

An undergraduate student enrolled at Clemson University can apply for admission to a [combined Bachelor's/Graduate degree program](#) if you hold a cumulative grade point average of 3.4, and the program of interest allows this option. You must submit [form GS6-Bachelor-to-Graduate Request for Combined Education Plan](#) to be considered for this program.

#### University employees

Employees of Clemson University may enroll in classes and pursue degrees at Clemson and may be eligible for [special tuition benefits](#). However, no member of the faculty with an appointment in an academic unit at the rank of instructor or higher may be considered as a candidate for a degree in the academic department where employed. For information on how to access the tuition benefit for employees, reference the Office of Human Resources' [Employee Tuition Assistance Benefit policy](#).

## Transient graduate students

If you have been admitted to a degree program at another institution and want to take graduate courses for transfer to your institution, you may be permitted to enroll as a non-degree-seeking transient student. To indicate this status when completing the online application, choose “Transient” as program type. Applications should be submitted at least two weeks prior to registration. You may earn no more than a total of 12 semester hours while in transient status, and you will not be eligible to matriculate into graduate degree programs at Clemson University without completing a separate application as a degree-seeking student and being offered admission.

## Teacher certification

Initial certification, recertification, and advance certification for teachers and school administrators are all available through the College of Education. Students and educators may obtain general information about the South Carolina requirements for certification by accessing the South Carolina Department of Education [Certification Regulations webpage](#); contact the [College of Education](#) for details. An application fee is required.

## 1.4. Application Fees and Status

All degree-seeking students (including new students, University employees, and Clemson students applying for a graduate program after completing an initial degree) must submit a nonrefundable application fee to the University before their application is processed. The Admissions section of the Graduate School’s website lists [current application fees](#).

### Application fee waivers

McNair Scholars who hold a grade point ratio of at least 3.0 will have application fees waived. The application fee will also be waived for GEM Fellows, veterans and active-duty military personnel, and any applicants associated with the Institute for International Education (IIE), such as Fulbright Scholars and Humphrey Fellows. Under certain circumstances, application fee waivers may also be offered by a graduate program or the Graduate School to select applicants.

**Procedure for programs:** Program coordinators should contact [Kathleen Costello](#), director of graduate admissions, for details about obtaining and distributing application fee waiver codes.

### Status of application

You can check the receipt status of your application by logging onto the Graduate School’s [application portal](#). From there, click on “Manage Your Account” and then “View All Forms.” If you are concerned about applications not listed as received, contact the Office of Graduate Admissions [via email](#), or call 864-656-3195.

### Application expiration date

Acceptance under an application is valid for one year beyond the initial semester desired for enrollment, with approval from the program of study. Applications initiated but not completed within one year will become invalid. See [Deferred admission](#).

## Disposition of application materials

Credentials or supporting materials submitted for admission to the Graduate School become the property of the University and are not returned. No copies will be provided to third parties outside the University except when compelled by legal authority. Copies will, however, be provided to appropriate offices at the University in the interest of academic matters or financial awards relative to the applicant. Applications and supporting documents are retained according to the retention policies of the state of South Carolina.

## 1.5. Admission

### Status of admission decision

The faculty of the various graduate programs make recommendations for admission to the dean of the Graduate School. Offers of admission are not official until approved by the dean of the Graduate School. Official admission decisions are communicated to applicants by email from the dean of the Graduate School. You can view the status of your admission application online at the [application portal](#). Click “Manage Your Account” and then “View All Forms.”

### Admission classifications

Applicants admitted to Clemson University’s graduate programs are classified as either fully or conditionally admitted.

#### *Fully admitted*

Fully admitted status indicates that your applicant credentials equal or exceed the minimum admission criteria prescribed for the particular degree.

#### *Conditionally admitted*

An applicant may be required to complete specified conditions within two semesters (or on an alternate timeline specified by the program) of enrollment before admission. A conditionally admitted student is not officially admitted to the university or a degree program until all conditions are met. Until all conditions are met, students will be classified as *non-degree* students. Specified conditions may include, but are not limited to:

- completing an English language proficiency program. Admissions conditions for this situation will be identified in the conditional language admission decision letter issued by the graduate school. Certification of completion of the program must be submitted to the Graduate School to move from conditionally to fully admitted.
- completing additional academic requirements. Admissions conditions for this situation will be identified in written correspondence provided by the admitting department and must accompany the graduate school non-degree admission decision letter. The program or department is responsible for notifying the Graduate School that the applicant has met all specified conditions within the required timeframe.

Once conditions are met, the student must reapply to the program to be granted fully admitted status. The Graduate School will provide a fee waiver to cover this process, and if the program accepts the student as fully admitted (meaning all requirements are met at an acceptable level), the Graduate School will issue a new decision letter, and the student’s status will change from *non-degree* to *degree-seeking*. Suppose

the student fails to complete the conditions at the level specified or within the time frame specified by the admitting program. In that case, the graduate school will notify the applicant that they are not being admitted to the University, and the applicant will be separated from the university.

### ***Provisionally admitted***

Students failing to provide the required credential certification (e.g., official transcripts) will be admitted provisionally. They are considered admitted but must provide proof of completion of all required degree(s) as soon as possible following matriculation in compliance with relevant policies.

**Procedure for student:** If your final transcript indicating the awarding of the baccalaureate and/or graduate degree was not available at the time the admissions offer was made, you must arrange to have official transcripts specifying the awarding of a degree submitted to the Office of Graduate Admissions or the Office of Enrolled Student Services within the first semester of your enrollment. Students failing to provide the appropriate documentation within the first semester of enrollment may be prohibited from enrolling in subsequent semesters until the necessary documentation is received. Clemson University transcripts do not need to be requested. Failure to comply may result in dismissal.

The registrar's office at each institution previously attended must provide official transcripts in sealed envelopes with an official signature over the seal. A sealed transcript opened by a student is no longer considered official. Transcripts may be mailed to Clemson University at the following address:

Graduate Admissions Office  
Clemson University  
E-209 Martin Hall  
Clemson, South Carolina 29634 U.S.A.

Official electronic transcripts may be emailed directly from the Office of the Registrar of the sending institution to Clemson University at [gstranscripts@clemson.edu](mailto:gstranscripts@clemson.edu). A transcript submitted electronically by anyone other than the issuing institution will not be considered official.

## **Deferred admission (change of term)**

You may defer enrollment for up to one year beyond the semester indicated in your offer of admission, pending approval from the program of study. To defer admission, you must request and receive written approval from the academic program that recommended admission via the [GS Change of Term form](#). Your application and supporting materials are valid for one year. Should you wish to defer your admission beyond one year of the initial semester desired, a new application, supporting documentation, and the prevailing application fee must be submitted (see previous topic [Application expiration date](#)). If you are an international student, you should notify the Office of International Affairs when the admitting program approves your request for deferred admission.

## **Denied admission**

An applicant may be denied admission to any of Clemson's graduate programs for various reasons. If you are denied admission and believe the decision was made unfairly or improperly, you may appeal the decision.

## Admission appeals

You may appeal an admission denial if you can demonstrate that the admission decision was made unfairly or improperly. Appeals are heard by the Graduate Admissions and Continuing Enrollment Appeals Committee or Applicant Conduct Review Appeals Committee, depending on the circumstances regarding the denial.

### *Appeals procedure*

1. You must submit an appeal of denied admission in writing within 30 days of the date of the letter indicating denial or at least two weeks before the beginning of the term in which you desire to begin classes, whichever is earlier.
2. You must submit the written statement to the Graduate School requesting the appeal on [form GS-Appeal Appeal of Dismissal or Denied Admission](#) and provide evidence that the admission decision was unfairly or improperly rendered. Any documentation for the Graduate Admissions and Continuing Enrollment Appeals Committee and/or Applicant Conduct Review Appeals Committee to consider should be attached to this form.
3. For denial cases initially determined by Applicant Conduct Review Committee, the appeal will be reviewed and considered by the Applicant Conduct Review Appeals Committee consisting of the dean of the Graduate School, the chair of the Crisis Management Team, and the Vice President of Student Affairs. Upon reviewing the case, the dean of the Graduate School will communicate the appeal decision that shall be considered final.
4. For cases involving denials for academic reasons, the Graduate School will make available to the Graduate Admissions and Continuing Enrollment Appeals Committee your appeal request and the complete admission file (application; transcript[s]; supporting documents) within three days. The Graduate School will also provide the graduate program coordinator with a copy of your appeal.
5. The Graduate School will identify the earliest hearing date, schedule the meeting, reserve the room, and notify all parties of the time and location of the hearing.
6. The dean of the Graduate School's designee will attend the hearings to provide procedural guidance but will have no vote on the committee's decision.
7. You will be called in first by the hearing panel chair to present your case. Following the conclusion of your presentation, you will be excused.
8. The faculty member[s] representing the graduate program will be called in next by the chair of the committee to present the program's rationale for denying admission. This faculty member may bring to the meeting any relevant documents to share with the members of the committee. These documents will be retained with the case in accordance with the state guidelines on the retention of academic materials.
9. The committee will decide on your case, which will be communicated immediately to you and the program coordinator. This communication will be in the form of an email notification from the Graduate School.
10. An appeal of the decisions of the committee may be made by you to the dean of the Graduate School within ten business days of the committee's decision.

11. Within 15 business days, the dean of the Graduate School will render a final decision for the University on admission appeals and will communicate that decision to each party and the members of the committee.

## Readmission

A degree-seeking student who has separated voluntarily from the University without an approved [leave of absence](#) may apply for **readmission**, at which time you must pay the standard application fee. Readmission decisions must be approved by the program and the Graduate School.

If you are readmitted, you must pay a fee equivalent to registering for one credit hour for each fall/Spring semester you were absent from the University. All policies, course of study requirements, and tuition and fee levels in effect **at the time of your readmission** will be in effect for the remainder of your program of study. Courses that have exceeded the maximum time limit (which differs for [master's](#) and [doctoral](#) degrees) or in which you did not receive at least a C– will not be applied to your new program of study. Of those courses that meet the readmission criteria, programs have sole discretion as to whether or not they accept these courses. Programs also have the right to impose other requirements as part of the readmission, including (but not limited to) retaking qualifying or comprehensive exams, completing new courses or internships, etc.

**Procedure for student:** Complete the [Graduate School application](#). The application includes instructions for students seeking readmission, which include addressing program-specific questions and submitting a plan and timeline for completion as a part of your personal statement. The standard application fee and all supporting materials must be submitted even though the University may already have some of those supporting materials on file (see [Continuous Enrollment](#) and [Leave of Absence](#) in the Academics section of this handbook). Notification of readmission will originate from the Graduate School.

**Procedure for department:** Departments and programs will process the application for readmission in the same manner as a new application. All policies and course of study requirements in effect at the time of readmission will be in effect for the applicant (see [Continuous enrollment](#) and [Leave of absence](#)). Notification to students of readmission decisions will originate from the Graduate School.

## Re-entrance as an undergraduate student

Former graduate students in good standing who are interested in re-entrance at the **undergraduate** level to pursue an undergraduate degree should contact [Undergraduate Admissions](#).

## Academic renewal

If you were dismissed from the Graduate School for a grade point deficiency and you have not enrolled for a period of one or more academic years, you may apply for readmission under special conditions known as **academic renewal**. For details and procedure, see [Academic renewal in the Academics section](#).

# 1.6. Orientation and Registration

Policy surrounding new student orientation and class registration — including dates and deadlines — is maintained by the Office of the Registrar. The Graduate School and the [Office of International Services](#) offer information, procedures and support for incoming graduate students on their websites.

All new graduate students should attend the general Graduate School orientation (see “Register for Orientation(s)” under the First Things First topic on the [New Student To Do List](#) page) as well as a specific program orientation if the department holds one.

New international graduate students should visit the [Arrival](#) page of the International Services website for information about arrival, orientation, campus life, and required documentation.

## 1.7 @Clemson.edu Email and Official University Communication

According to Clemson University policy, email is an official method of communication. Thus, **all official communications will be transmitted through Clemson University email to your official Clemson email address at your “@clemson.edu” email address**, not an @g.clemson.edu address. You are responsible for monitoring this email account at all times while enrolled at Clemson University. Failure to monitor this account may cause you to miss important announcements and deadlines and will not serve as a basis for an appeal or modification of deadlines.

# Part 2: Academics

## 2.1. Graduate Program Basics

All students should familiarize themselves thoroughly with the Graduate School and Clemson University academic policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook and provided on the Office of Student Affairs [Policies page](#) on the University website. Students should consult their graduate program handbooks and their graduate program coordinators or department chairs for specific details within their degree program, which may have more stringent requirements.

### Academic integrity

#### *Graduate philosophy*

An academic environment of integrity is one in which students, faculty and staff interact with each other from a position of mutual trustworthiness. As a member of the consortium of institutions comprising the International Center for Academic Integrity, Clemson University has committed itself to preparing a community of scholars dedicated to integrity in teaching, research, scholarship, mentorship and the acquisition and display of professional values of *trust, honesty, fairness, responsibility, respect, and courage*.<sup>2</sup> Clemson graduate students are expected to avail themselves of the many opportunities and resources on and off campus to learn how to engage in professional practice with integrity. The Graduate School and the community of scholars engaged in graduate-level education will respond vigorously and expeditiously to charges of [violations of academic integrity](#).

The Graduate School and the graduate faculty will respond vigorously to charges of violations of academic integrity. To create a culture that values academic integrity:

- faculty must be clear on syllabi and in instructions to students about the academic expectations for completing assignments,
- students must be aware of academic integrity policies and expectations and must be proactive in asking for clarification on procedures for completing assigned work,
- graduate programs must engage students in discussions about disciplinary-specific issues and professional practice relative to academic integrity,
- research mentors should inform students of prominent cases of academic dishonesty by other faculty and graduate students to heighten students' awareness,
- advisory committees should discuss integrity in relation to master's or doctoral degree requirements, comprehensive exams, etc., and should be proactive in screening these products for violations.

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2. *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity*, 3rd Edition. The Center for Academic Integrity, October 1999; revised 2021. Accessed at [https://academicintegrity.org/images/pdfs/20019\\_ICAI-Fundamental-Values\\_R12.pdf](https://academicintegrity.org/images/pdfs/20019_ICAI-Fundamental-Values_R12.pdf).

## 2.2. Graduate Faculty Status<sup>3</sup>

This policy seeks to establish a graduate faculty composed of faculty members well-equipped to teach graduate-level courses, serve on graduate student advisory committees, and chair graduate student advisory committees. Absent this basic quality-control mechanism, without appropriate checks and balances, we are at risk of providing sub-optimal education for our graduate students.

### Policy

The Graduate Faculty is the group of faculty qualified and approved to direct the learning of graduate students through effective teaching at the graduate level and mentoring students' professional development and research progress. Three categories of graduate faculty are defined as: Graduate teaching faculty, Graduate advising faculty, and Graduate directing faculty. Graduate teaching faculty are approved to teach graduate-level courses. Graduate advising faculty are approved to be regular members of graduate student advisory committees. Graduate directing faculty are approved to teach graduate courses, act as members of graduate advisory committees, direct theses and dissertations, and chair graduate student advisory committees.

Graduate directing faculty who decide to leave the faculty of Clemson University may retain their Graduate directing faculty status for a period of one year. The intent is to allow a faculty member who leaves Clemson to continue as the advisory committee chair for a student who remains at Clemson and allow the advisory committee to remain intact as is, if the student and faculty member agree it is in the best interest of the student. Under extraordinary circumstances, this status may be extended for an additional year upon approval by the dean of the Graduate School.

Each college will develop policies and processes within its typical personnel review and appointment structure to define: (a) qualifications for each of the three categories of graduate faculty status; (b) how these decisions are made and approved; (c) the mechanism for periodically reviewing graduate faculty status (at least every five years) and for removing a faculty member where necessary; and (d) the appeal process. If appropriate, colleges may decide that individual schools, departments, or programs will create their own policies and processes addressing (a) – (d). As the last step in this process, the dean of the Graduate School will be responsible for final review and approval of Graduate Faculty.

At the beginning of each academic year, or as needed, each college will provide a list of changes to the graduate faculty to the dean of the Graduate School for approval. Any requests to approve Special Faculty as graduate directing faculty must be clearly identified and must include the faculty member's CV and an indication that the program and college consider the faculty member's credentials, experience, and current duties supportive of directing an active research program. The rationale for any denial or revocation of graduate faculty status by the dean of the Graduate School must first be documented and should be discussed with the dean of the candidate's college. Individuals who feel they have been treated unfairly in this process may appeal the decision to the provost or provost's designee.

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3. Revised 16 March 2016 to eliminate senior grad status. Approved 19 September 2016 by Graduate Council with amendment regarding renewal of status. Revised 19 June 2017 to clarify that units are required to have a policy, and that these are recommendations or guidelines.

## Guidance for developing college policies

- A. Qualifications for **Graduate Faculty** status vary across disciplines. Some example classes of qualifications include:
1. Faculty status (at Clemson, for example, being a Regular or Administrative faculty member, rather than a Special faculty member), and how unusual cases will be handled (such as scholars or experts outside Clemson);
  2. A clear statement of the minimum acceptable degree (often a terminal degree) and/or other critical qualifications appropriate for the field in the discipline or closely related disciplines (e.g., professional licensure);
  3. Proficiency in scholarly/creative production as evidenced by indicators such as:
    - a. Active scholarship documented by the publication of scholarly work (e.g., books; articles in refereed journals or conference proceedings), grants and contracts received, and/or creative activities appropriate to the field
    - b. Recognition of creative contributions and research by awards, prizes, fellowships, and similar honors
    - c. Editorial service for scholarly journals, university press, scholarly books, and professional manuscript review
    - d. Professional contributions in a relevant field
  4. Proficiency in teaching courses at the graduate level and what indicators of teaching proficiency will be valued;
  5. Proficiency in mentoring graduate students in professional or scholarly endeavors;
  6. Other discipline-specific criteria.
- B. Define qualifications for chairing a student advisory committee, if different from A, above. For example, as chairing a student advisory committee is a skill that many new faculty have not had a chance to practice, at some institutions graduate faculty are required to participate in a few advisory committees or to co-chair before chairing a committee. In other institutions, all incoming tenured and tenure-track faculty are automatically designated as graduate faculty with the qualifications to chair graduate advisory committees. Units should consider not only how to ensure quality mentoring for graduate students but also how to mentor new faculty in this skill.
1. Typically, Regular or Administrative faculty are eligible for graduate directing faculty status (and therefore are eligible to chair student advisory committees), while Special faculty ranks are eligible for graduate advising faculty status and may serve as co-chairs. However, some units may wish to consider some Special faculty for graduate directing status under special circumstances.
- C. Determine the mechanism through which graduate faculty status is awarded, both for Regular and Special faculty ranks (which may differ). In some units, department chairs will make the decision,

while in others, TPR committees will have the responsibility. For newly hired faculty, it is helpful to describe whether they can receive graduate faculty status as part of the appointment process and, if so, how that decision is vetted.

- D. Determine the mechanism for periodically reviewing graduate faculty (or chairing committees) status and the criteria for maintaining this status. Units will often want to incorporate this review into other typical and routine faculty review processes (e.g., TPR, post-tenure review, reappointment of lecturers, etc.).
- E. Units should consider the mechanism for removing a faculty member from the graduate faculty. Membership in the graduate faculty is a privilege, not a right. Units might want to scrutinize particularly carefully the privilege of chairing a student advisory committee and specify due process for review and reaffirmation or removal of graduate faculty status. For example, a unit might decide that faculty found to be in violation of certain University policies — or out of compliance with certain federal regulations — might be removed from the graduate faculty.
- F. Outline a reasonable appeal process for faculty who feel unfairly treated in this process. Ideally, these appeal processes should be internal to the college except in unusual circumstances, in which case the provost could be the final arbiter of this process, again ideally as part of routine faculty review processes.

## 2.3. Your Adviser and Advisory Committee

### Adviser (major adviser, committee chair)

Every student enrolled in a graduate program must have a major adviser. The major adviser is the faculty member who provides general guidance throughout your program of study. The major adviser will recommend initial courses to be taken until the advisory committee is selected. Initial coursework should be of a fundamental or core nature so that the full advisory committee, once constituted, will have maximum flexibility to formulate the remainder of your program of study. Your major adviser, in consultation with the graduate program coordinator or department chair, will assist you in selecting the members of your advisory committee. The major adviser is responsible for chairing the advisory committee meetings and providing realistic expectations for completing the degree requirements. More than one faculty member may co-chair an advisory committee. Note that some colleges or departments will have different criteria for faculty to serve as chair of your advisory committee.

Students pursuing a master's or specialist's degree must select an adviser and submit their [GS2 Plan of Study](#) (curriculum) by the middle of their second semester. Doctoral students must select an adviser and submit their GS2 Plan of Study no later than the beginning of their fourth semester of study following matriculation. After these deadlines, you may be blocked from registering for future courses until you submit a plan of study. Review your program's **graduate program handbook** for the written procedures for the selection of the major adviser. The Graduate School supports your right to have significant control over selecting your major adviser (including the ability to change advisors) and your advisory committee.

## Graduate Advisory Committee<sup>4</sup>

A student's advisory committee approves your degree curriculum, supervises your graduate program, administers the final oral examination (if required), and initiates the recommendation for awarding the degree. In addition, the advisory committee may administer qualifying (or preliminary) or final comprehensive examinations. One committee member is designated as chair (or major adviser) and normally directs your dissertation or thesis, if required.

Every student enrolled in the Graduate School must form an advisory committee no later than the middle of their second semester after matriculation into a master's or specialist's degree program or no later than the beginning of the fourth semester of their doctoral program. Individual programs that require a standing exception to the timeline for curricular reasons may appeal for an alternative timeline to be approved by the dean of the Graduate School.

**Committee composition:** A minimum of three faculty members must be selected by a student seeking a master's or specialist's degree with a final exam or culminating assessment. A student seeking a doctoral degree must select a minimum of four faculty members. All members of an advisory committee must be current members of the [graduate faculty](#). The majority of the advisory committee, including the chair, must include full-time Clemson University Regular or Administrative faculty as defined in the *Faculty Manual*.<sup>5</sup> Special faculty may serve as co-chairs or committee members as long as the chair is a permanent faculty member appointed to the graduate faculty and the Special faculty member(s) are members of the graduate faculty. The chair, co-chair, or at least half of the committee must have a primary appointment in the program offering the degree. If the student declares a minor, this area must be represented on the committee. Committee members of interdepartmental programs are to be appointed according to bylaws (formulated by the program faculty and endorsed by the academic unit housing the program).

Academic programs at the master's or education specialist's level that are non-thesis and do not have a final exam or culminating assessment (i.e., do not submit the GS7M) may choose to establish an alternative student committee structure for the purpose of curriculum guidance. Such programs may choose to appoint a single faculty member or professional adviser to serve as the advisory chair, with no other committee members required. Any program requiring any form of comprehensive assessment (e.g., thesis, portfolio, final exam, etc.) that must be evaluated by an advisory committee is not permitted to use this advisory structure. The individual in this important role must be a full-time, permanent employee of Clemson; external individuals may not serve as advisory committee chair.

**Major adviser or committee chair:** Regular or Administrative faculty holding graduate faculty status are eligible to serve as the major adviser or chair of the committee.

**Time limit for departing/retiring faculty serving as major adviser/committee chair:** Departing/retiring faculty members who are serving as chair of one or more student graduate advisory committees may continue to serve as chair of a thesis or dissertation committee for a period of up to one year with the following conditions:

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4. Revisions proposed 20 January 2017. Passed advisory committee January 2017. Passed Graduate Council April 2017; revised 11 April 2017 for terminology consistency about faculty categories in faculty manual.

5. For definitions of Regular, Administrative, and Special faculty, refer to the current [Faculty Manual](#).

## Clemson University Graduate School POLICIES & PROCEDURES

1. A student and departing/retiring faculty member mutually agree to retain the departing/retiring faculty member as chair of the thesis or dissertation committee;
2. A doctoral student has already advanced to candidacy by completing their comprehensive exam and has an approved dissertation proposal;
3. A student has a scheduled final defense date within one calendar year of the departing/retiring chair's separation from the University; and
4. The department chair supports the departing/retiring faculty member in continuing in that role and maintaining the existing committee structure.

The student may reformulate the committee at any time by moving their previous chair to a co-chair, member, or non-active role. The student must do so after one year has elapsed since the separation.

**Academic unit policies:** Units may specify more restrictive standards for who may be eligible to serve as a major adviser or committee chair and may expand the pool of eligible faculty to include Special faculty categories who serve as full-time Clemson employees. These unit guidelines should clearly articulate qualifications for this status, what types of special faculty are eligible, and how they are reviewed (e.g., TPR committee and department chair).

**Chairing a dissertation:** Graduate School policy does not currently differentiate qualifications for serving in this very challenging and important role. We encourage academic units to specify what qualifications, if any, they look for in serving as a dissertation chair.

**Persons not employed by the University:** Certain non-employees may serve on the advisory committee. External individuals (e.g., -tenure-track faculty at other institutions, scholars employed in industry or other non-academic venues, etc.) who meet the unit standards for [graduate faculty status](#) and are active scholars in an area relevant to the thesis or dissertation may serve as a committee member pending approval of the unit TPR committee and department chair. External committee members may not serve as chair of the advisory committee.

Once advisory committee members are selected and approved, you, your department, and your committee members are notified of the fully constituted committee using the approved [Plan of Study](#).

### Plan of Study deadlines (form GS2, graduate degree curriculum)

If you are a degree-seeking student, you must file a [GS2 Plan of Study](#) or graduate degree curriculum (accessed via iROAR) near the beginning of your program of study. This planned program represents your individual curriculum as recommended by your advisory committee. It must adhere to departmental as well as University policies. The total number of graduate credits required for the degree is determined by your advisory committee, consistent with the specific program guidelines and Graduate School policy. These credits constitute the core of your graduate degree curriculum. All transfer courses listed on the GS2 must conform to the policies on transfer courses (see [Transfer credit](#)). These documents may evolve, with advisory committee approval, throughout the course of your degree program, and changes should be reviewed and approved by your committee, and a new GS2 form submitted whenever a change occurs. The Graduate School website provides additional [Plan of Study instructions online](#).

If you experience a problem completing or routing your Plan of Study, please email [GS2Help@clemson.edu](mailto:GS2Help@clemson.edu).

**Deadlines:** Students pursuing a master's or specialist's degree must submit the GS2 Graduate Advisory Committee Selection by the middle of their second semester following matriculation, and doctoral students must submit the GS2 Graduate Advisory Committee Selection no later than the beginning of their fourth semester of study following matriculation. All graduate students must submit a final GS2 Plan of Study by the deadline listed on the [graduation deadlines web page](#). Failure to meet these deadlines may result in a registration block, late fees and/or inability to graduate when desired. Students are encouraged to submit an initial GS2 Plan of Study before enrolling in the majority of credit hours required for their degree and after consulting with their advisory committee regarding the coursework that best supports their research goals and/or other future plans. As the student continues to matriculate and plans change, the GS2 Committee Selection and Plan of Study may be resubmitted. Students should consult their graduate program handbook and talk with their graduate program coordinator to determine if earlier deadlines for submitting an initial GS2 Plan of Study are required by their graduate program.

## Continuous enrollment

As a graduate student enrolled in a degree program, you are required to maintain continuous enrollment after initial matriculation (i.e., you must register each Fall and Spring semester until you either have graduated, have permanently withdrawn, or have been dismissed). If you are enrolled in the Spring and Fall semesters, you are not required to register during the summer unless you meet one of the exceptions below. Registration in a zero-credit internship or similar course satisfies this requirement. Registering to audit a course does not meet this requirement. Note that a student on a 12-month graduate assistantship must maintain continuous enrollment during the summer in addition to Fall and Spring semesters (see [Assistantships and fellowships](#)) to keep that assistantship.

### *Exceptions*

- **Incomplete grades**

A student who anticipates not being able to remove a Fall semester I (incomplete) grade by the end of the semester should register for that Spring semester and any subsequent semesters needed to complete the work to comply with the continuous enrollment policy. A student who fails to remove a Spring I grade by the end of the summer will not be dismissed (because summer registration is not required for continuous enrollment). Still, you will have to register for the following Fall and any subsequent semesters until the I has been removed (see [Grading system: Incompletes](#)).

- **Registration in a Summer session for submission of thesis or dissertation and oral examinations or other degree milestones**

A student who completes any degree milestone (e.g., preliminary or comprehensive exam, defense or oral exam of any kind) or submits their thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School during any Summer session must be registered during that Summer session.

- **Graduation**

A student who completes all requirements for the degree (including the Graduate School's acceptance of the final version of your thesis or dissertation) before the first day of classes for the Fall or Spring semester or the first Summer session may graduate during the next semester or Summer session without being registered, provided that you were registered in the immediately preceding semester or Summer session and that you applied to graduate during that preceding term.

### ***Failure to maintain continuous enrollment***

The Graduate School may dismiss any student who fails to comply with the continuous enrollment policy. If you are dismissed from your program for failure to maintain continuous enrollment, you will be required to reapply for admission. Readmission requires a positive recommendation from your academic program and approval by the Graduate School and, therefore, is not guaranteed.

Continuous enrollment is expected, but we understand that it may not be possible each semester due to challenges & hardships that arise on an individual basis. Therefore, we have the leave of absence (LOA) and medical withdrawal policies and procedures to accommodate all students.

## **Leave of absence**

A student *in good academic standing* (minimum 3.0 GPA and has successfully met other program or Graduate School requirements) who must interrupt a graduate program may request a leave of absence from graduate study. A leave of absence may be granted for up to 12 months, with a possible renewal of up to one additional 12-month period.

A student *not in good standing* (GPA lower than 3.0 or failed critical program or Graduate School requirements, e.g., comprehensive or qualifying exams) may also request a leave of absence. However, the Graduate School may also choose to dismiss the underperforming student where future success seems unlikely. Should the request for the leave of absence be approved by the Graduate School, the student will return in the same academic status as before the leave.

A leave of absence is usually granted for compelling personal, family, medical, or professional reasons that require the student to suspend graduate study and to be absent from the University for a period of time. During a leave of absence, students are expected to be focused on these non-academic priorities. A leave of absence is not intended to be a mechanism for you to avoid tuition costs while making progress toward a degree. Therefore, you ***may not*** make progress toward your degree requirements while on leave (e.g., taking comprehensive or qualifying exams; completing incomplete grades; submitting, revising, or defending a thesis or dissertation, conducting independent research, etc.). A student on leave will maintain access to basic CCIT services such as University email but should not use other University resources such as research labs, faculty time, recreation facilities, or health and wellness services.

**Procedure for student:** The plan to take a leave of absence from your program should be discussed first with your major adviser and/or program coordinator well in advance of your intended leave. These faculty members will inform you of concerns at the program level that must be understood and/or addressed before leaving, including departmental or program financial support issues. Formally notify the program and the Graduate School of your intended leave by completing the [form GS-LoA Request for Leave of Absence](#). After you complete this form, forward it electronically or hand-deliver a hard copy to secure the necessary signatures from your graduate program adviser or coordinator. The Graduate School will not approve incomplete forms; thus, you will be considered not in compliance with the [Continuous enrollment](#) policy. If you are an international student, you should check regulations on how a leave would impact your visa status and other important factors.

## Leave for military commitments

### *Active duty*

Degree-seeking students who have been called to report for active duty before the start of a semester or anytime during a semester and will not be able to attend or continue classes should 1) withdraw from any registered classes, 2) complete a Leave of Absence (LOA) form if you plan on continuing with your graduate program.

If a withdrawal is required due to active-duty service, you will receive a 100% refund of tuition and fees.

If you use VA Benefits, please contact [Clemson's certifying official](#) with your intent to withdraw. The Certifying Official will need a copy of your Official Orders and will notify the VA of your change in student status. Please visit the ["Students Called to Active Duty" webpage](#) for more information.

### *Annual training*

If you receive orders to complete annual training during a semester in which you are enrolled, please work with your adviser and faculty regarding course requirements. Based on your specific courses, you may be eligible for an \*incomplete grade, or your professor may deem an early examination appropriate.

\*Students receiving an incomplete grade are not eligible for a refund of academic fees.

For assistance, you may contact the office of Military and Veteran Engagement at (864) 656-2982 or email: [veteran@clemson.edu](mailto:veteran@clemson.edu).

## Transfer credit

### *Independence of graduate degrees*

A graduate student who has completed the requirements for a graduate degree may not then use those same credits toward a second degree. The exceptions to this rule are the master's degree en route to the doctorate and students approved for the dual degree option.

### *Research, internships, theses and dissertations*

Under no circumstances will transfer credit be awarded for research, internships, master's thesis work, or doctoral dissertation work performed at another university.

### *Courses*

Your doctoral/masters'/EdS advising committee will make the final determination about transfer credit. Up to 12 credit hours of coursework (and no more than one-third of the graded course credit hours required for a master's degree) may be transferred to a master's degree. All graded credits transferred to Clemson's graduate programs must have been completed at a regionally accredited institution and must be verified by the submission of an official transcript. Programs may have more restrictive policies on acceptable transfer credits clearly articulated in their graduate program handbook.

Grades earned for courses taken at institutions other than Clemson University will not be included in the student's grade point ratio. Valid transfer credits will appear on your transcript as credits earned. Under no circumstances will transfer credit be awarded for courses in which a grade lower than B (or its

equivalent) has been received; courses graded on a pass/fail basis; continuing education units; courses completed outside the six-year (master's) or eight-year (doctorate) time limit for degree completion; for correspondence, extension, or in-service courses; or for concentrated courses and workshops that award credit at a rate exceeding one credit per week. All transfer courses listed on the [GS2 Plan of Study](#) must be courses taken for credit from a regionally accredited degree-granting institution whose scholastic reputation is acceptable to Clemson University and your advisory committee and department.

**Procedure for student:** To have courses considered for transfer, you must discuss with your major adviser and/or advisory committee your proposal to use specific courses from other institutions. Within the guidelines established by the Graduate School, the advisory committee will identify courses acceptable for transfer and will record these courses on your [GS2 Plan of Study](#). You must then have an official transcript sent from the institution(s) where credit was earned to the Office of Enrolled Student Services, 104D Sikes Hall. Only when courses have been verified by Enrolled Services to meet all Graduate School requirements will they be approved for application toward the degree. This approval should be secured as early as practical once you matriculate into a Clemson University degree program. The Office of Enrolled Student Services and the Graduate School have final authority to approve or deny requests for course transfer. No faculty or staff outside the Office of Enrolled Student Services or the Graduate School have the authority to approve this type of request.

## 2.4. Navigating Courses

### Syllabus

A syllabus must be prepared for every graduate class and made available to students enrolled in that class, ideally on the first day of class and no later than the last class period before the last day for a student to add a class. The syllabus should define the course expectations, including a topical outline of the course, grading information, and attendance policies.

**Procedure for instructors:** Instructors may access the Graduate School's syllabus requirements on the [Faculty and Staff Resources](#) webpage (login required) under "Current Class Regulations."

### Class attendance

You are expected to be well prepared for — and to routinely attend — all classes except when extenuating circumstances intervene. All students are required to attend the first scheduled day of classes and labs. Students who cannot attend the first class are responsible for contacting the instructor to indicate their intent to remain in that class. If you do not attend the first class meeting or contact the instructor by the second class meeting or the last day to add the class, whichever comes first, the instructor can drop you from the roll. Specific class attendance policies are established by instructors and are included in each course syllabus.

### Auditing courses

Permission to audit a graduate course is granted at the discretion of the academic department chair, the coordinator of the program offering the course, or the instructor. Audited courses do not carry credit and are not noted in your academic record. Audited courses may not be used to satisfy stated prerequisites for a graduate course. Additionally, you may not establish credit through examination in any course for which you were previously registered as an auditor.

## Change of major or degree program

You may request a change of major and/or degree by completing the iROAR-based [GS14 Request for Change of Degree and/or Major](#) process. You must meet all program and Graduate School requirements for admission into the new program and receive approval from the new program's program coordinator and department chair before final approval will be granted. Comprehensive exams must always be completed in the current discipline regardless of whether you completed them in the previous discipline.

## Enrollment limits

Maximum enrollment limits for graduate students refer to graduate and undergraduate credits combined. During the Summer sessions, if the six-week and three-week sessions run concurrently, the total credits are not permitted to exceed the maximum for the six-week session. Specific enrollment limits are defined in the following table.

Graduate student enrollment limits				
Student category	Semester	Maximum credit hours		
		6-week session	3-week session	Full Summer (12 wks)
Full-time students	15	6	3	<u>12</u>
Graduate assistants (10 hours)	15	6	3	<u>12</u>
Graduate assistants (11+ hrs.)	12	6	3	<u>12</u>
Full-time CU employees	9	6	3	<u>6</u>

**Procedure for student:** If you want to exceed these credit-hour limits, you must get approval from your major adviser, who will submit an appeal of the enrollment policy to the dean of the Graduate School, who in turn will assess your record and make a determination.

**Procedure for department:** Departments or programs that want to require graduate curricula to exceed 15 credit hours per semester should submit this request to the Graduate Curriculum Committee for review as a program modification.

## Dropping courses

The [Academic Calendar](#) provides official dates for withdrawing from a class without record or without final grades. If you are considering dropping a course, you must ensure you comply with all other policies and conditions of your awards. You may submit a withdrawal request via [iROAR](#). Failure to attend classes or verbal notification to instructors does not constitute formal withdrawal. A student who stops attending classes but does not withdraw is held accountable for all financial and academic outcomes of that decision.

A student who officially withdraws within the first two weeks of classes will have no grades recorded. Those who officially withdraw after the first two weeks and before the last five weeks will have a grade of *W* (withdrew) entered on the academic record. If you are dropping **all** courses, please see [Withdrawing from the University](#); the timetable differs between dropping one course and dropping all courses with the intent to withdraw. The date on which you withdraw online is the official date of withdrawal recorded by the Registrar.

Before dropping courses, international graduate students must receive authorization from an adviser in the Office of International Services. You must not fall below the required full-time enrollment mandated by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

A student on an assistantship must maintain minimum enrollment levels. See [Assistantships and fellowships](#).

## Grading system

Graduate students in graduate-level (6000+) courses may be graded using the following letter grades: *A*, *A-*, *B+*, *B*, *B-*, *C+*, *C*, *C-*, *F*. Faculty have sole discretion as to whether they use the full range of grades available or a subset (e.g., *A*, *B*, *C*, *F*). There is no expectation or mandate that faculty *should* use plus/minus grades. Under no circumstances will *A+* be awarded. ***Faculty must describe their grading policy*** for a course, including whether they will use +/- grading, in the course syllabus.

A minimum grade of *C-* (or *P*) must be earned for each and every course a student applies toward a degree.

### ***Grade appeal***

Grades cannot be appealed, although you may file an official grievance under certain circumstances. See [Academic Grievance Policy](#). Students may not file a grievance for a faculty member's use of a particular grading system (e.g., full range including +/- versus only *A*, *B*, *C*, *F*).

### ***Pass/fail enrollment***

Thesis and dissertation research, and a small number of unstructured courses approved by the Graduate Curriculum Committee as non-graded courses, may be taken at the graduate level on a pass/fail (P/F) basis. Courses graded P/F are not included in your GPA; however, the grade *P* or *F* does appear in your permanent academic record. Classes not previously approved as pass/fail by the Graduate Curriculum Committee will not be converted to the pass/fail option at a student's request. Credit hours for which you receive a grade of fail (*F*) will not apply toward the number of credit hours required for your degree but can indicate a lack of satisfactory academic progress and may lead to dismissal. The accumulation of grades of pass (*P*) in thesis or dissertation research does not infer completion of the research; such grades indicate satisfactory progress.

### ***Incompletes (grades of I)***

A grade of Incomplete (*I*) indicates that a relatively small part of the semester's work remains undone and indicates a reasonable expectation that your completion of the work will lead to a satisfactory grade. Grade *I* is not given to a student whose submitted work indicates a failure to master the material, failure to turn in any work, or failure to attend class. Instructors have complete discretion to approve or deny a request for an incomplete based on their assessment of your progress in the course. This decision is not grievable.

The student is allowed 30 days after the beginning of the next scheduled session, excluding summers and regardless of the student's enrollment status, to remove the incomplete grade. Normally, only one extension for each *I* may be granted, and only under unusual circumstances. The extension must be approved in writing by the instructor of the course and the chair of the department in which the course was taken. The extension will indicate the nature and amount of work to be completed and the time limit. (Under this policy, you are prohibited from removing the *I* by repeating the course.) A letter grade of *I* converts to *F* unless the incomplete is removed within the time specified.

Any student who receives a grade of *I* is ineligible for graduation, including earning a master's degree en route to a doctoral degree, until the incomplete work has been resolved and a letter grade submitted to the Office of the Registrar.

**Procedure for student:** If an instructor grants you an incomplete, ask your instructor to provide a written statement of the work to be completed and the due deadline.

**Procedure for instructor:** At the student's request, you should provide a written statement of the work to be completed. Instructors have ten working days after the deadline to grade make-up work and submit the final grade to the Office of the Registrar. You should not accept work submitted after the deadline unless an extension has been approved. If the student has requested an extension, the instructor should submit the request to the Office of the Registrar by the deadline specified on the make-up form. Once the student has submitted the completed work, you should submit the make-up form to the Office of Enrolled Student Services for recording the grade.

## GPA (grade point average)

In calculating your grade point average (GPA; sometimes referred to as a grade point ratio or GPR), the total number of grade points accumulated is divided by the total number of credit hours attempted at Clemson during the semester, session, or other period for which the grade point ratio is being calculated. For each credit hour, the student receives grade points as follows: *A*: 4.00, *A*–: 3.66, *B*+: 3.34, *B*: 3.00, *B*–: 2.66, *C*+: 2.34, *C*: 2.00, *C*–: 1.66, *F*: 0, *I*: 0, *W*: 0. Audited courses do not carry credit and are not noted on your academic record.

### *Computing and resetting the grade point average (GPA)*

Clemson University recognizes the independence of graduate degrees; that is, credits earned for a completed degree may not be used towards a second degree. As such, it is the policy of the Graduate School to reset the grade point average following completion of any graduate degree, with one exception: that of a master's degree earned en route to the Ph.D. in the same discipline.

## Academic records

Your permanent academic record is maintained in the Office of the Registrar and contains personal identifying information, grades, and credits. The academic record, maintained in accordance with the University's retention policy, is a historical record of a student's academic progress.

## Transcripts

Information about obtaining an official transcript is available on the [Registrar's website](#). A [transcript request form](#) is also available as a PDF from the Office of the Registrar. The University does not currently offer an *official* electronic transcript.

# 2.5. Degree Requirements

## Master's Degree Requirements

### *Credits required*

Consistent with our regional accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Clemson University requires a minimum of thirty hours beyond the bachelor's degree for any master's degree. At least one-half of the total graduate credit hours required

by the advisory committee, exclusive of thesis research, must be selected from courses numbered 8000 or above.

Your GS2 Plan of Study will determine your specific requirements for the degree as determined by your advisory committee, consistent with the specific program guidelines and Graduate School policy. These credits constitute the core of your graduate degree curriculum. Supplemental courses (undergraduate or graduate

courses to broaden your academic experience) are not required to be included on the GS2 Plan of Study; however, if a listing is desirable, such courses may be included.

### ***Thesis option***

Each program includes a minimum of 24 hours of graduate credit and a minimum of six hours of master's thesis research (course number 8910).

### ***Non-thesis option***

Each program includes a minimum of 30 hours of graduate credit, none of which may be master's thesis research.

### ***Programs with a minor***

A minor outside the degree program, if chosen and/or required by the program, shall consist of at least nine credit hours in that area.

### ***Residence***

There is no University-wide residence requirement for a master's degree; however, individual degree programs may establish such a requirement.

### ***Thesis grades***

Thesis research is graded on a pass/fail (P/F) basis. The accumulation of grades of pass (P) in thesis research does not infer completion of the research, but only indicates satisfactory progress. Receipt of a grade of fail (F) implies unsatisfactory progress and may be cause for dismissal from the Graduate School, irrespective of grade point average.

### ***Thesis proposal***

Students must submit a thesis proposal to their committee that conforms to the guidelines within their graduate program handbook, and the proposal must be approved prior to substantive work on the thesis. Following approval of the thesis proposal by the advisory committee, the GS-ResearchApproval form Advisory Committee Thesis/Dissertation Research Approval must be submitted to Enrolled Student Services as evidence of approval of the project as proposed.

### ***Time limit***

A master's student has six years from the date of first matriculation to complete a degree; therefore, all course-work to be credited toward any master's degree must have been enrolled in and completed within six (6) calendar years prior to the date on which the degree is to be awarded. Also see: Credit by Examination (course revalidation).

## Dual master's degrees

If a student pursues two master's degrees simultaneously, one-fifth of the graded graduate coursework credit hours may be applied toward both degrees. The one-fifth credit hour rule references one-fifth of the curriculum with the highest number of required, graded, graduate coursework credits. Required core courses for either degree may not be displaced by selecting the option to participate in the dual degree option.

**Procedure for student:** Consider both the added value of pursuing this outcome, as well as the added challenges and stress that may also result from pursuing this outcome, when making your decision. Discuss your interest in pursuing two master's degrees simultaneously with your current major advisor and current graduate program coordinator. Next, discuss your interest with the graduate program coordinator for your second master's degree of interest. Given the potential complexities in developing coordinated GS2 Plans of Study that involve shared credit hours applied to both master's programs, it is important that the discussions described above be initiated by you as early as possible.

**Procedure for department:** The graduate degree curricula (as recorded on form GS2 Plan of Study) must clearly denote that the student is working toward two degrees and must identify the courses that are being applied to both programs. The Plan of Study form must be submitted in accordance with the Plan of study policy. Committee members, department chairs, and deans of both graduate programs must approve the two plans of study.

## Master's en route to doctoral degree

In some circumstances, students currently enrolled in a doctoral program may wish to concurrently pursue a master's degree in either the same field as their doctoral program or in a different field.

Students may pursue a master's degree en route to a doctoral degree while continuing to make adequate progress toward their doctoral degree, as determined by the expectations established by the student and their doctoral advisor. Failure to make adequate progress toward the doctoral degree will endanger the student's enrollment in the doctoral program.

At the discretion of a student's doctoral advisory committee, coursework required for an en route master's degree may also be used to satisfy the doctoral degree coursework requirement, partially or fully. The minimum credit hours typically required for the doctoral degree (30 credit hours) may be reduced by 6 credit hours for students pursuing an en route master's degree. This is accomplished by double-counting a maximum of 6-credit hours towards both the master's and doctoral total credit hour requirements. The result will be a 30-credit hour masters and a minimum 24 unique credits towards the doctoral degree.

**Procedure for Students:** Arrange a meeting with your doctoral advisor **before** proceeding to fill out the plan of study portions of the “GS2” and “GS2-14” forms to discuss the following concerns:

- Will you need to take additional course prerequisites upon joining the proposed master's program? If so, how will this impact your doctoral graduation timeline?
- How will the master's program affect your time commitments with your doctoral program (e.g., class schedule, research, comprehensive exams, etc.)?

Complete the GS2 Plan of Study form for your doctoral degree program, and a GS2-14 Master's en route to PhD Degree Curriculum form for the en route master's degree program. The GS2-14 form should include the signatures of your doctoral advisory committee, as well as your master's program committee members, indicating both programs approve your simultaneous enrollment in the doctoral and master's programs. The GS2-14 Master's en route to PhD Degree Curriculum form is due to the Graduate School the semester prior to the semester in which the master's degree is expected to be conferred.

**Procedure for Faculty:** Meet with the student to discuss the en route option, especially the bulleted items indicated above. If a master's en route program is approved, work with the student to ensure the GS2-14 Master's en route to PhD Degree Curriculum form and the GS2 Plan of Study are completed correctly, and all committee members' signatures are obtained before submitting to the Graduate School.

**Completing the forms:** The GS2-14, Master's en route to Ph.D. Degree Curriculum form, must include a minimum of 30 credit hours required for the master's degree. At least one-half of the required courses for the en route master's degree must be selected from those numbered 8000 or above. This applies to any transfer credits as well. Transfer credits must not have been used to satisfy the requirements for any other degree and must have been completed within the six-year period preceding the date on which this Clemson's master's degree will be awarded. There are no exceptions to this requirement.

The GS2 Plan of Study required for the doctoral degree must also include a minimum of 30 credit hours, where 24 of those credit hours are unique to the doctoral degree (i.e. not also included on the GS2-14 form). Therefore, the GS2 Plan of Study for the doctoral degree must include:

- A) a minimum of 18 unique credit hours of dissertation research,
- B) a minimum of 6 additional unique credit hours of dissertation research or coursework,
- C) a minimum of 12 credit hours of coursework, some or all of which may also be included on the GS2-14 for the en route master's degree.

## Specialist in education degree requirements

The requirements pertaining to residence, time limits, and final examinations for master's degrees also apply to the Specialist in Education degree. It is typical that coursework required for this degree includes 30 credit hours beyond the master's degree. Consult the [College of Education](#) and individual programs' graduate program handbooks for details on the various EdS programs. All graduate degrees below the doctoral level are subject to the six-year time limit.

## Doctoral degree requirements

Coursework leading to the doctoral degree is planned to give you a comprehensive knowledge of your field of specialization and a mastery of the methods of research. The degree is not awarded solely on the basis of coursework completed, residence, completion of preliminary or comprehensive examinations, or other routine requirements. The final basis for granting the degree is your grasp of the subject matter across a broad field of study, your competence in planning and conducting research, and the ability to express yourself adequately and professionally, both orally and in writing. Ultimately, only your advisory committee can certify that you have earned this degree.

Some doctoral programs allow students with a bachelor's degree to matriculate directly into the doctoral degree program. The Graduate School website hosts a list of these programs, as well as the form that current Clemson undergraduate students may use to explore shortening their enrollment time in these

"direct entry" doctoral programs by applying graduate credits to both undergraduate and graduate program requirements (see Combined Bachelor's/Graduate plan).

### ***Program of study and credit requirements<sup>6</sup>***

In accord with SACSCOC<sup>7</sup> guidelines, the Graduate School requires that a doctoral degree comprise a minimum of 30 credits beyond the master's degree and at least 60 credits beyond the bachelor's degree. The advisory committee aids you in developing an individualized curriculum (to be outlined in the [GS2 Plan of Study](#)) that meets program requirements and provides appropriate training to meet your goals.

A minimum of 12 credit hours of non-research coursework and a minimum of 18 hours of dissertation research are required for any doctoral degree.

### ***Residency***

The goal of residency is to facilitate specified engagement with members of the faculty of the University and under direct mentorship and advisement of a research advisor and advisory committee in the department or program of the major. Further, it enables the student to participate in other typical activities pertinent to the development of a scholarly profile. As such, all doctoral programs at Clemson University should integrate 1) disciplinary depth and breadth, 2) scholarly immersion, 3) professional socialization, and 4) professional practice into the residency expectations of their students. Residency can incorporate research training of individuals and groups, laboratory activities, networking opportunities with other students and other scholars, assisting with grant proposals, and participation in scholarly outlets such as scholarly publications and presentations.

Residency for doctoral degree programs can be accomplished through one of three mechanisms:

- **Two consecutive semesters of full-time enrollment on a Clemson University campus:** Students will be expected to be immersed in research and professional development activities consistent with the expectations of the residency requirement listed above.
- **Alternative program plan: Specific** degree programs may propose an alternative plan by which all enrolled students in that program will achieve residency expectations to be approved by the Graduate School. Alternative plans may be proposed for off-campus, online, and traditionally part-time enrolled programs.
- **Alternative student plan:** An alternative proposal for an individual student to achieve residency goals must be approved by the advisory committee and the Graduate School. The plan must be submitted at least one semester before implementation and included on the GS2 Plan of Study. Approved plans may be revised and resubmitted as warranted.

Each doctoral program must determine the permissible options for doctoral students to meet the residency requirement and include them in their respective program handbook. Programs may incorporate any or all of the three options listed above. All students will be required to adhere to the full-time enrollment requirement unless the program has submitted an alternative plan that is approved by the

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6. This policy became effective 1 August 2011. Students enrolled before that date are bound by the minimum credit requirements in effect when they enrolled.

7. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

## Clemson University Graduate School POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Graduate School. New program proposals must include the mechanism for satisfying the residency requirement.

Alternative residency plans (program and student) must include specific descriptions of how residency goals will be met. As such, the plans should address the following:

### Disciplinary depth and breadth

- Access to a variety of classes and academic experiences within the student's field and related disciplines;
- Access to library resources, information technology, and laboratory resources;
- Quality and rigor of the program through engagement with and scrutiny by peers.

### Scholarly immersion

- Development of the student's capacity to make significant original contributions to the knowledge base in their field (e.g., individual and group research training, assisting with externally funded grant proposals, participation at scholarly conferences, publications, or other forms of scholarly dissemination).
- Ability to understand and critically evaluate the literature of the field and to apply appropriate principles and procedures to the recognition, evaluation, interpretation, and understanding of contemporary issues and problems within the field.

### Professional socialization

- Substantive interaction with faculty and other scholars for disciplinary guidance and mentorship;
- Interaction with fellow graduate students on scholarly and professional issues;
- Provision of a broad range of professional development experiences to develop dispositions and guard against over-specialization;
- Access to a wide spectrum of seminars, professional presentations, and contact with leaders within their discipline.

### Professional practice

- Awareness of and commitment to the ethical and regulatory principles and practices appropriate to the field.

### ***Preliminary or qualifying examinations***

The Graduate School does not require programs to administer preliminary or qualifying examinations. However, some doctoral programs require that preliminary or qualifying examinations be taken prior to the comprehensive examination. These types of examinations are intended to provide an early, general assessment of a student's mastery of content and/or conceptual understanding of the research process. The structure, duration, review, and re-examination policies for qualifying examinations are defined in writing by the program faculty in the graduate program handbook for the respective program.

### ***Comprehensive examinations***

The comprehensive exam is designed to evaluate your overall mastery of a body of knowledge and skills after completing most of the program of study. The particular form of the comprehensive examination in any degree program is described in that graduate program handbook. You may attempt the comprehensive examination only on the recommendation of your advisory committee and only after completion of most of the required coursework. This examination must be administered by the faculty of the Clemson University program offering the degree, according to policies published in the graduate program handbook. A majority decision is required to pass the comprehensive exam; dissenting members of the examining committee may forward a minority report to the Graduate School. Your performance on this examination will determine whether you will be recommended for admission to candidacy for the degree.

Satisfactory completion of the comprehensive examination must occur at least six months before graduation, except where the graduate program handbook specifies a different timeline.

Should you fail to pass the comprehensive examination, you may be given a second opportunity only by recommendation of a majority of the examining committee. Committees are encouraged to carefully consider a student's likelihood of successfully completing the exam after they fail the first attempt and to recommend dismissal for any student whose performance is so poor that it is unlikely that a second attempt will be successful. For a student who is permitted a second attempt, a minimum of two months must pass before the student can undergo a second comprehensive examination. A second failure will result in the student being dismissed from Clemson University. If a student feels that program, department, college, or Graduate School policies have been violated with respect to their comprehensive exam, that student has the right to file a grievance. See: Academic Grievance Policy, for a description of the process and deadlines.

Doctoral students who have passed a comprehensive examination and who decide to change degree programs, must complete a comprehensive exam in the new degree program.

**Procedure for student:** Before scheduling the comprehensive examination, you must have selected an advisory committee and have an approved graduate degree curriculum ([GS2 Plan of Study](#)) on file in the Office of Enrolled Student Services. Comprehensive examinations are scheduled individually by the departments. Consult your graduate program coordinator and major adviser for appropriate advice on preparing for and scheduling the comprehensive examination.

**Procedure for committee:** Within three weeks of the examination, the advisory committee chair will inform the Office of Enrolled Student Services of the result of the comprehensive exam via [form GS5D Results of the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam and Candidacy](#).

### ***Candidacy***

A doctoral (Ph.D., Ed.D., D.N.P.) student becomes a candidate for the doctorate (or is "admitted to candidacy") upon successful completion of the comprehensive examination and dissertation proposal. Completion is documented by submitting the GS5D form Results of the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam and Candidacy and the GS-ResearchApproval form Advisory Committee Thesis/Dissertation Research Approval to Enrolled Student Services, indicating that the committee has approved the proposed research topic.

### ***Dissertation***

The candidate for a doctoral degree receives academic credit for conducting research and preparing a dissertation under the direction of the research advisor. A dissertation, mandatory for all candidates for

the doctoral degree, requires 18 hours of doctoral research (course number 9910) exclusive of any research credits earned at the master's level. See also [Finalizing your thesis or dissertation after defense](#).

### ***Time limit***

All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within eight (8) years from the date you first matriculate into a doctoral degree program at Clemson. The time limit applies to all doctoral programs, even cases where a student is pursuing a master's degree en route to the doctorate. This clock does not stop for a leave of absence. Programs may petition for different time limits for their program for good cause. In exceptional circumstances, a student may petition the Graduate School for additional time with the approval of the advisory committee. A student who exceeds the time limit without an extension can be dismissed from the Graduate School for failure to maintain adequate academic progress.

## **Off-campus research**

Although thesis and dissertation research is normally performed at Clemson or Clemson-affiliated locations, in some cases, the University may not own appropriate, specialized equipment or facilities. Permission may be granted for off-campus research according to the following provisions:

1. **Written consent and research plan:** You must have the written consent of your thesis or dissertation adviser, full advisory committee, and department chair before engaging in off-campus research. You must submit a written plan for the research effort to the advisory committee for approval. The plan should include a discussion of the problem and intended scope of the investigation and should be structured in terms of a specific time frame.
2. **Statement from the organization where research will be conducted:** Your advisory committee may require a statement from an appropriate officer of the organization at which you will be located, agreeing to a) your plan to complete thesis or dissertation research using the organization's equipment and facilities; b) the apportioning of at least 25 percent or other appropriate amount of your employment hours to thesis research; and/or c) the organization's release of patent rights or copyrights arising from discoveries or concepts that evolve during your master's or dissertation research.
3. **Travel:** You may be required to travel to the Clemson campus at your own expense to meet with your thesis or dissertation adviser and advisory committee as often as the committee deems necessary.
4. **Continuous enrollment:** You must maintain [continuous enrollment](#) at Clemson University while the research is in progress.
5. **Supervision and reports:** When research is conducted at a non-Clemson facility, we must be sure that we exercise proper and necessary control over this important phase of your study. The following requirements must be met:
  - a. An employee at the facility must be identified to supervise your research. This individual must be qualified and certified for the supervisory position by the department and college involved and by the dean of the Graduate School, and must be suitable for [graduate faculty status](#) within the academic unit housing your degree program;
  - b. A resume of the research supervisor must be submitted to your full advisory committee for review and recommendation to the dean of the Graduate School;

- c. The research supervisor must update the advisory committee on your progress.

## Foreign language requirements

Language requirements are determined by programs rather than by the Graduate School. Consult your program's graduate program handbook for foreign language requirements and guidelines.

## Senior enrollment in graduate courses

Clemson University seniors meeting the accepted academic standard for graduate work (3.0 cumulative grade point average) are eligible to request enrollment in graduate-level courses. Enrollment of seniors in any graduate course is subject to approval by the department offering the course and by the Graduate School. The total course workload for the semester must not exceed 18 hours, and the cumulative graduate credits earned by seniors shall not exceed 12 semester hours. The credits and quality points associated with senior enrollment in graduate courses will be part of the undergraduate record. Graduate courses used toward an undergraduate degree cannot be counted toward any graduate degree (including a total minimum credit count of 120). Graduate courses taken beyond the requirements of the undergraduate degree may count toward a graduate degree.

**Seniors with 3.4 or higher grade point average.** Seniors with 3.4 or higher grade point averages are eligible for participation in a [combined bachelor's/graduate plan](#).

**Seniors with 3.0 grade point averages.** Seniors with 3.0 or higher grade point averages are eligible to request enrollment in graduate-level courses. Courses cannot be taken at the 6000 level if their 4000-level counterparts are required for the undergraduate degree in the same academic major as the proposed graduate degree (see [Course restriction, 6000-level](#)).

**Procedure for student:** Approval by the Graduate School is required before registration in any graduate course. The student should use the appropriate form, [GS6 Request for Senior Enrollment](#) or the [GS6--Bachelor-to-Graduate Request For Combined Education Plan](#).

## Combined Bachelor's/Graduate plan

A combined bachelor's/graduate degree plan may provide a seamless and efficient path for students to complete both degrees at Clemson. This process has several advantages, including automatic admission into the master's program (bypassing the application fee and the need to take the GRE) and potentially applying graduate credits to both undergraduate and graduate program requirements.

To be eligible, the student must have completed the bachelor's curriculum through the junior year (minimum 90 credits) and have a minimum overall grade point average of 3.4. A maximum of 12 credit hours of graduate courses in the master's program may be applied to the bachelor's program; however, the total credit hours taken for the two degrees must be at least 150 unique credit hours for the bachelor's to master's plan, or 180 unique credit hours for the bachelor's-to-doctorate plan. That is, the credit hours counted towards the bachelor's degree plus the credit hours taken after the bachelor's is awarded must total at least 150 (master's) or 180 (Ph.D.). Further, this total may contain a maximum of six credit hours of thesis or dissertation research, and all credit hours to be included in the total completed after receiving the bachelor's degree must be in 6000-level or higher courses. As determined by the participating bachelor's program, graduate courses may be applied to the bachelor's degree as electives or technical requirements or by substituting 7000- or 8000-level courses for required undergraduate courses. Under no circumstances can 6000-level counterparts of 4000-level courses required for the bachelor's degree be counted toward graduate

degree requirements. Combined bachelor's/graduate plan students are not eligible for graduate assistantships or fellowships until their bachelor's degrees have been awarded. [Form GS6-Bachelor-to-Graduate Request for Combined Education Plan](#) should be completed and signed by the student and relevant faculty members and returned to the Graduate School.

**Procedure for student:** While a senior, you should consult both your academic adviser and the graduate program coordinator of the master's program you wish to pursue and officially request participation in the combined bachelor's/master's program by completing [form GS6-Bachelor-to-Graduate Request for Combined Education Plan](#). Endorsements by the program coordinator or department chair of both programs are required. **Note:** The GRE cannot be required for students approved via [GS6-Bachelor-to-Graduate](#) forms to pursue graduate degree programs.

**Procedure for department:** Departments and graduate programs that wish to offer a combined bachelor's/graduate program should submit a written notification to the dean of the Graduate School, identifying the date on which they intend to make this option available to their students. For each student in this program, departments and graduate programs should ensure that: 1) the courses to be counted meet the requirements specified above; 2) there are at least 150 total unique credit hours counted towards the two degrees; and 3) courses completed after the baccalaureate to be counted toward the 150 -credit-hour requirement are at the 6000 level or above.

## Course restriction, 6000-level

6000-level courses are graduate counterparts of undergraduate 4000-level courses. To enroll in or receive credit for any courses at the 6000 level or above, you must have been officially admitted by the Graduate School, either to a degree program or as a non-degree student, or have been approved to enroll as a senior in graduate-level courses through a request using [form GS6 Request for Senior Enrollment in Graduate Courses](#), or [form GS6--Bachelor-to-Graduate Request for Combined Education Plan](#) (see the previous topic, [Dual master's degrees](#)). You may not enroll in 6000-level courses for which the corresponding undergraduate 4000-level credit has been awarded, nor can graduate credit be awarded retroactively for 4000-level undergraduate courses already completed.

## Duplication of graduate degrees

A student holding a master's or doctoral degree (from Clemson or any other institution) may not, as a rule, become a candidate for the same degree in the same field of study.

## Certificate programs

Graduate certificates are official credentials offered by Clemson University and approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education in the same manner as all degree programs. At the graduate level, Clemson University recognizes both Post-Baccalaureate certificates (intended for those who have earned a bachelor's degree) and Post-Master's certificates (intended for those who have earned a master's degree). Each graduate certificate has its own application, admission process, and individual requirements. Graduate certificates will be noted on official transcripts, and a paper certificate may be given to the student upon completion. Tuition, fees, and the number of credit hours required for completion vary by certificate program. A list of available Graduate Certificate Programs can be found on the Graduate School's Graduate Programs website.

Graduate certificates require a minimum of nine credit hours, and at least 1/3 of the required credit hours must be earned through instruction by Clemson University. For a post-baccalaureate certificate, no more than

two-thirds of the total credit hours may be 6000-level credits from 4000/6000 courses. For a post-master's certificate, no more than one-third of the total credit hours may be 6000-level credits. All other credits required for graduate certificates must be at the 7000 level or higher and may include no more than three credit hours of research. A minimum grade of B is required in all courses. Courses counted toward a certificate can also be counted toward a degree program. A [Graduate Certificate Curriculum Planning form](#) should be completed and submitted to Enrolled Student Services no later than the beginning of the last semester of classes.

## Credit by examination

Graduate students are not eligible to receive credit by examination other than through utilization of the form, policy and procedures on [course revalidation \(form GSCV\)](#). All coursework to be credited toward any of the degrees must have been enrolled in and completed within six (6) calendar years before the date on which the degree is to be awarded. For example, a student graduating in the Spring semester must have started and completed all coursework within the 72-month period beginning with the summer term six years earlier. When recommended by the student's advisory committee and approved by the dean of the Graduate School, coursework at Clemson University completed outside the six-year limit may be revalidated by written examination. Such examinations will be under the direction of the department regularly offering the course or courses for which the student seeks revalidation and available only to students currently enrolled at Clemson University. Coursework completed outside the six-year time limit at an institution other than Clemson University may not be transferred to Clemson or validated for graduate credit. Exceptions to the 6-calendar year time limit and the enrollment requirement may be considered only in unusual circumstances and with approval from the Graduate School.

## 2.6. Nearing Graduation

### Graduation requirements

A candidate for graduation is a student who has applied to graduate via iROAR by the [Apply to Graduate deadline](#) prescribed in the University calendar for a particular graduation date. Only candidates who have completed all graduation requirements are permitted to participate in the graduation ceremony.

**Procedure for student:** Follow the steps below and visit the [Graduation deadlines](#) webpage and the [theses and dissertations](#) webpages for additional information.

- **Early in the year you expect to graduate:** Contact the Enrolled Student Services Office early in the calendar year in which you plan to graduate to confirm your graduation status and eligibility. Ensure you have proposed and secured approval for your thesis or dissertation and have submitted the before engaging in substantive work on the project.
- **At the beginning of the semester in which you desire to graduate:** A candidate for a degree is required to apply for the diploma within three weeks following the opening of the final semester or the opening of the first Summer session before the date the degrees are to be awarded. Applications for graduation must be submitted online through the student's [iROAR](#) account.
- **Work with your chair/adviser to finalize your thesis or dissertation:** Your research adviser will determine when your thesis or dissertation is suitable for initial review by the rest of your advisory committee. At this point, you and your adviser will provide each committee

member a copy of the manuscript. This must take place ***at least three weeks before the defense***. Committee members may request more than three weeks to review the thesis or dissertation. These deadlines should be coordinated through your committee chair. For your convenience, the Graduate School website provides templates, sample files, and other information to help you format your manuscript.

- **Schedule your thesis or dissertation defense:** Schedule your defense ***at least two weeks (14 calendar days)*** before the deadline for submission of the [GS7 form](#). This provides minimal time for edits and responses to the defense, formatting review, and further edits based on the formatting review. If your thesis or dissertation requires significant revisions or substantial formatting changes, you may not have enough time to provide edits and complete all other steps for graduation. We encourage students to schedule defenses as early as is practical.
- **Notify Enrolled Student Services** of the date, time, location and other details of your defense ***at least ten (10) calendar days*** before your defense. To do this, complete the [online defense form](#) that will add your defense to the [calendar](#). Submitting the form will generate an email to Enrolled Services, and this email will serve as your official written notification.
- **Hold your defense** as scheduled. Note that students may not provide refreshments, snacks, gifts, or other inducements during the defense. The department may provide these if desired, as long as the student does not pay for them.
- **Revise your thesis or dissertation** to respond to committee recommendations as a result of the defense. Once your committee and chair are satisfied with your thesis or dissertation and all revisions are final and approved, they will complete the appropriate [GS7 form](#). This form must be submitted to Enrolled Student Services by the date published on the Graduate School's [deadline calendar](#). Note that if committee-required revisions are substantial, you may not be able to meet subsequent deadlines for graduation and may have to defer to a future graduation date.
- **Submit to the Graduate School for formatting review:** You must submit your approved thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School by the date published on the Graduate School's [deadline calendar](#). The Graduate School will review the thesis or dissertation to ensure that it complies with the [formatting guidelines](#) established by the Graduate School, particularly the preliminary pages of the document but including the page size and margins and consistent formatting throughout the manuscript. Manuscript submission and review are completed online. Step-by-step instructions and helpful tips for the process, including formatting, defense, file conversion, submission via upload, revision, and final approval, are available on the [Theses and Dissertations webpage](#) on the Graduate School website. You will be notified via email when the review is complete. Manuscripts will be approved by the Graduate School only if and when no changes are required. Typically, theses and dissertations are reviewed *within three business days* of receipt by the Graduate School, though it may take longer if you submit close to or on the [deadline date](#). In addition, you must allow for the possibility that [format revisions](#) will be required after one (or more) initial reviews and plan your submission accordingly. Note that official approval for graduation includes both manuscript acceptance by the Manuscript Review Office and the receipt of the completed [form GS7M Final Exam and Thesis Approval Form](#) or [form GS7D Dissertation Defense and Approval](#) by Enrolled Student Services.

## Master's degree programs

*For degree programs requiring a final examination, your graduate program handbook should outline the nature of the exam, when students are expected to complete it, and how it is evaluated.*

Following successful completion of the exam and acceptance of the terminal project, if one is required, [form GS7M Final Exam and Thesis Approval](#) should be submitted to Enrolled Student Services.

*For degree programs that require a thesis,* the Graduate School provides programs with broad latitude for creating appropriate processes for proposal, formatting, and defense of theses. The [graduate program handbook](#) should outline the processes required regarding a thesis project proposal, guidelines for how the thesis should be formatted, evaluated, and defended. In addition, you must file a completed [GS-Research Approval form](#) with your committee members' signatures concurrently with your GS5D form (with Enrolled Student Services). See [Approval of your thesis or dissertation proposal](#) topic below. Information about thesis formatting for electronic publication and archiving is covered in [Finalizing your thesis or dissertation after defense](#) below.

## Doctoral degree programs

### *Dissertation proposal*

Once advanced to candidacy, you must submit a proposal to your advisory committee outlining the details of the research you hope to do to fulfill the dissertation requirement. Each program should have a process for evaluating, defending, and endorsing dissertation proposals. Endorsement of the proposal by the committee (ideally in written form) serves as the "contract" between the committee and you and outlines the project's scope and should occur before data collection. In addition, the Graduate School requires you to file (with Enrolled Student Services) a completed [GS-Research Approval form](#) with your committee members' signatures concurrently with your GS5D form. See [Approval of your thesis or dissertation proposal](#) topic below.

### *Submitting your dissertation for committee review*

You will present your completed dissertation manuscript to your committee chair and advisory committee in accordance with the guidelines outlined in your program's [graduate program handbook](#) and within the timeline established by your major adviser and/or advisory committee. This timeline must meet the University deadlines above.

Your committee chair determines when the manuscript is suitable for initial review by the remaining committee members. Once your adviser decides the draft is ready to share with the rest of your committee, you will provide each committee member with a copy of the manuscript for review. Committee members should normally complete the initial review of your dissertation in three weeks or less; however, agreements may be made to allow for additional time if necessary.

### *Dissertation oral defense*

You must pass an oral examination (the dissertation defense) which your committee will administer. Defenses are public events — members of the Clemson University community are invited to attend the examination. Defenses not open to the public should be rare and for good cause. Personal preference does not constitute "good cause," but reasonable University accommodations for documented accessibility needs do constitute "good cause." Departments may have a standard procedure for these announcements/invitations, outlined in the program's [graduate program handbook](#).

The student should schedule the oral defense with enough time for committee review and for each committee member to be in attendance (in person or virtually). A majority decision from synchronously

participating committee members in support of the oral examination is required for a student to be considered to have passed the exam; dissenting members of the examining committee may forward a minority report to the Graduate School. A vote of "pass" at a thesis or dissertation defense should only be rendered when each participating committee member indicates final approval (or dissent) of the dissertation by signing [form GS7D](#) *Dissertation Defense and Approval*.

Note that students are **not** allowed to provide refreshments, snacks, gifts, or inducements for the oral defense. Programs or faculty may provide these if they desire, as long as the student does not pay for them.

A committee member unable to participate synchronously in the defense, either in person or via audio or video conference, may not vote on the oral defense. They must be counted as an abstention, as they did not participate in the oral defense. Meeting individually with the student is not an acceptable substitute for participating in the oral exam.

A student must still receive a passing vote from the majority of the committee members (two out of four counts as a majority where an advisory committee contains four members). If one is absent and counted as an abstention, a student would then need two affirmative passing votes if a committee contains either three or four members, or three passing votes if five or six members constitute the advisory committee.

The committee should not sign form GS7D until the manuscript is responsive to all committee members' concerns and recommendations. If a student submits a manuscript requiring substantial revisions, there might not be sufficient time for revisions and committee review and approval before the submission deadline for format review. In these cases, graduation may have to be deferred to a future graduation date.

A student who fails an oral defense may be allowed a second opportunity only at the advisory committee's recommendation. Committees should only grant a second attempt when there is a strong probability of success. If the performance in the first exam leaves committee members feeling there is a low probability of success on the second attempt, dismissal of the student should be recommended to the Graduate School. Failure of the second dissertation defense must result in dismissal from the Graduate School.

## Graduate School approval of your thesis or dissertation proposal

Research activities with the intention of leading to the completion of a thesis or dissertation must be approved by the student's advisory committee. Typically, this process involves a formal proposal with the advisory committee members present. Upon approval of the student's research plan, the [GS-Research Approval, Approval of Thesis/Dissertation Research Proposal](#) form is to be submitted to Enrolled Services. This form communicates formal approval for the student to embark on the research project as proposed. If significant deviations from the approved plan become necessary, another proposal defense is warranted.

The student is expected to bring a copy of the [GS-Research Approval form](#) to the scheduled proposal defense. Upon committee approval (minor changes notwithstanding), the form is to be completed by the advisory committee and submitted to Enrolled Student Services. If additional changes are expected before commencing the research, those may be included on the form and/or as an attachment. Unsuccessful proposal defenses (e.g., significant changes required) necessitate another proposal defense to be scheduled. The form is not to be submitted until a successful proposal defense (as determined by the advisory committee) has been verified. If the proposal process is commensurate with the requirements for the comprehensive exam, this form should be submitted concurrently with the [GS5D form](#).

## Finalizing your thesis or dissertation after defense and committee approval

### *Formatting and format approval*

The Graduate School has delegated authority to graduate programs and students' advisory committees to determine the appropriate format for publication of theses and dissertations in accordance with standards acceptable to the discipline. Consequently, each [program handbook](#) must contain specific information about program expectations for theses and dissertations.

The Graduate School will review the thesis or dissertation to ensure that it complies with the [guidelines established for formatting](#), particularly the preliminary pages of the document but including the page size and margins and consistent formatting throughout the manuscript. Manuscript submission and review are completed online. Step-by-step instructions and helpful tips for the process, including formatting, defense, file conversion, submission via upload, revision, and final approval, are available on the [Theses and Dissertations](#) pages on the Graduate School website. Review typically requires at least three business days, and the entire review process may take longer if formatting corrections are needed.

### *Publishing, archiving and printing*

The Graduate School publishes theses and dissertations electronically in partnership with [University Libraries](#). You will find a step-by-step [guide to the submission process](#) in the Theses and Dissertations section of the Graduate School website. No fees are required to upload, publish, and archive your thesis or dissertation; fees apply only to the order of printed, bound copies and copyright filing with the U.S. Office of Copyright.

The Graduate School does not require you to purchase printed copies, but some departments do (see the online [list of departments requiring bound copies](#)). Any program requiring a student to purchase printed copies must state this clearly in the program handbook and any requirements for binding style, size, paper quality, etc.

Approximately six weeks after your graduation (or after your publication embargo expires, whichever is later), your thesis or dissertation will be available for viewing online in the [TigerPrints](#) repository on Cooper Library's website.

### *Restrictions on publication and publication embargoes*

It is expected that the results of research performed using University facilities be published in the open literature (i.e., theses, dissertations, journals, magazines, or books) and that the faculty may freely disclose any information obtained in the teaching programs of the University. Exceptional cases may arise, however. The guidelines below shall apply to any projects requiring that results be kept confidential for a limited period; a request for a publication delay is also referred to as an *embargo*.

- The University shall not accept external contracts/grants that require research results to be kept confidential forever. A definite term of confidentiality shall be stated in a written nondisclosure agreement that is approved by the dean of the Graduate School and shall not exceed one year beyond the date of notification to the sponsor that a manuscript suitable for publication has been prepared. The University administration may grant exceptions and extensions only under unusual circumstances (e.g., national security, national emergency, classified activities, the pursuit of patents, or certain confidential agreements), with the approval of the dean of the Graduate School.
- Students associated with confidential projects must have prior approval for the use of results in preparing reports, theses, or dissertations in fulfillment of degree requirements. The Graduate School usually will not accept a thesis or dissertation that must be embargoed for

more than one year. In accordance with the nondisclosure agreement, documents submitted in partial fulfillment of degree requirements will be retained by the Graduate School (or the department in the case of project reports for non-thesis programs). The student's thesis or dissertation defense shall not be open to those not bound by the nondisclosure agreement.

- Students may request an embargo period not to exceed one year but may request a renewal for an additional year with approval from the Graduate School.

**Procedure:** Students may request an embargo period of up to one year as part of the online submission process. No further paperwork is required. If you determine that you need another year, send a request to Jill Bunch, explaining why the second year is needed and what will be accomplished in that second year.

### ***Restrictions on use***

Theses and dissertations submitted to the Graduate School in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduate degrees and deposited in the University Library are, as a rule, open to the public for reference purposes. Extended quotations or summaries may be published only with the permission of the author and the dean of the Graduate School.

## **2.7. Special Circumstances**

### **Academic probation**

Graduate students are placed on academic probation when their cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below a 3.0. Academic probation is an early alert system that signifies when a student is not making satisfactory academic progress towards graduation and may be subject to dismissal.

Courses taken on a pass/no pass (P/NP) basis are not included in GPA calculations, but not passing can indicate failure to maintain adequate performance or failure to make satisfactory progress toward degree completion. This includes thesis research credit hours (8910) and dissertation research credit hours (9910) and can lead to dismissal.

The cumulative 3.0 GPA requirement applies independently to graduate degrees. Which means a new grade point average computation begins after the completion of the first degree. If a student is enrolled in two or more degree programs simultaneously, the 3.0 GPA requirement applies to each program.

The Graduate School recognizes any course completed with minimum grade of C– for the course to apply toward a degree. Programs may have higher expectations if desired, and these must be clearly articulated in the graduate program handbook. Students who fail to meet these requirements become ineligible for graduation and remain on academic probation until they earn the requisite 3.0 grade point average or are dismissed.

Incomplete and NG grades affect GPA. Students who have incomplete and/or NG grades and receive academic probation notifications will not be officially placed on academic probation unless the letter grade resolution of the incomplete and/or NG grade results in a cumulative GPA lower than a 3.0.

Students who fall below a 2.0 GPA (0-1.99) will automatically initiate the dismissal procedure by the Graduate School. Exceptions to this include the following:

## Clemson University Graduate School POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- Students who have a 0 GPA due to only having P/NP courses on their transcript
- Students who have incomplete or NG grades
- Students in their first semester

Students who have a GPA between 2.0-2.99 will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and dismissal will be determined through an agreement from the graduate program and Graduate School with the Graduate School sending the official dismissal notification to the student.

**Procedure for students:** If you are a graduate student placed on academic probation, you will receive an email at the end of each semester your cumulative GPA is below a 3.0. You should meet with your major advisor and/or graduate program coordinator to ensure the expectations for removal of the probationary status are clearly defined and you understand them. You must submit a [GSPS – Graduate Student Plan for Success form](#) indicating your plan to raise your GPA to the required 3.0 along with anticipated grades for the next semester's classes. All signatures indicated on the form are required before submitting. The deadline to submit the GSPS form is by the last day to register or add a class for the next semester. Failure to submit a GSPS form by the deadline will result in a hold being placed on your account which will prevent you from dropping and/or registering for classes until the GSPS form is submitted.

Students with incomplete and/or NG grades will not be required to submit a GSPS form unless the letter grade resolution results in a cumulative GPA lower than a 3.0, or the time frame for resolving an incomplete grade is beyond the 30-day time limit indicated in the incomplete grade policy.

**Graduate assistants and fellowship recipients:** Students who have assistantships and/or fellowships and are on academic probation may be in jeopardy of having the assistantship or fellowship terminated, particularly if they are on probation more than one semester. Programs may choose not to reappoint a student failing to perform to expected standards academically or in reference to assistantship duties. You should consult your graduate program handbook for program expectations. The Graduate School reserves the right to declare a student ineligible for an assistantship or fellowship independent of program decisions.

**Procedure for faculty:** Program coordinators, department chairs, and college deans receive a notification at the end of each semester of the students in their programs who are on academic probation. The Graduate School expects communication from programs regarding students who have not demonstrated satisfactory academic progress and performance of previous successful measures have failed. Programs that no longer wish to retain these students should contact Dr. Natasha Croom, Associate Dean of the Graduate School within two days of receipt of the probation notification.

For retained students, advisors and program coordinators will need to meet with students and provide supportive guidance in developing a plan to help the student be successful. Signatures are required on the [GSPS – Graduate Student Plan for Success form](#) before submitting. A new GSPS form is required after each semester the student appears on academic probation.

## Dismissals<sup>8</sup>

A student may be dismissed from the Graduate School for failure to maintain adequate academic status or progress, receipt of *F* or *NP* for thesis or dissertation credits, second failure on a final or comprehensive exam, second failure on a thesis or dissertation defense, failure to meet required program expectations, failure to maintain continuous enrollment, student conduct issues, or academic integrity violations. Dismissed students are permitted to reapply to the Graduate School to pursue the same or different degree program unless they have been permanently dismissed. Admission decisions will be considered upon recommendation by the program area. Permanently dismissed students will not be considered for any Clemson academic degree, certificate, or non-degree enrollment.

Student dismissals for academic reasons are determined by the Graduate School, whereas the Office of Conduct and Ethical Standards (OCES) determines student dismissals for conduct reasons.

Infraction	Sanction (if mandated or recommended)	Returning criteria
Failure to maintain adequate academic status or maintain satisfactory progress	Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-year waiting period if requesting academic renewal</li> <li>New graduate application required if not employing academic renewal</li> </ul>
Failure to maintain adequate academic status or maintain satisfactory progress	Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New graduate application required</li> </ul>
Receipt of <i>F</i> or <i>NP</i> for master's or doctoral research credits	Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New graduate application required</li> </ul>
Second failure of comprehensive exam	Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New graduate application required</li> </ul>
Failure of second final exam or thesis for master's degree programs	Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New graduate application required</li> </ul>
Failure to complete other program milestones (e.g., prelim exam, required projects, not meeting stipulations in Plan for Success, etc.)	Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New graduate application required</li> </ul>
Failure to complete dissertation in allotted time period	Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New graduate application required</li> </ul>
Failure of second dissertation defense	Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New graduate application required</li> </ul>
Failure to maintain continuous enrollment	Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New graduate application required</li> </ul>
Student conduct	Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dependent on results and sanctions from conduct hearing; communicated by OCES</li> </ul>
Level four academic integrity violation	Permanent dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permanent dismissal from the University</li> </ul>

**Procedure for department:** A program wishing to recommend the dismissal of a graduate student should submit a request, along with a rationale, to the dean of the Graduate School. At the end of each semester,

8. Revision draft date 21 April 2017. Approved by Graduate Council 9 May 2017. Approved by Academic Council 18 January 2018.

program co-ordinators are notified of students with grade point averages below 3.0 or other indicators of failure to make satisfactory progress (e.g., failure to complete milestones according to stated deadlines). The Graduate School will designate the level of probation (R1 or R2) to be assigned to each student or will determine that the student should be dismissed.

### ***Dismissal appeals***

Appeals of dismissal related to academic performance/satisfactory progress are heard by the Graduate Admissions and Continuing Enrollment Appeals Committee. The burden of proof is on the student to demonstrate the dismissal decision resulted from an improper or unfair process. This constitutes the ***only*** grounds for appealing a dismissal decision. Disagreement with the decision does not constitute grounds for appeal or reversal of the decision.

**Procedure for student:** An appeal of continuing enrollment (dismissal) must be submitted in writing by the graduate student within 30 days of the date of the official letter received from the Graduate School indicating dismissal.

1. The student should submit the written statement requesting the appeal on [form GS-Appeal](#) and provide evidence that the dismissal decision was unfairly or improperly rendered. Any supporting documentation for the committee to consider should be attached to this form.
2. Within five business days (excluding days the University is closed) of receipt, the Graduate School will make available to the committee the student's appeal request, the student's Enrolled Services file, the recommendation for dismissal, and any relevant documents provided by the student. The Graduate School will also provide the graduate program coordinator with a copy of the student's appeal request within the same time frame.
3. The Graduate School will identify the earliest hearing date and will schedule the meeting, reserve the room, and notify all parties of the time and location of the hearing.
4. A designee of the dean of the Graduate School will attend the hearings to provide procedural guidance but will have no vote in the committee's decision.
5. The student will be called in first by the committee chair to present their case. Following the conclusion of the student's presentation, they will be excused.
6. The faculty representing the graduate program will be called in next by the committee chair to present the program's rationale for recommending dismissal. The faculty may bring to the meeting any relevant documents to share with the members of the committee. These documents will be retained with the case in accordance with the University's regulations on retention.
7. The committee will make a decision on the case, which will be communicated immediately to the student and the program coordinator. This communication will be in the form of an email notification. A letter, under the signature of the Graduate School, will also be mailed to each party.
8. Appeals of the decisions of the committee may be made by the student to the dean of the Graduate School within ten calendar days of the decision of the committee. Appeals of these decisions can only be made when there is evidence that the appeals committee unfairly or improperly applied policy or procedure in arriving at their decision. Disagreement with the decision is not grounds for appeal.

## Withdrawing from Clemson University

Withdrawing from the University occurs when you voluntarily leave Clemson and discontinue your degree program (as well as any assistantship, fellowship, or other financial aid). This is different from a medical withdrawal or [dropping a course](#). To withdraw from Clemson University, you should visit the Registrar's [Withdrawal checklist](#) and follow the instructions to effect immediate separation from the University. Withdrawal includes dropping all courses via iRoar, but you must notify Enrolled Student Services and your program coordinator as well. Note that if you have pending issues of concern, such as an academic integrity or community standards violation, the Graduate School may delay acting on your request until those issues are settled. The Graduate School reserves the right to dismiss a student rather than approving a withdrawal.

For international students, withdrawing from Clemson University will likely have visa implications. Be sure to communicate with International Services before withdrawing.

Withdrawal from Clemson does not prevent you from reapplying to a program in the future.

## Medical Withdrawal

A medical withdrawal request may be considered in unexpected cases in which serious mental health concerns, physical health concerns (illness or injury), or other documentable challenge prevents a student from continuing academic work during the semester, and an arrangement for incompletes is not possible. Medical withdrawals will be considered for both physical and mental health circumstances. Approved medical withdrawals will replace all course grades for the approved term with a W grade. This action applies to all courses a student is enrolled in during the semester in question; it may not be applied selectively to some courses but not others.

**Procedure for student:** Requests for a medical withdrawal are submitted directly to [the Graduate School's associate dean of academic and student affairs](#). The request may be submitted via email or by sealed envelope if confidential documentation is involved. Such requests are considered only for current terms and involve withdrawal from all classes. Medical withdrawal requests received after the last day of classes will only be considered in exceptional cases where the student is physically incapable of submitting the request (e.g., incapacitated physical state) and requires additional documentation for the extension.

A medical withdrawal request must include medical documentation and a student statement justifying the withdrawal. The statement must be accompanied by credible documentation from a healthcare provider that specifies the following:

- the date of onset of illness;
- the dates you were under professional care;
- the general nature of your medical condition and why/how it prevented you from completing your coursework;
- the date of your anticipated return to school; and
- the last date you were able to attend class.

If approved, a medical withdrawal hold will be placed on the student's record until the healthcare provider supplies documentation that the student is well enough to return to the University and resume academic requirements.

The effective date of withdrawal from class (last date of attendance) will be used to calculate any tuition refund, if applicable. Students receiving financial assistance are encouraged to contact Student Financial Services to discuss how a withdrawal will impact their financial status.

Each such case will be considered individually based on the nature of the request. International students are encouraged to consult the International Services office to determine the impact a withdrawal may have on their status.

Students considering a medical withdrawal are also encouraged to contact Student Health Services to inquire about their student health insurance coverage.

A student may appeal a denied medical withdrawal request within ten calendar days of the decision. The written appeal should be sent directly to the [dean of the Graduate School](#). These decisions can only be appealed when there is evidence that the denial resulted from an unfair or improper application of policy or procedure. Disagreement with the decision is not grounds for appeal.

In cases where a matriculated student needs to take time away from the program or withdraw before classes start (e.g., anticipated surgery), a [Leave of Absence form](#) should be submitted instead of a medical withdrawal request.

## Posthumous graduate degree

A graduate student who has passed away may be awarded a degree posthumously on the recommendation of the Dean of the Graduate School and the student's advisory committee. The student's advisory committee should recommend awarding of the degree by contacting the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School will forward the request to the Office of the Registrar, where it will be processed. The degree will be given to the family of the student, and the student will be recognized as an alumnus of Clemson University. Posthumous doctoral degrees may be recognized during doctoral commencements.

In the case that minimal progress toward the degree had been made (e.g., enrolled in only 1 or 2 semesters or only completed less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the coursework), a certificate of achievement may be given to the family of the student. The student's advisory committee should recommend awarding of the certificate by contacting the Dean of the Graduate School. The request will be forwarded to the Office of the Registrar, where it will be processed. Certificates of achievement toward doctoral degrees may be recognized during doctoral commencements. The student will be recognized as an alumnus of Clemson University.

## Academic redemption

There is no opportunity at the graduate level for academic redemption (i.e., repeating a course to replace a prior grade with a new grade). When a course is repeated, the new grade will be *added to* — not substituted for — the original class grade. The exception to this is academic renewal.

## Academic renewal

Any student who withdrew from the University or was dismissed from the Graduate School for failure to maintain an adequate academic status or satisfactory progress, and who has not enrolled for a period of one or more academic years, may apply for readmission under special conditions known as academic renewal. Under these conditions, all previous graduate credits and course grades will be ignored for purposes of evaluating a new GPA and academic status or satisfactory progress. These courses will be assigned a grade of “X,” and will not be counted toward the new degree program. The previous record will remain on the

transcript as well as the notation “readmission under the policy of academic renewal.” If the student is readmitted under the Academic Renewal policy, the policies, procedures, and guidelines in the current academic year’s Graduate School’s Policies & Procedures Handbook, as well as the program’s handbook applies. Academic renewal may occur only once.

**Procedure for students:** To be readmitted under the requirements of academic renewal, contact the coordinator of the program of interest to discuss your plan to be successful and to learn about program requirements. You must submit the [GS00 – Request for Academic Renewal form](#) and a new application for admission. Approval of consideration for readmission under academic renewal will be determined by the graduate program.

**Procedure for faculty:** The program coordinator of the student’s intended program of study must meet with the student to discuss their plan to be successful, as well as their commitment and intentions to complete the graduate program in a timely manner. Ensure the student’s last date of enrollment has been one or more academic years. Review the [GS00 – Request for Academic Renewal form](#), sign, date, and submit. Signing the form only indicates that you understand the student’s desire to begin anew in your graduate program. The official decision of admission is dependent on the review of the student’s new application for admission.

## 2.8. Academic Grievances

### Academic Grievance Policy<sup>9</sup>

It is the policy of the Graduate School to address all grievances of an academic nature filed by enrolled graduate students. Graduate student grievances are heard by the Graduate Academic Grievance Committee.

Grievances must be filed with the Graduate School within 60 days of the alleged act and may involve the following:

1. violations of program, department, college, or Graduate School policies related to final grades in courses or research (8910 or 9910);
2. violations of program, department, college, or Graduate School policies and procedures related to the completion of any academic requirement, including theses and dissertations, oral or written comprehensive examinations; and
3. graduate student assistantship employment, including allegations that offers of assistantship appointments made during recruiting were not honored after enrollment.

The Graduate Academic Grievance Committee will not hear allegations of discrimination based on age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status. All such allegations or complaints should be submitted to the [Office of Access and Equity](#). The Graduate School will promptly refer any such complaints received to the Office of Access and Equity.

The Graduate School will support a timely process to hear and respond to grievances and will handle all documents in such a way as to protect the confidentiality of the information. Members of any committee and parties to any hearing are expected to keep all information related to a grievance confidential.

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9. Academic Grievance Policy implemented Fall 2010. Updated Spring 2017.

### ***Committee structure***

The **Graduate Academic Grievance Committee (GAGC)** is a committee of faculty and student representatives. Faculty are selected by their colleges and serve two-year staggered terms. Student representatives are selected by the Graduate Student Government through an application and interview process in the Spring semester and are approved by the dean of the Graduate School. Students serve one-year terms. The associate provost and dean of the Graduate School (or dean's designee) serves as nonvoting chair. No member of the Graduate Academic Grievance Committee may simultaneously be a member of the Undergraduate Academic Grievance Committee, nor may they be members of the undergraduate or graduate academic integrity committees. The selection of faculty and student membership on the Graduate Academic Grievance Committee will occur in April of each year as needed.

The **Initial Grievance Review Board (IGRB)** is a subcommittee of the GAGC responsible for determining which grievances will go forward to the Grievance Hearing Panel. The membership of the IGRB is selected from the larger membership of the GAGC and should comprise one faculty representative from each college. One graduate student representative also serves on the IGRB. The IGRB selects a faculty member to serve as its chair. The IGRB will serve for an entire academic year. A majority of the voting members must endorse a grievance to move forward to the hearing panel.

The **Grievance Hearing Panel (GHP)** is a five-person subcommittee of the GAGC, composed of three faculty and two graduate students, appointed by the chair of the GAGC as cases are received from the IGRB. The GHP is responsible for hearing student grievances forwarded to it by the IGRB, proposing resolutions and, in the case of appeal, preparing the file and forwarding recommendations to the dean of the Graduate School. A chair of each GHP will be selected from the faculty members of the panel. Members of the hearing panel should not be members of the college of the student filing the grievance.

### ***Procedures and rules governing academic grievances***

#### **Procedures for students filing a complaint**

At any time prior to filing a grievance, you may consult with the University Ombuds charged with mediation in cases involving graduate students.

**Step 1.** Any student wishing to file a complaint must first make every attempt to resolve it within the college. You must first take the complaint to the faculty or staff member(s) involved. If no resolution can be reached, you should request assistance from the department chair and the dean of the college. The University Ombuds Office may be a resource for you during this time.

**Step 2.** If the grievance remains unresolved, you may file the complaint with the Graduate School. You must first meet with the associate dean of the Graduate School charged with oversight of the Graduate Academic Grievance Committee. The associate dean will describe the grievance process to you. If you wish to proceed with the grievance, the associate dean will provide you with Graduate School [form GS-g-A Filing of Grievance](#), which will enable you to provide a written statement detailing the grievance and your attempts to resolve it at the college level by documenting (a) the dates of consultations at the college level, (b) the names of the people consulted, and (c) the signature of the collegiate dean attesting that no resolution could be reached. You must return the fully executed form GS-g-A to the Graduate School within 30 days of your initial meeting with the associate dean. If you fail to file the grievance within this timeframe, you forfeit your opportunity to proceed unless you can show clear evidence that it was impossible to comply with this deadline. Questions concerning possible impacts on your graduate status should you not be successful in the grievance may be discussed at this time with the associate dean of the Graduate School.

You may seek external counsel (an adviser, an attorney, etc.) to assist with the preparation of materials to submit to the Academic Grievance Committee. You may also request such an individual accompany you to the hearing, but this adviser may not actively participate in the hearing.

**Step 3.** You and the associate dean of the Graduate School will file the grievance with the Initial Grievance Review Board.

### Procedures for the Initial Grievance Review Board (IGRB)

1. An associate or assistant dean from the Graduate School will serve in a nonvoting advisory role to the Graduate Academic Grievance Committee and IGRB if needed.
  2. The chair of the Initial Grievance Review Board (IGRB) will be provided a copy of the grievance (form GS-g-A), at which time the chair will convene the IGRB (either in person or asynchronously) to review the grievance. The Graduate School will retain the original copy of form GS-g-A.
  3. The IGRB will determine, by majority vote, if the complaint constitutes a grievance as defined by the grievance policy above, rendering it either *nongrievable* or *grievable*.
- **Nongrievable.** If the IGRB finds the complaint to be nongrievable or that the grievant has not followed policies, procedures, and timelines outlined in the *Graduate School Policies & Procedures Handbook*, the IGRB will execute its portion of [form GS-g-A](#), explaining the reasoning for its determination, and return the case to the associate dean with oversight of academic grievances. The associate dean will notify the student of the IGRB's decision. The student may appeal this determination to the dean of the Graduate School within ten days by requesting a review of the complaint. The student's request to the dean must provide a convincing rationale for the appeal based on factual evidence that policies were not followed or were misinterpreted. Disagreement with the decision is not a basis for an appeal to the dean. This appeal must be in writing and will be attached to form GS-g-A. The dean of the Graduate School may elect to uphold the IGRB's decision or forward the case to the Academic Grievance Committee for a hearing. If the dean of the Graduate School upholds the decision of the IGRB — that the case is nongrievable — the Graduate School will notify the student, and the University will take no further action. The dean will respond with an appeal decision, which is not subject to further appeal or due process. The associate dean of the Graduate School will notify all parties involved in the case, including the chair of the Graduate Academic Grievance Committee, the student, and all department faculty and staff reported on form GS-g-A, of the decisions of the IGRB and the results of any appeal.
  - **Grievable.** If the IGRB finds the complaint to be grievable and that the grievant has complied with all relevant policies, procedures, and timelines contained within the *Graduate School Policies & Procedures Handbook*, the IGRB will forward the case through the associate dean of the Graduate School to the chair of the Graduate Academic Grievance Committee, who in turn will appoint the Grievance Hearing Panel to hear the case.

### Procedures for the Grievance Hearing Panel (GHP)

1. In the case that the IGRB recommends that the grievance be heard and that it meets all requirements for a grievance, the chair of the GAGC will appoint a Grievance Hearing Panel of five individuals (three faculty and two graduate students not from the same college as the student filing the grievance and also not from the same college as the faculty member against which the grievance was filed) to hear the case. The GHP will select a faculty member to serve as chair and notify the associate dean of the Graduate School.
2. A copy of the recommendation of the IGRB and all supporting documents related to the case will be provided to the Hearing Panel chosen to hear the case.
3. Prior to convening the hearing, the chair of the Hearing Panel will contact the student who has filed the grievance as well as the faculty member against whom the grievance has been filed. The chair of the Hearing Panel will provide copies of the grievance to both parties, answer procedural questions that the parties have concerning the hearing, and ask each party if they have submitted all written documentation to the committee. If additional written materials are received prior to the hearing, the chair of the Hearing Panel will distribute copies to all Hearing Panel members and to all parties to the grievance.
4. The hearing will be informal and will be closed. The chair will take whatever action is necessary to ensure appropriate due process and an equitable, orderly, and expeditious hearing. All parties to the grievance will be given an opportunity to be heard. In addition, the chair may request the presence of any other person who can supply information pertinent to the grievance. If any witness is unable to be present at the hearing, the chair may, at their discretion, accept a written statement from that witness to be presented at the hearing. Witnesses will be present in the hearing room only when they are called to speak before the Hearing Panel. All parties will be permitted to question all individuals who present information, including each other. All parties may bring one adviser of their choice to the hearing to provide counsel; however, advisors will not be permitted to participate in the proceedings in any way except to communicate confidentially with the individual they are present to advise. They may not ask questions, speak, provide any written information, or in any other way communicate with panel members or individuals present to speak on the topic and may not in any way interrupt or influence the proceedings. The chair is directed to immediately remove any advisors who violate this restriction in any way. Removal of an adviser from the proceedings will not be considered grounds for appeal. No other person may be present for the hearing.
5. Upon conclusion of the hearing, the Hearing Panel will, by majority vote, reach a recommended resolution to the grievance. The Hearing Panel chair, in consultation with the associate dean of the Graduate School, will then formulate the findings in writing. The written findings and recommended resolution will be forwarded via official University email to all designated parties. Each party will be asked to indicate acceptance of the recommended resolution by replying to the

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findings/resolution email within 14 days of its original send date. Failure to respond within 14 working days will constitute acceptance.

6. If all parties to the grievance accept the resolution recommended by the Hearing Panel, the matter of the grievance will be considered closed. The associate dean of the Graduate School will notify all involved individuals that the case is resolved. The associate dean of the Graduate School will ensure that the resolution is effected and will notify other appropriate University officials as necessary.
7. If either party rejects the recommended resolution to the case, all materials will be referred to the dean of the Graduate School. When grievances are referred to in this manner, this constitutes an appeal of the decision. The dean of the Graduate School will make the final decision within five working days of receipt of the appeal. This decision is final and not subject to further appeal. The associate dean of the Graduate School will notify all parties included on [form GS-g-A](#) of the decision of the dean and will ensure that the resolution, including notification to the University Registrar if needed, is communicated promptly.
8. Should a grievance be filed against the dean of the Graduate School in the dean's capacity as a member of the faculty, the substitution of the Vice President of Academic Affairs and provost of the University (or provost's designee) must be made for a student wishing to appeal the finding of the Hearing Panel.
9. At the conclusion of the hearing, all printed materials provided to individual members of the Academic Grievance Committee will be collected by the Graduate School.
10. To the extent permitted by law, all records and discussions relevant to the grievance will be held in confidence; however, information will be available to succeeding members of the Academic Grievance Committee. The Graduate School will retain one complete file of each grievance in a locked file for the required length of time in accordance with state guidelines on the retention of academic materials.
11. These policies and procedures can be changed by recommendation from the membership of the Academic Grievance Committee with approval of the Graduate Advisory Committee, the Graduate Council, and the provost's Academic Council. Such changes will not affect any case under consideration at the time of the change.

## University Ombuds office

The *ombuds* is an independent, confidential resource who aids faculty, graduate students, and postdoctoral students in resolving problems, complaints, and conflicts when normal procedures have not worked satisfactorily. The Ombuds office serves as a central information source on policies, procedures, and regulations affecting faculty, graduate students, and postdoctoral students. The office refers individuals to people and offices able to resolve problems or handle appeals at the lowest possible level. Where appropriate, the ombuds can facilitate communication or mediate between parties.

The ombuds strives to ensure that faculty, graduate students, and postdoctoral students receive fair and equitable treatment within the University system. They provide an independent point of view in an informal

and confidential environment. The ombuds will not identify you or discuss your personal concerns with anyone without your permission. Private, confidential meetings can be arranged at your convenience. All communications will be treated with strict confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

The ombuds works toward resolutions based on principles of fairness. They are neither an advocate for faculty, administration, or students, nor an agent of the University.

The [Office of the Ombuds](#) is available to assist faculty members, graduate students, and postdoctoral students who

- need guidance in resolving a problem or a concern relating to the University;
- need information about policies or procedures;
- need someone to mediate between individuals or within the University;
- feel the University has made an error in a particular case;
- feel they have been victims of harassment or discrimination;
- are unsure about which University policies, procedures, or regulations apply to a given situation;
- have specific academic problems that cannot be resolved by following regular University procedures;
- feel they have been unfairly treated;
- have a problem that requires someone to negotiate a solution or to help facilitate communication between parties; and/or
- feel that a University policy, procedure, or regulation has been applied unfairly or erroneously.

Additional information about the ombuds' standards, practices, and confidentiality, plus office location and contact information, are available on the [University Ombuds](#) webpage.

## 2.9. Violation of Academic Integrity

### Academic Integrity

#### *Graduate policy and procedures*<sup>10</sup>

Violations of the principles outlined in the graduate philosophy on academic integrity will be pursued to the fullest extent according to the procedures outlined below. Violations of academic integrity include violations in coursework, research,<sup>11</sup> independent projects, practica, internships, comprehensive and qualifying exams, theses and dissertations and other publications<sup>12</sup> or works submitted as requirements

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10. Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures implemented in 2010.

11. Depending on the research infraction, the [University's Research Division Policies](#) may in some cases take precedence over the Academic Integrity Policy.

12. Depending on the research infraction, the [University's Research Division Policies](#) may in some cases take precedence over the Academic Integrity Policy.

for receipt of a degree. Non-degree-seeking students may also be charged with violations of academic integrity.

This policy broadly defines and provides examples of violations of academic integrity, categorizes the seriousness of violations into four levels,<sup>13</sup> and establishes guidelines for discerning appropriate sanctions for each. As there is no way to identify within this policy all the possible violations of academic integrity, the policy and ensuing procedures are intended as a general guide for faculty in all colleges to enable consistent, reasonable, and fair judgments of graduate student actions incongruous with the fundamental values and general philosophy described above.

The authority to resolve cases of violations of academic integrity by enrolled graduate students is vested in the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee.

#### A. Definitions, explanations and examples of violations of academic integrity<sup>14</sup>

Violations of academic integrity may include, but are not limited to, the following:

***Cheating.*** Cheating involves giving, receiving or using unauthorized aid on any academic work submitted for grading, including but not limited to coursework, laboratory assignments, research projects, comprehensive and qualifying examinations, theses and dissertations, or using digital logins and account numbers that belong to another person without the permission of the account owner. Unauthorized aid includes collaborating with classmates or others when explicitly prohibited, using online paper mills or paying individuals to prepare research papers, reports or projects, submitting identical work to satisfy the requirements of more than one class without the approval of the faculty, or using textbooks, notes, the internet, and other sources when instructed to work alone.

***Fabricating/falsifying information.*** Fabricating or falsifying information involves actions such as making up data that were not collected, stating that studies were conducted that were not, indicating that original source material was read when information was obtained from secondary or tertiary sources, making up references not used, or identifying sources that were not consulted (e.g., telephone interviews).

***Facilitating violations of academic integrity.*** Facilitating violations of academic integrity involves a student intentionally helping another violate the principles of academic integrity (for example, allowing friends access to their work, or instructing students on ways to solicit aid on papers, projects, take-home exams, tests for state and national licenses, etc.).

***Failing to cite contributors.*** Failing to cite an author or multiple authors involves not giving credit to individuals who have contributed significantly to a work (paper, research project, poster, etc.) and claiming the final product as one's own.

***Plagiarizing.*** Plagiarizing is theft of the work accomplished by someone else. It includes copying and pasting words, phrases, sentence structure, computer code or files, images, or ideas from any source, including the internet, and attributing the work to one's own efforts. Blatant examples of plagiarism include failure to use quotation marks, failure to indent quoted text of more than three lines, and

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13. Levels based on the academic integrity model of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ; used by permission. Rutgers' document accessed at [https://slwordpress.rutgers.edu/academicintegrity/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2014/11/AI\\_Policy\\_2013.pdf](https://slwordpress.rutgers.edu/academicintegrity/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2014/11/AI_Policy_2013.pdf)

14. Based on the academic integrity model of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ; used by permission. Rutgers' document accessed at [https://slwordpress.rutgers.edu/academicintegrity/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2014/11/AI\\_Policy\\_2013.pdf](https://slwordpress.rutgers.edu/academicintegrity/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2014/11/AI_Policy_2013.pdf)

failure to cite consulted sources either in footnotes, endnotes or within the body text of a document. More subtle examples of plagiarism include paraphrasing or using others' conceptual frameworks for developing creative works without acknowledgment or permission or citing a source within the text but then directly quoting the materials without the use of quotation marks or text indentation.

***Thwarting others' progress.*** Thwarting others' progress involves editing, deleting or otherwise destroying electronic files that belong to another person or intentionally stealing or destroying property which prevents others from using it to gain needed information to complete assignments; for example, library materials on reserve, materials on loan by a faculty member, or reports and documents made available for student use by external companies, state and federal agencies, etc.

## **B. Levels of seriousness of violations of academic integrity and sample recommended sanctions<sup>15</sup>**

At the graduate level, it is expected that students exhibit sophistication in understanding the tenets of academic integrity. Even so, it is clear that some types of violations are more serious in nature than others and that some types of violations require deliberate, calculated actions on the part of the student. This policy categorizes academic integrity violations into four levels. To provide guidance on the administration of sanctions, examples of violations of academic integrity are delineated below by the level of seriousness. This list is by no means exhaustive but is reflective of the types of violations that have been observed at Clemson University. Guidance may be sought from the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee to determine the appropriate level of seriousness in unusual or highly complex instances.

### ***Level One violations of academic integrity and sample recommended sanctions***

Includes instances where it is determined that a first-year graduate student is *essentially unaware* of the principles of academic integrity at Clemson, where a student has misunderstood instructions from a professor and has committed an infraction impacting a *minor portion* of assigned work or has committed an infraction on an assignment of *minor significance* to the final grade. Level One violations are addressed by the professor. Examples of Level One violations include the following:

1. failure to follow instructions to work independently;
2. plagiarism affecting very minor portions of an assignment or project;
3. first-time offenses by students unfamiliar with the academic integrity expectations at Clemson.

Sample recommended sanctions for Level One violations include one or more of the following:

1. failure on the assignment;
2. requirement to make appropriate corrections and resubmit the assignment for grading;
3. verbal or written reprimand;

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15. Based on the academic integrity model of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ; used by permission. Rutgers' document available at [https://slwordpress.rutgers.edu/academicintegrity/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2014/11/AI\\_Policy\\_2013.pdf](https://slwordpress.rutgers.edu/academicintegrity/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2014/11/AI_Policy_2013.pdf)

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4. assignment to attend a seminar on academic integrity and to write a paper on knowledge gained to be submitted for credit or no credit, at the professor's discretion.

### *Level Two violations of academic integrity and sample recommended sanctions*

Includes instances that impact a *moderate portion* of an assignment, course, project, laboratory, or research activity. Level Two violations are addressed by the faculty member, the graduate program coordinator, and the department chair. Examples of Level Two violations include the following:

1. failing to acknowledge sources by use of quotation marks, footnotes, endnotes or indentations of lengthy direct quotes;
2. using unauthorized aid (notes, books and other references, other students' work, websites, etc.) in violation of explicit instructions to complete in-class or take-home exams;
3. failing to acknowledge sources of materials paraphrased;
4. failing to acknowledge sources of assistance or other contributors in preparation of assignments, papers, posters, or projects, etc.;
5. using the conceptual frameworks of others in developing creative works without acknowledgment or permission.

Sample recommended sanctions for Level Two violations include one or more of the following:

1. failure on the assignment with no opportunity to amend;
2. assignment of a similar task with a higher level of difficulty and more stringent grading;
3. receipt of zero on the assignment.

### *Level Three violations of academic integrity and sample recommended sanctions*

Includes instances where it is determined that a student *flagrantly and intentionally* has violated the principles of academic integrity in a *significant portion* of an assignment, course, or research activity. Level Three violations are heard by the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee. Examples of Level Three violations include the following:

1. knowingly plagiarizing *major sections* of papers submitted for grading;
2. knowingly plagiarizing major sections of the thesis or dissertation prior to submission for publication;
3. purchasing papers or reports and submitting them for grading;
4. thwarting others' progress by destroying computer files, laboratory resources, or library materials;
5. devising means with classmates to cheat on exams of any sort (qualifying, preliminary, state exams for licensing, etc.).

Sample recommended sanctions for Level Three violations include one or more of the following:

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1. receipt of a grade of *F* in the course;
2. suspension from the University for one or more semesters;
3. termination of the student's graduate assistantship and/or University fellowship;
4. notation in the Graduate School of the violation of academic integrity and the sanction.

### *Level Four violations of academic integrity and sample recommended sanctions*

Includes instances where it is determined that a student has intentionally committed violations of the principles of academic integrity serious enough to constitute *academic fraud*, actions which have the impact of bringing the reputation of the institution itself into question. Level Four violations are heard by the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee and may involve interaction with the Faculty Senate and the Vice President for Research if sponsored research is involved.

1. fabricating data in research projects, papers, and reports;
2. creating false sources for references which do not, in fact, exist;
3. plagiarizing in materials to be submitted for publication, including final submission of theses and dissertations and journal articles;
4. falsifying transcript records, altering any supporting documents submitted to the University with the application for admission;
5. paying an individual or company to produce a thesis or dissertation;
6. forging a faculty or staff member's signature on any document.

Sample recommended sanctions for Level Four violations include one or more of the following:

1. mandated permanent dismissal from the University with no possibility of academic renewal;
2. notation in the Graduate School of the violation of academic integrity and the sanction;
3. notation of the dismissal on the student's permanent academic record (transcript).

**Note:** Repeated violations of the policy of academic integrity, irrespective of the level, should result in serious sanctions, up to and including permanent dismissal.

### C. Structure of the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee

**Faculty.** Three tenured faculty members from each of the seven academic colleges and the Library, elected by the faculty accorded voting rights in each college and the Library, serve staggered three-year terms on the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee. Members of the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee must not simultaneously be members of the Undergraduate Academic Integrity Committee, nor of the grievance committees of either the graduate or undergraduate programs. Faculty representatives are selected by college rules at the end of the Spring semester to serve two-year staggered terms that begin in the fall.

**Students.** Seven graduate students — one from each college — are selected and approved by the Graduate Student Government (GSG). These students are then recommended for one-year

appointments to the associate provost and dean of the Graduate School. Graduate student committee members must maintain good standing within the University for the entire duration of the appointment and must have completed nine credit hours at the graduate level prior to being selected by GSG.

**Chair.** The associate provost and dean of the Graduate School (or dean's designee) serves as chair and is a nonvoting member.

**Hearing Panel.** Cases will be heard by a panel of five committee members comprising two graduate students and three faculty members from different departments. Decisions of the hearing panel require a majority vote.

**Meetings and Hearings.** The committee convenes throughout the calendar year, including summers, when there is a case to be heard. The Graduate Academic Integrity Committee will meet to review and revise its procedures, if necessary, prior to the last day of classes of every Spring semester. Revised procedures will go into effect on the first day of the subsequent Fall semester.

**Recusal.** To avoid possible conflict of interest, faculty and graduate student representatives should recuse themselves from cases involving colleagues or peers in their colleges.

#### D. Notification of a violation of academic integrity

1. When, in the opinion of a faculty member, there is evidence that a student has committed a violation of academic integrity, the faculty member will fully document the charge in writing in a statement delivered in a sealed envelope to the associate dean of the Graduate School. At the same time, at their discretion, the alleging faculty member is encouraged, but is not required, to privately inform the student charged of the nature of the allegation.
2. When, in the opinion of a student or staff member, there is evidence that a student has committed a violation of academic integrity, the student or staff member should contact the faculty member for the course (including the research adviser or internship/practicum/co-op supervisor) to discuss the incident. After being contacted, if, in the opinion of the faculty member, there is evidence that the student has committed a violation of academic integrity, the faculty member will deliver a formal written charge in a sealed envelope to the associate dean of the Graduate School. At the same time, at their discretion, the alleging faculty member is encouraged, but is not required, to privately inform the student charged of the nature of the allegation.
3. When, in the opinion of anyone outside the University, there is evidence that a student has committed a violation of academic integrity, that person should bring this allegation to the attention of the associate dean of the Graduate School. The associate dean will contact the appropriate faculty representative of the student's program (consistent with the alleged violation). The faculty member will determine if charges are to be brought against the student. If the faculty member determines that there is sufficient evidence to file a charge, the faculty member will fully document the charge in writing in a statement delivered in a sealed envelope to the associate dean of the Graduate School. At the same time, at their discretion, the alleging faculty member is encouraged, but is not required, to privately inform the student charged of the nature of the allegation.

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4. Within ten working days from the date the associate dean of the Graduate School has received a formal charge of an alleged violation, they will provide the student with a copy of the charge and the policy and procedures of the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee.
5. The Graduate School will notify the Academic Integrity Committee that a case has been received and will indicate whether or not this violation constitutes a first offense (verified by documentation of previous violations sanctioned at Level Two or above as noted on the record retained in the Graduate School).
6. The Graduate School will identify a panel to hear the case depending on the availability of committee members and the faculty member bringing the charge.

### E. Procedures if the student chooses to waive their right to a hearing

1. The student must meet with the associate dean of the Graduate School to request to waive their right to a hearing. This usually happens when the student is informed of the charges.
2. If the student wants to waive their right to a hearing, the associate dean will allow the student to execute [form GS-ai-A Request to Waive Academic Integrity Hearing](#), and will inform the student of the classification/level of the offense (Level Two to Level Four). A student may not request a hearing for a Level One violation.
3. A student who requests to waive their right to a hearing will have no right to appeal the sanction imposed unless the sanction includes suspension or permanent dismissal from Clemson University.
4. The Graduate School will notify the professor of the decision of the student to waive their right to a hearing.

### *Application of sanctions in cases without a hearing*

When the student has waived their right to a hearing, sanctions may be imposed by the faculty member if Level One; by the faculty member and department if Level Two; or by the Academic Integrity Committee hearing panel if Level Three or Four.

1. In cases of Level One violations, the professor should meet with the student and inform them of the sanction. The professor should provide an email notification to the associate dean of the Graduate School including the date of the meeting with the student and the sanction imposed. Level One violations will not become a part of the student's permanent academic record at the University but will be recorded for data purposes only in the Graduate School. In keeping with the commitment to encourage students' understanding and embracing the tenets of academic integrity, Level One violations will be used as a warning and as a teaching opportunity.
2. In cases of Level Two violations, the professor and department chair should meet with the student and inform them of the sanction. The professor should provide an email notification to the associate dean of the Graduate School including the date of the meeting with the student and the sanction imposed. Level Two violations will not become a part of the student's permanent academic record at the University but will be recorded in the Graduate School and considered as the student's first offense of violation of the policies of academic integrity.

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3. In cases of Level Three violations, the professor and department may choose to recommend a desired sanction to the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee's hearing panel; however, the panel will make a final determination of appropriateness of the sanction.
  - a. If the hearing panel accepts the recommendation of the professor/department, the hearing panel chair will notify the associate dean of the Graduate School. The associate dean will then make notation in the student's file accordingly and forward a copy of the sanction to the student and professor. If the student does not appeal the decision of the hearing panel within the allotted five working days (see [appeals](#) below), the Graduate School will notify the University Registrar of the violation and the sanction if suspension is imposed.
  - b. If the hearing panel does not accept the sanction recommended by the professor/department, the hearing panel will make a determination of appropriate sanction. The associate dean will then make notation in the student's file accordingly and forward a copy of the sanction to the student and professor. If the student does not appeal the decision of the hearing panel within the allotted five working days (see [appeals](#) below), the Graduate School will notify the University Registrar of the violation and the sanction if suspension is imposed.
4. In cases of Level Four violations, the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee hearing panel will determine the sanction. The associate dean will then make notation in the student's file accordingly and will forward a copy of the sanction to the student and professor, department, and dean of the Graduate School. If the student does not appeal the decision of the committee within the allotted five working days (see [appeals](#) below), the associate dean will notify the University Registrar of the violation and the sanction.

### F. Procedures if the student chooses to pursue a hearing

1. A hearing may not be requested for a Level One violation. Level One violations will be used as a teaching opportunity in the course/program/department, whichever is relevant, to discuss with the student the seriousness of failure to understand academic integrity issues at the graduate level.
2. If a student requests a hearing for a Level Two violation, the associate dean of the college will assist in assembling a three-person hearing panel within the college. Decisions of the hearing panel will be final. Graduate student representation on this panel is not required.
3. The Academic Integrity Committee's hearing panel (for cases identified to be Level Three or Four) will consist of five individuals — two graduate students and three faculty members from different colleges — selected as cases are brought forward. Each hearing panel will select a faculty member to serve as chair of the hearing.
4. The faculty member filing the charge must present a full written explanation of the charge to the associate dean of the Graduate School, who will forward it to the chair of the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee's hearing panel within three working days of receipt. The Graduate School will also provide a copy of the charge to the student within the same time frame.

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5. The student will then have five working days in which to provide a detailed written explanation on [form GS-ai-B, Student Rebuttal of Charge](#) in their own defense. This form will be submitted to the hearing panel through the Graduate School.
6. The chair of the hearing panel will convene the hearing as soon as is practical.
7. The student and the alleging faculty member will receive at least five business days' advance notice of the hearing date.
8. The hearing will be conducted in a closed session with the student, alleging faculty member, hearing panel members, associate dean of the Graduate School, and any witnesses called to be present.
9. Only materials submitted to the hearing panel prior to the hearing may be introduced and/or explained during the hearing. If necessary, witnesses may be called to speak before the hearing panel and will be present only when speaking before the panel.
10. At the discretion of the chair of the hearing panel, the hearing may be suspended to accommodate the review by the panel of unanticipated new information.
11. Following the hearing, the parties will be excused, and the hearing panel will deliberate in a closed session.
12. Decisions of the hearing panel will be made by majority vote.

### G. Findings of the hearing panel

1. If the student is found *not in violation*, the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee's hearing panel will report this finding to the Graduate School on [form GS-ai-C, Report of Finding](#). The Graduate School will notify all parties involved of the finding by forwarding a copy of form GS-ai-C to each.
2. If the student is found *in violation*, in cases at Levels Three or Four, the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee's hearing panel will report its decision and recommended sanction to the associate dean of the Graduate School on [form GS-ai-C, Report of Finding](#). The Graduate School will notify all parties involved of the finding by forwarding a copy of form GS-ai-C to each.

### H. Appeals

The decision of the collegiate or Graduate Academic Integrity Committee's hearing panel is final and no appeals may be filed except in cases resulting in suspension or permanent dismissal. In these instances, within five working days after receipt of written notification of a suspension or dismissal, a student may submit a written appeal to the dean of the Graduate School to review the decision. The decision of the dean of the Graduate School is final.

**Note:** Should the faculty member filing the charge be the dean of the Graduate School (in their capacity as a member of the faculty), the substitution of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost of the University (or provost's designee) must be made for students wishing to appeal the finding of the hearing panel.

## **I. Administration of sanctions**

The alleging faculty member will notify the student and the Graduate School of sanctions imposed for Level One or Two violations. The Graduate School will notify all parties of the decision of the Graduate Academic Integrity hearing panel for Level Three and Four violations and will oversee administration of any sanctions involving suspension or dismissal.

1. Level One sanctions are determined by the alleging faculty member. While the faculty member is not restricted to the limited suggestions outlined in this policy, the sanction should be consistent with the suggested sanctions for Level One violations. The associate dean of the Graduate School may be contacted for assistance, if desired.
2. Level Two sanctions are determined by the faculty member in consultation with the graduate program coordinator and department chair. While these individuals are not restricted to the limited suggestions outlined in this policy, the sanction should be consistent with the suggested sanctions for Level Two violations. The associate dean of the Graduate School may be contacted for assistance, if desired.
3. Level Three sanctions are determined by the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee's hearing panel. If the violation is not the student's first while enrolled at Clemson University, the student may receive a grade of *F* for courses or research (8910 or 9910) or will receive a grade of "fail" on the comprehensive exam in question and may be suspended from the University for one or more semesters. Students suspended for violations of academic integrity will also be terminated from graduate assistantships or University fellowships for the same period of the suspension from the date of suspension. The dean of the Graduate School will be notified of decisions involving suspension and will formally issue a letter of suspension to the student. Notification to the Office of the Registrar, the Office of International Affairs, the collegiate dean, graduate program coordinator, faculty bringing the charge, and department chair will be made by forwarding to those parties a copy of the letter of suspension.
4. Level Four sanctions are determined by the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee's hearing panel. Level Four sanctions require that the student be permanently dismissed from the University. The dean of the Graduate School will be notified of decisions involving suspension and will formally issue a letter of permanent dismissal to the student. Notification to the Office of the Registrar, the Office of International Affairs, the collegiate dean, graduate program coordinator, faculty bringing the charge, and department chair will be made by forwarding to those parties a copy of the letter of permanent dismissal.

## **J. Retention/disposition of files**

The Graduate School will retain all files of academic integrity cases and their findings in accordance with the University's records retention policy.

## **K. Confidentiality**

All academic integrity hearings are closed, and cases are considered confidential. The Graduate School and members of the Graduate Academic Integrity Committee and hearing panels will keep all materials and discussions of the cases confidential to the extent permitted by law.

## Academic misconduct for former graduate students

It is possible that an act of academic misconduct will remain undiscovered until after a degree is awarded. In such a case, Clemson University reserves the right to revoke any degree based on new revelations about scholarly issues including — but not restricted to — admission credentials, all forms of coursework, research, theses, dissertations, or other final projects.

## Revocation of academic degrees

Academic institutions have a critical responsibility to provide an environment that promotes integrity while at the same time encouraging openness and creativity among scholars. Care must be taken to ensure that honest errors and ambiguities of interpretation of scholarly activities are distinguishable from outright misconduct. This policy is applicable to egregious fraud or other misconduct in obtaining an academic degree. The Clemson University Board of Trustees has the sole authority to revoke any degree previously awarded.

**Definitions.** As used herein, the following terms shall apply when the degree holder was a graduate student:

1. “Dean” shall mean the dean of the Graduate School.
2. “Committee of Investigation and Recommendation” shall be composed of the members of the standing University Graduate Admissions and Continuing Enrollment Appeals Committee, except for the associate dean of the Graduate School, who shall not be a member of the committee. A graduate student will be appointed to the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation by the President of the Graduate Student Government within ten calendar days of notification by the President of the Faculty Senate. Any member of the Graduate Admissions and Continuing Enrollment Appeals Committee who is a faculty member in the department that awarded the degree shall not be a member of the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation for that particular investigation. If there are fewer than three non-disqualified faculty members, the President of the Faculty Senate shall appoint additional faculty members to bring the number of faculty committee members up to three. If the President of the Faculty Senate is from the same department that awarded the degree involved, the President-elect of the Faculty Senate shall appoint the additional member.

**Complaint.** An allegation or complaint involving the possibility of misconduct can be raised by anyone. The allegation should be made in writing to the dean of the Graduate School.

**Initial review.** The dean of the Graduate School will conduct the initial review to determine whether or not the allegation has merit. The dean may discuss the matter with the former student’s advisory committee and other faculty members as appropriate. The dean may also contact people outside the University who may be able to provide factual information on the alleged misconduct or who may otherwise have expertise concerning issues involved in the alleged misconduct. If the dean determines that the allegation has no merit, they will terminate the investigation. If the dean determines that serious academic misconduct is suspected, the dean will notify the President of the Faculty Senate in writing in a confidential manner. The dean shall also notify the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost of the University of the charge but will not discuss any details of the charge.

**Committee of Inquiry.** The President of the Faculty Senate shall, within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the notification from the dean, appoint three faculty members to the Committee of Inquiry and notify the President of the Graduate Student Government, who shall appoint a graduate student to the Committee of

Inquiry within ten calendar days of notification. The President of the Faculty Senate shall also notify the degree holder of the formation of a Committee of Inquiry. If the Faculty Senate President is from the same department that awarded the degree involved, the President-elect of the Faculty Senate shall appoint the Committee of Inquiry. The faculty members will be appointed from departments that did not award the degree involved. The committee will elect its chair from the faculty members on the committee.

For each allegation, the Committee of Inquiry will review the complaint and any other information provided by the dean and determine whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant a formal charge of academic misconduct and further investigation under this policy. While the Committee of Inquiry shall not make a recommendation as to whether a degree should be revoked, the purpose is to provide a review to separate frivolous, unjustified, or mistaken allegations from those requiring a more detailed and formal investigation. The Committee of Inquiry will review the evidence and must determine that the alleged misconduct more probably than not occurred in order for the committee to recommend a formal charge and further investigation.

Within 30 calendar days of the formation of the Committee of Inquiry, the committee will submit a written report to the President of the Faculty Senate. If the committee's report finds that the investigation should not proceed, the President of the Faculty Senate shall terminate the investigation and notify the appropriate people. If the committee's report finds that a formal charge and further investigation are warranted, the President of the Faculty Senate shall, within ten calendar days of receipt of the report, send a copy of that report to the dean of the Graduate School and to the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation. The President of the Faculty Senate shall also immediately notify the President of the Graduate Student Government that a student representative needs to be appointed to the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation. The President of the Faculty Senate shall also notify the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost of the Committee of Inquiry's recommendation. No details of the charge will be discussed. A majority vote of the Committee of Inquiry is necessary to recommend that a formal charge and further investigation are warranted. A tie vote means that the investigation is terminated, as stated herein.

**Notification to degree holder.** The dean shall issue in writing, within ten calendar days of receipt of the report of the Committee of Inquiry, a formal charge of academic misconduct to the degree holder. This written notice shall detail the faculty allegations for the charge and the evidence supporting the charge. This written notice shall also inform the degree holder that if the charges are substantiated, the degree holder's degree could be revoked. This written notice shall also inform the degree holder of their right to appear at a hearing as stated in this policy. The dean shall also send with this notice a copy of this policy and procedure. This notice shall be delivered to the accused in person or sent by certified mail, return receipt requested.

**Committee of Investigation and Recommendation.** The Committee of Investigation and Recommendation shall extend to the degree holder due process, which shall, at a minimum, include the following:

1. notice of the nature of the complaint;
2. notice of the evidence supporting the complaint;
3. notice of the hearing;
4. the opportunity to present evidence, including testimony;
5. the opportunity to hear the testimony against the degree holder;
6. the opportunity to ask questions of all witnesses; and

## **Clemson University Graduate School POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

7. the opportunity to have an attorney or adviser present at the hearing; however, the role of the attorney or adviser shall be solely to assist the party, and the attorney or adviser shall not be permitted to participate actively in the proceedings.

The degree holder shall not be entitled to know the identity of the person(s) who originally made the complaint unless that person agrees that their identity can be revealed.

The chair of the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation shall inform the degree holder of the time and date of the hearing.

The dean of the Graduate School or dean's designee shall present the accusation against the degree holder at the hearing and may have one additional representative present during the hearing. Under this section the term "dean" is understood to include the dean's designee if such a designation is made.

The degree holder and the dean may submit written materials to the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation prior to the hearing. The chair of the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation shall make available the materials received to the other party and to all committee members. The hearing before the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation shall be held no sooner than thirty (30) calendar days and no later than ninety (90) calendar days after receipt of the report of the Committee of Inquiry unless the degree holder and the dean agree to a different date. All matters pertaining to the hearing shall be kept as confidential as possible and the hearing shall be closed to the public. A verbatim record of the hearing will be taken and a text copy thereof transcribed and made a part of the hearing record. The degree holder and the dean shall be responsible for having any witnesses they wish to testify in attendance at the hearing. Witnesses will be present only while testifying.

The chair of the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation shall take whatever action is necessary during the hearing to ensure a fair, orderly, and expeditious hearing. No formal rules of evidence will be followed. If any objection is made to any evidence being offered, the decision of the majority of the committee shall govern. Irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious evidence shall be excluded.

The degree holder and the dean shall be permitted to offer evidence and witnesses pertinent to the issues.

The dean shall present the case against the accused first. The accused shall then present their response.

The chair will allow each party to ask questions of the other party and will allow each party to ask questions of the other party's witnesses at the appropriate time during the hearing as determined by the chair. Members of the committee may ask questions of any party or any witness at any time during the hearing.

Within 15 calendar days of the conclusion of the hearing, the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation shall submit a written report to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost. The report shall contain findings and a recommendation as to whether the degree holder's degree should be revoked. The Committee of Investigation and Recommendation must find clear and convincing evidence that serious academic misconduct has been committed to recommend the revocation of the degree holder's degree. If the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation does not find clear and convincing evidence of serious academic misconduct, the committee cannot recommend revocation of the degree holder's degree, and the matter shall be closed. A majority vote of the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation is necessary to recommend the revocation of a degree holder's degree. This means that a tie vote will result in the matter being closed.

At the same time that the report is sent to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost, the chair of the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation shall send a copy of the report to the degree holder, the dean, and other appropriate people involved in the process.

If the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation recommends that the degree holder's degree be revoked, the chair shall also send a complete copy of the hearing record to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost. The hearing record shall consist of the transcript of the hearing and all documents that were submitted to the committee. The chair of the Committee of Investigation and

Recommendation shall label which documents were submitted by each party when forwarding this information to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost.

If the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation recommends that the degree holder's degree be revoked, the chair shall also send a copy of the transcript of the hearing to the degree holder and the dean at the same time that it is sent to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost.

**Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost.** If the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation recommends that the degree be revoked, the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost shall review the hearing record and report of the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation. If the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost decides that the degree holder's degree should not be revoked, they shall notify the degree holder, the dean, the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation, and other appropriate people involved in the process, in writing, within 21 calendar days of receipt of the transcript of the hearing; and the matter shall be closed. If the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost decides to recommend that the degree holder's degree should be revoked, the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost shall send that recommendation in writing to the President of the University within 21 calendar days of receipt of the transcript of the hearing. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost shall send to the President, along with their recommendation, the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation's report and the hearing record. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost shall send a copy of their recommendation to the degree holder, the dean, the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation, and other appropriate people involved in the process. If the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost is disqualified from reviewing the case, the dean of the Graduate School shall be substituted for the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost.

**President.** If the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost recommends to the President that the degree holder's degree should be revoked, the President shall transmit that recommendation along with the report of the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation and the hearing record to the Executive Secretary of the Board of Trustees within 30 calendar days of receipt. If the President wishes to make a recommendation, they shall review the recommendation of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost, the report of the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation, and the hearing record and forward a recommendation to the Executive Secretary of the Board of Trustees within 30 calendar days of receiving the recommendation of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost.

**Board of Trustees.** The Executive Secretary of the Board of Trustees shall send to all Trustees the hearing record, the recommendation of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost, the report of the Committee of Investigation and Recommendation, and the recommendation of the President, if any. A majority vote by the Board of Trustees at a duly constituted board meeting is required to revoke an academic degree. The decision of the Board of Trustees shall be final.

**Guiding principles.** All actions taken by committees shall be effective by a majority vote.

All investigations, hearings, and actions shall be kept as confidential as possible except for notice of any revocation approved by the Board of Trustees.

A decision not to proceed at any stage of the proceedings set forth in this policy does not necessarily mean that the original complaint was groundless.

For good cause shown, at the request of either party and the approval of the other, the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and provost shall extend any time limit set forth in this policy. Any such time extension shall be communicated in writing to all appropriate parties.

**Administrative action if degree is revoked.** If a degree is revoked by the Board of Trustees, the former student's transcript will be modified to reflect that the degree was revoked, and the former student will be informed of the revocation and requested to return the diploma. If the former student was enrolled in a program requiring a thesis or dissertation, all bound copies and the ETD (electronic thesis or dissertation) will be removed from the Clemson University Library. In addition, ProQuest will be notified and requested to take appropriate action regarding the ETD. Students whose degrees have been revoked may be eligible to reapply for admission according to normal University procedures and policies in effect at the time of reapplication.

## **Retribution or retaliation**

There is no place for retribution in a community of scholars who respect and promote academic integrity. Faculty should agree to support and uphold the decisions of their peers who serve as members of the Academic Integrity Committee and hearing panels. These individuals take seriously the responsibility to render objective decisions on cases brought before them. Faculty members have a professional obligation to teach by example and to guide graduate students in practices of ethical judgment and building personal and professional integrity. Students at the graduate level are expected to refrain from retribution or retaliation and maintain similarly high academic and professional integrity standards.

The Office of Access and Equity hosts the University's [Anti-harassment and Non-discrimination Policy](#) and defines [procedures for resolution of discrimination/harassment complaints](#).

For additional information on this topic, as it affects all University community members, see the [Whistle-blower policy \(PDF\)](#) on the [University Policies](#) webpage.

# Part 3: Financial Information and Assistantships

## 3.1. Financial Basics for Graduate Study

### Tuition for graduate students

Satisfactory settlement of all expenses is a requirement for completing each semester's class registration, and no student is officially enrolled until all past due accounts have been satisfied. Financial aid cannot be used to satisfy balances carried forward from a prior academic year. Graduate tuition and fees can be found on [the registrar's tuition calculator webpage](#) (be sure to click on the "Graduate" tab). See also [Fiscal Policy: Settlement of University Fees](#).

### State resident status

Eligibility for payment of in-state tuition and fees is determined by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education and codified under the provisions of [Sections 59-112-10 through 59-112-100, South Carolina Code of Laws](#), 1976, as amended. The University also offers [esidency classification information](#).

**Application for resident status:** Any graduate student or prospective student whose status concerning entitlement to payment of in-state tuition and fees is uncertain has the responsibility of securing a ruling from the University by providing all relevant information on special application forms or forms. If you are interested in applying for residency and therefore receiving resident tuition, you may submit an [Application for Residency Status](#) found on the University's Residency Classification webpage or may print, complete, and deliver the application to the Office of Residency Classification in G-01 Sikes Hall at least two weeks before the semester in which resident tuition is desired. Please visit the [Residency Classification webpage](#) for complete information, FAQs, and forthcoming deadlines.

**Appeals:** Students may appeal determinations of non-residency. Students wishing to appeal a determination regarding residency should contact the [Office of Residency Classification](#), G-01 Sikes Hall, Clemson, SC 29634-5123, or email [finaid@clemson.edu](mailto:finaid@clemson.edu).

### Fees for graduate students

Fees, in general, support non-academic services for students. The University works to keep fees competitive with peer institutions and only charges students what is defensible in covering costs

associated with the services provided. For a list of required fees for graduate students, see the Graduate School's [Tuition and Fees](#) webpage. See also the [Mandatory health insurance](#) topic in this section.

## Student loans

Information about loans for graduate students may be found on the Graduate School's [Finance/Tuition — Loans](#) webpage. The Office of Student Financial Aid administers federal financial aid for graduate students. We encourage you to discuss your financial aid options with the Office of Financial Aid. For more information, visit the [Student Financial Aid](#) webpage or send a request via [email](#).

## Payment methods

The Office of Student Financial Services details student billing information, payment due dates and methods, payment plans, and optional fees online at [Paying Your Bill](#). Graduate assistants are eligible for the payment plans described on the [Student Financial Services](#) website under "Payment Plans."

## Late registration service charge

A student has not completed registration until all required steps have been taken, including payment of tuition and fees. Any student failing to complete registration by the published deadlines will incur a late enrollment charge. See the Registrar's [Academic Calendar](#) for deadlines.

## Past due accounts

Any indebtedness to the University which becomes past due immediately jeopardizes the student's enrollment, and no such student will be permitted to enroll for an ensuing semester or summer term. Billing fees and/or collection costs may be added to the indebtedness. Further, any student who fails to pay all indebtedness to the University, including collection costs, may not be issued a transcript or diploma. Unresolved debts may be turned over to a collection agency, reported to a credit bureau, and/or deducted from state income tax refunds. Debts include, but are not limited to, parking violations, library fines, rent, academic fees, and others.

### *Returned checks, EFTs, and credit card payments*

Along with other fiscal policies, disputed settlements of University fees, returned checks, EFTs, and credit card payments are determined by Student Financial Services. Find additional details on the [Fiscal Policy](#) webpage and the [Paying Your Bill](#) webpage.

### *Loan default*

Graduate students who are employed in programs administered directly or indirectly by Clemson University and are found to be in default on payments of student loans may be subject to wage withholding (garnishment) according to Legislative Authority P.L. 102-164; To U.S.C. S1095A *et. seq.*

## Refunds

Refunds of tuition and fees, and the policies governing them, are described on the [Fiscal Policy](#) page, with additional details on the [Student Financial Services](#) page.

## 3.2. Assistantships and Fellowships

All assistantships are administered by individual units (departments, colleges, centers, etc.) Any student interested in an appointment as a graduate assistant should make direct contact with the department, college, or unit of interest. Each unit may have deadlines for applying for positions and/or specific requirements for the assistantship. Students may also consult the [Michelin Career Center](#) page at the [Clemson Center for Career and Professional Development](#) website for additional postings and on-campus employment opportunities.

### Council of Graduate Schools Resolution

Clemson is a member of the [Council of Graduate Schools](#) and adheres to the following Resolution\* (for a PDF copy of the entire resolution, click [here](#)):

Acceptance of an offer of financial support\* (such as a graduate scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, or assistantship) for the next academic year by a prospective or enrolled graduate student completes an agreement that both student and graduate school expect to honor. In that context, the conditions affecting such offers and their acceptance must be defined carefully and understood by all parties.

Students are under no obligation to respond to offers of financial support before April 15; earlier deadlines for acceptance of such offers violate the intent of this Resolution. In those instances in which a student accepts an offer before April 15 and subsequently desires to withdraw that acceptance, the student may submit in writing a resignation of the appointment at any time through April 15. However, an acceptance given or left in force after April 15 commits the student to first inform the program that they are withdrawing or resigning from the offer of financial support that they previously had accepted. Starting in Fall 2020, applicants are no longer required to obtain a formal release from the program whose offer they accepted, either before or after the April 15 deadline. It is further agreed by the institutions and organizations subscribing to the above Resolution that a copy of this Resolution or a link to the URL should accompany every scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, and assistantship offer.

— Council of Graduate Schools, *Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees and Assistants*.  
Renewed October 2020\*

\* This Resolution applies to offers of financial support only, not offers of admission.

### Eligibility for graduate assistantships

To qualify for a graduate assistantship, you must demonstrate that you possess at least a bachelor's degree (by submitting an official transcript to Enrolled Student Services) and must be enrolled in a graduate degree program. Students employed in full-time positions inside or outside the University are not eligible for assistantships.

The Graduate School reserves the right to withdraw an assistantship appointment at any time because of failure to meet basic eligibility requirements, including maintaining adequate academic performance and satisfactory progress toward degree, or for violation of University policies. Units may also withdraw an assistantship based on failure to follow guidelines or for substandard performance in assistantship duties.

## Types of assistantships

- **Graduate Research Assistants (GRA)** conduct supervised research or assist with research funded from any source administered by the University.
- **Graduate Administrative Assistants (GAA)** provide help to departments with various types of administrative duties.
- **Graduate Resident Directors (RD)** are program staff of the residence halls and are classified as Graduate Administrative Assistants.
- **Graduate Extension Assistants (GEA)** help carry out supervised extension services of the University or PSA.
- **Graduate Teaching Assistant categories:**
  - ◆ *Graduate Grader Assistants (GGA)* help faculty grade class work (e.g., homework and quizzes).
  - ◆ *Graduate Laboratory Assistants (GLA)* provide help in undergraduate laboratories but are not responsible for assigning grades.
  - ◆ *Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA)* teach undergraduate classes or laboratories under the supervision of a faculty member. GTAs are not responsible for assigning grades.
- **Graduate Teachers of Record (GTR)** assume primary responsibility for teaching undergraduate classes or laboratories and are responsible for assigning grades. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) requires that all Graduate Teachers of Record (GTR) have “earned at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline, be under the direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, receive regular in-service training and be evaluated regularly.”<sup>16</sup> The department chair is responsible for determining that the 18-hour requirement is met either through coursework or with a memo containing documentation that the graduate assistant meets the requirement as an exception. The Enrolled Student Services Office will certify that the 18-hour requirement has been met.

The Graduate School provides a printable assistantships reference sheet, [GS2003 Titles and Related Information Table for Departmental Graduate Assistants](#), linked on the [Forms and Applications](#) webpage.

## Preparing graduate teaching assistants for the classroom<sup>17</sup>

Hundreds of graduate students serve as teaching or lab assistants or graders each semester, supporting the mission of excellent undergraduate education at Clemson. To ensure high-quality experiences for undergraduates and teaching assistants, the Graduate School will require each student appointed as a

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16. Section 4.8.4 of the SACSCOC *Criteria for Accreditation*. Accessed at <http://www.sacscoc.org/principles.asp>.

17. Approved in concept by Advisory Committee 16 September 2016. Approved by Graduate Council 5 April 2017.  
Approved by Academic Council 18 January 2018.

grader, lab assistant, teaching assistant, or graduate teacher of record to demonstrate minimal competencies in such areas as:

- Pedagogy,
- University policies (e.g., FERPA, Title IX, access and equity, etc.),
- Mentoring students from diverse backgrounds,
- Knowledge of human development appropriate for teaching undergraduate students,
- Assessment, and
- Other areas the faculty deem critical.

All students appointed as graders, lab assistants, teaching assistants, or graduate teachers of record must participate in training that meets the competencies specified by the Graduate School before beginning the appointment.

The graduate school will offer regular training sessions to meet these objectives. Other units may offer training meeting or exceeding these objectives as a substitute for, or as a companion experience to, the graduate school training. There will be a developmental progression in the training of:

1. Graders
2. Lab assistants
3. Teaching assistants
4. Graduate teachers of record.

Students with a first-time appointment as a grader, lab assistant, GTA, or GTR must participate in the training appropriate for that appointment. Students who previously participated in one training level and subsequently receive an appointment at a higher level must participate in the new level of training.

Waivers requesting a student be exempt from or delay training may be considered in unusual circumstances. Approval of the college dean (or designee) and graduate school dean is required.

## **Appointment process and terms<sup>18</sup>**

All appointments for assistantships (teaching, research, laboratory, administrative, and grader) must be processed at least *annually* through the Graduate School. Selection of assistantship recipients, notification of the appointment, duration, and the stipend amount are the responsibilities of the department or unit making the offer. The appointing unit must use the approved [graduate assistantship contract template](#) and include a clear description of the expectations of the assistantship, the anticipated beginning and ending dates (not more than 12 months per appointment letter), stipend amount, average hours of service per week, the work schedule (where appropriate), and the conditions for reappointment if any. In addition, the graduate assistant must be apprised of the financial penalties related to academic fees that may be incurred if the assistantship starts after the beginning of the semester or is terminated before the end of the semester or session. Units making the appointment

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18. Approved by Advisory Committee 25 March 2016.

may include an attachment to the standard contract where it is necessary to specify duties and other requirements and terms of the appointment but may not alter the language of the standard contract.

Where students are to be continued (reappointed) for the next fiscal/academic year, each contract should be revised to reflect expectations for the coming year starting each July 1 (or, in the case of appointments of less than 12 months, the start of the contract).

**Specifying duties:** Work assignments for students should be clear and specific and relate to the student's academic program. Duties to be accomplished for any graduate assistant must be agreed upon in writing by the student and the faculty adviser (or supervisor) in charge of the assistantship appointment. The work to be performed must be above the paraprofessional level.

Supervisors should clearly distinguish between the work to be performed for the assistantship and the work being performed toward completing the degree. For example, it would be unusual for time spent completing class assignments to be part of the duties of an assistantship. Hours spent on thesis or dissertation research would not routinely be considered part of assistantship duties unless the research and the assistantship are part of an externally funded research project, and that research directly supports the work of the project.

Where duties require students to work outside the hours typically expected according to the appropriate University calendar (e.g., nights, weekends, holidays), the appointment letter should specifically describe these expectations.

**Maximum work hours:** A typical graduate assistantship will require an average of 10–28 hours of service per week, which must be clearly described in the appointment letter. Projected hours per week should align with the position's expectations and demands. Starting in Spring 2019, units making new GA appointments may, at their discretion, assign a partial tuition waiver in proportion to the hours worked (e.g., a 10-hour assistantship may be assigned a 50% tuition waiver; a 15-hour assistantship may be assigned a 75% waiver, etc.). Existing appointments should not be modified for partial waivers until reappointment. This must be communicated as part of the appointment and contained in the appointment letter signed by the student if utilized; otherwise, the assumption will be that a full (100%) tuition waiver will be in effect.

A student may have multiple graduate assistantships or hourly appointments by the University; however, it is the responsibility of the secondary employer to receive permission of the primary employer and the Graduate School before assignment of any additional work and to ensure that the maximum workload of 28 hours per week (20 hours per week for F-1 visa holders) is not exceeded.

**Work calendar, University holidays, and leave:** Graduate assistants appointed as GTAs, GTRs and GLAs will be expected to work their average hours during the typical [nine-month Academic Calendar](#), including during the exam period. Graduate assistants holding nine-month appointments are entitled to the official University holidays and/or breaks accorded nine-month faculty. Graduate assistants with 12-month appointments are entitled to the official University holidays accorded to 12-month administrative staff ([holiday schedule](#)). Any expected deviation from the typical calendar must be specified in the offer (e.g., being present to feed lab animals during holidays, working on weekends or at night, etc.) Graduate assistants do not accrue leave. They are expected to work typical hours per week according to the calendar specified by their program. Students on 12-month contracts are expected to work their typical number of hours throughout the year, including the summer.

**Intellectual property terms, research policies and procedures:** Ownership of any intellectual property you may produce is governed by the University's [Intellectual Property Policy](#).

**Leave without pay:** Graduate assistants may request up to four weeks of leave without pay per semester and one week of leave without pay per Summer session for illness of a close family member, death in the immediate family, or personal illness or hardship. If leave without pay is not approved by the administrator of the graduate assistantship, the graduate assistant may petition the dean of the Graduate School for approval.

**Family Leave (Graduate Assistants):** A graduate assistant (of any gender) is eligible for up to six weeks of family leave without pay for the birth, adoption, new guardianship of a child; death of an immediate family member; or caring for a spouse, child or parent who has a serious health condition. When circumstances permit, a request for family leave should be made to the department at least one month in advance of the anticipated leave date, with notification provided by the department chair to the dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate School encourages the department and student to work together to enable the student to maintain enrollment and employment status during this time. The student must be guaranteed an assistantship upon returning from family leave to fulfill the remainder of their contract. See the Graduate School's webpage, [Student Employment FAQs](#), for additional information regarding leave for assistantship holders.

## **Start date for fall-semester assistantships**

Graduate assistantships typically start around the beginning of classes each fall. However, there may be good reasons why an assistantship should start before the semester begins, such as to provide preparation time for teaching a class, to provide training, to accommodate the timeline of a research project, to address administrative tasks that need to be completed before the start of the semester, etc. Appointments for Fall semester assistantships may therefore start as early as August 1. Any assistantship commencing before the start of classes must provide summer pay in addition to the contracted amount at the same weekly rate (or higher) as the appointment during the regular academic year. There is no requirement for enrollment in credits during this abbreviated summer period as long as the student is enrolled in the required credits for the Fall semester.

Before August 1, a new hire will need to be hired as an intermittent hourly employee. Graduate students enrolled and employed in the Spring, who plan to continue their education in the fall, can remain in a student worker status during the summer, employed as either a graduate assistant or graduate hourly. Assistantship appointments requiring start dates before August 1 should be made as typical summer appointments and will require appropriate summer enrollment (see [Continuous enrollment](#)). Assistantship appointments for other semester terms should coincide with the start of classes and require standard enrollments.

## **Tuition as a graduate assistant**

The University's Board of Trustees approved a policy designed to standardize tuition and fee charges for graduate assistants. A student on an assistantship must pay fees for graduate assistants listed on the [Tuition and Fees](#) webpage.

For an assistantship added between the first day of classes and the last day to drop or withdraw without grades, the student's liability to the University is 50% of total tuition and 100% of fees unless the funding is new grant money to the University. After the last day to drop or withdraw without final grades, the student receives no graduate assistant benefit or refund of tuition and fees previously paid; therefore, assistantship appointments must be made each semester before the date when no abatements would be offered to a graduate assistant. This date is established annually by the Student

Financial Services Office, and this policy is consistent with the University's calendar for the refund of fees. For more information, access the [Graduate Assistant Tuition Chart](#) online.

## English proficiency for international students

Clemson University complies with South Carolina requirements to ensure that all instructional activities are conducted by individuals possessing appropriate proficiency in written and oral use of the English language. Instructional activities include lectures, recitation or discussion sessions, and laboratories. The individuals to be certified include full-time and part-time faculty, graduate teachers of record, graduate teaching assistants, and graduate laboratory assistants for whom English is not the first language. Clemson University's [English Fluency Policy](#) is hosted online by the Office of Student Affairs. See also the previous topic, [English language proficiency](#), in the Application and Admissions section.

## English proficiency for international teaching assistants

The State of South Carolina requires us to ensure that non-native speakers of English are well prepared to teach and proficient in delivering instruction in English. In light of this, the Graduate School and the Office of Global Engagement have investigated what other institutions are doing to ensure that:

1. International Teaching Assistants (ITAs) are screened using a reliable and valid method to assess English proficiency in the context of the delivery of educational lessons or similar activities in an undergraduate classroom;
2. International Teaching Assistants (ITAs) are appointed to teaching positions (e.g., GTR, GTA) only once they have been certified through this process as being sufficiently proficient in teaching while using English; and
3. Where ITAs fail to show strong proficiency in teaching using English, there is support for these otherwise well-qualified students to attain proficiency.

Having teaching faculty (including ITAs) highly proficient in teaching in English not only responds to state expectations and allows us to demonstrate due diligence for accreditation but also assists us in maintaining the highest possible quality of undergraduate education, in line with Clemson Forward goals.

1. All non-native English-speaking students awarded a graduate assistantship that involves teaching (including GTR and GTA) should be screened via well-validated methods that specifically assess language proficiency (both spoken and written) in the context of teaching;
2. All non-native English-speaking students awarded a graduate assistantship involving teaching must demonstrate proficiency in spoken and written English appropriate to teaching undergraduate students at Clemson;
3. Where students fail to demonstrate English proficiency but have a high probability of attaining proficiency with support, the Graduate School will identify a provider who will offer support to improve that student's proficiency;
4. Any ITA not demonstrating acceptable levels of proficiency before the start of the semester may not be appointed in a role that involves teaching.

## Arrival deadline for international students on assistantship

International students on assistantship without a U.S. Social Security card/number must arrive on campus, register for classes, and report to the International Services Office (108 Long Hall) **a minimum of 20 days before** the University's official "late enrollment" period. Please find the enrollment deadline for the relevant term on the Registrar's [Academic Calendar](#) page. It is ideal to arrive earlier.

## Minimum stipends

The minimum graduate assistantship stipend must be commensurate with a rate of 1.2 times the prevailing [federal minimum wage](#).

## Maximum stipends

The Graduate School does not currently regulate or cap assistantships as long as they exceed the minimum threshold. We expect that stipends should be commensurate with market, experience, and skills and should be equitable with other stipends within the unit that involve similar responsibilities.

## Benefits

Benefits available to all graduate assistants are summarized and detailed on the Student Assistance Program webpage.

## Mandatory health insurance

All graduate students are required to maintain health insurance coverage while enrolled at Clemson. The Graduate School website provides [information](#). Redfern's current insurance and billing fee schedules may be found on the [Student Health Services Insurance and Billing](#) webpage.

## Student responsibilities

**Minimum enrollment:** To maintain a graduate assistantship, you must maintain full-time enrollment status (nine *graduate* credit hours during each Fall and Spring semester). Students on 9-month assistantships are not required to enroll in summer courses.

Undergraduate coursework should generally be completed before awarding an assistantship or should be completed *in addition to* the routine graduate coursework. Only in cases where the program requires undergraduate courses of study will undergraduate credits be considered to satisfy this requirement.

Upper limits on academic loads related to hours of service per week are delineated in the [Enrollment Limits: maximum credit hours](#) chart, and both undergraduate and graduate credits are subject to this limit.

The graduate school reserves the right to disallow a student not meeting these requirements to receive an assistantship. A graduate student who fails to maintain compliance with this policy may be considered for immediate termination of the assistantship or loss of future assistantships. Any GA who needs to request a variance from these guidelines should contact the graduate school *before the beginning of the semester* to receive a waiver.

**Summer enrollment:** Students on assistantships during the summer (most common with 12-month appointments) must enroll during the period covered by the assistantship. If an assistantship is awarded for the entire summer (long summer), you must register for at least six credits during that session. Any credits for research must be registered in the long Summer session. An assistantship in one of the six-week part-terms (SSI, SSII, Mini A, Mini B, Mini C, Mini D) will require registration in three credits during that term.

**Performance and good standing:** To remain eligible to continue receiving assistantship support, you must comply with all policies contained in the *Graduate School Policies & Procedures Handbook* and policies from the department/program awarding the assistantship. You must maintain minimum enrollment levels, maintain at least a 3.0 GPA, make satisfactory progress toward your degree, perform at a high level in your assistantship duties, and follow all other expectations of conduct appropriate to a graduate student. Failure to comply with these expectations can result in loss of support and other sanctions outlined in the *Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook* and your program handbook. Conduct, ethical, and integrity violations can lead to immediate termination of the assistantship and other sanctions outlined in the *Graduate Policies and Procedures* handbook.

## Renewal of assistantships

Graduate assistants have no right to continuing support beyond the term of a current appointment. Renewal of an assistantship can only occur when funds are available, and performance during the prior appointment has been reviewed and found acceptable. Where graduate assistants are not performing within acceptable standards, we encourage supervisors to communicate feedback to students in writing early and often during the appointment. As students often rely upon support from assistantships, it is ideal for communicating intent to renew or not to renew an assistantship as early as is practical.

Graduate assistantship appointments require that an annual assessment be completed before any appointment is renewed for the following year. There are several options for this requirement. The Graduate School posts two general evaluation forms plus a customizable template in the [Faculty/Staff section](#) of the website (CU login required), but if there is another assessment that the supervisor or program uses, or there is another type of evaluation more suitable for the appointment, it may be used in place of the generic examples we provide. The evaluations should be shared with the student and are maintained in departmental files.

## Termination of assistantships

Non-renewal of an assistantship refers to a situation in which a student completes an appointment and is not offered another. Termination of an assistantship refers to a situation where an assistantship is ended before the end of the appointment. Termination of an assistantship can have devastating and permanent consequences for a student. It should only be undertaken after clear feedback on deficiencies and attempts to assist the student in meeting expectations. Any terminated student can seek guidance from the [University Ombuds Office](#), the Graduate School or file a grievance with the [Graduate Academic Grievance Committee](#) if there is clear evidence that the termination was unfair or that this policy was improperly followed. Termination of an assistantship is different than non-renewal.

**Termination by student:** Should a graduate student determine the need to terminate their assistantship appointment, they should consult with the assistantship supervisor as soon as possible

— and if at all possible, at least two weeks before termination — to ensure a smooth transition in hiring a replacement graduate assistant. The notice of termination, prepared by the student, should be both verbal and written. [Withdrawing from the University](#) (that is, withdrawing from all classes) will result in the termination of an assistantship. International students should consult with appropriate offices relating to immigration/visa status if considering this option.

**Termination for academic deficiency:** An assistantship may be terminated for academic deficiency if a student drops below the minimum credit hour requirement (nine per semester or three per Summer session) or for failure to meet other academic requirements as described under [Academic probation](#). Any student placed on probation will be at risk of losing their assistantship. Students may lose their assistantship without being dismissed from the University. Departments desiring to terminate a graduate student's assistantship for academic deficiency should prepare a written notice of termination, provide the student with at least two weeks' notice, and submit the request to the Graduate School. The Graduate School reserves the right to terminate an assistantship or declare a student ineligible for future assistantship appointments where serious academic deficiencies are apparent.

**Termination for failure to perform duties:** If in the opinion of the immediate supervisor of the graduate assistant, a student is not carrying out the assistantship duties satisfactorily, the supervisor should immediately provide feedback to the student and attempt to resolve the problem. Early and frequent feedback can help prevent more serious performance problems. All conversations and feedback should be documented and placed in the student's written record, with a copy provided to the student. If the student's performance remains unsatisfactory, the student should receive a written warning from the department chair (or designee) delivered through official Clemson University email detailing the nature of the problem. If, after this formal warning, the student fails to improve to reasonable standards, the department chair should give the student a written notice of termination. This letter of termination should be sent to the student through official Clemson University communications channels (i.e., official email) and should specify the date of termination and any requirements for vacating the position. At least two weeks should elapse between the written warning and the notice of termination. The dean of the Graduate School should be notified of the termination. Notices of termination will be retained in the student's file in accordance with state employment policies.

**Termination for cause:** An assistantship may be terminated for other serious violations of Clemson University community norms and values, including violations of the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and/or [Academic Integrity Policy](#). Allegations regarding violations of this nature should be referred to the appropriate disciplinary body. If a student is unable to perform their duties because of violations such as these, their assistantship should be suspended pending completion of due process. A student suspended from their assistantship but ultimately found not guilty of the alleged violations should be reinstated in good standing and reimbursed for lost assistantship revenue.

**Termination due to loss of external funding or financial exigency:** A sudden or unexpected loss of funding from either an external funding source or (in very rare cases) a dramatic change to the University budget environment may result in the termination of an assistantship. While we work diligently to reduce the probability of this outcome, unexpected developments could require this step. An unexpected loss of external funding cannot be used to justify the termination of assistantships not directly funded by that project.

Should the University receive notification that research funding will be discontinued, departments must notify the affected graduate students with as much advance notice as possible. If departments do not provide adequate notification to the research assistant, the department will be responsible for two weeks of stipend support for the student. Departments should make every effort to secure funding to enable affected students to continue throughout the current semester or term. With appropriate documentation, a department chair may request the dean of the Graduate School for an exception to the policy.

**Financial liability from loss of assistantship:** Your stipend payments will cease immediately upon the termination of your assistantship, regardless of the reason for termination. Any pay received erroneously in excess of the contracted amount or after the termination of the assistantship must be returned to Clemson University.

If an assistantship is terminated, whether by the student or by the University, tuition and fees for the current term will be recalculated to the normal rates rather than the highly subsidized rate afforded to a student on an assistantship. The student will be responsible for the full balance once the bill is recalculated. If you are found to have fraudulently received payments from an assistantship, you may also be required to repay those funds.

**Other implications of the loss of assistantship:** If you are an international student who is required to have an assistantship to maintain your immigration status or a student required to maintain your assistantship for other reasons, the loss of your assistantship may change your ability to continue studies at Clemson University. Loss of an assistantship may also change your eligibility for certain forms of financial aid. It is your responsibility to understand these implications and work with appropriate offices where necessary.

**Protections:** Graduate students at Clemson are future colleagues and should be treated respectfully, befitting that status. You are entitled to a workplace free from harassment and discrimination. If you feel you have been subject to a hostile work environment, harassment, discrimination, abuse, or have any other concerns about your working and academic conditions, please contact the Office of Access and Equity, Office of Human Resources, the dean of the Graduate School, or the Office of the Ombuds.

For additional information, see the Office of Access and Equity's [Anti-harassment and Non-discrimination Policy](#).

### 3.3. Fellowships

Fellowships are monetary awards that require no service or work from the student. Fellowships may be institutionally awarded (through the Graduate School or one of Clemson's graduate programs) or externally awarded and portable to Clemson University. Fellowships are awarded by government agencies (federal, state, local), private foundations, industries, professional groups, and others. The Graduate School maintains a [list of available fellowships](#) on its website, including information on many prominent external fellowships.

Typically, fellowships are awarded on merit. For Clemson University fellowships, students are nominated for consideration by faculty. For a monetary award to be designated a fellowship, it must provide the recipient with a minimum of \$1,000 for the academic year. All fellowship recipients are granted the in-state rate for tuition and fees.

Some awards may limit students' research to areas of interest to the donor and may require a period of residency at the industrial sites. Fellowships are usually offered in early February or March. Except for some programs with premium tuition levels (see [Program Tuition Tiers](#) on the Graduate School website), graduate fellows and trainees pay fees applicable to South Carolina residents. Unless otherwise stipulated by the grantor and/or donor, holders of fellowships or traineeships are required to enroll in the same minimum credit load as other departmental graduate assistants.

Normally a student cannot hold concurrently two or more fellowships or traineeships (or the equivalent) administered by the University, regardless of the funding sources. Fellowship recipients are eligible for appointment as graduate assistants. For students simultaneously holding fellowships or traineeships and assistantships, the fee structure for assistantships prevails. Detailed information is available from the individual colleges or academic departments.

Continued receipt of any fellowship or traineeship is contingent on the student maintaining a satisfactory academic status. Fellowships may be withdrawn at any time for failure to maintain a satisfactory academic status or for violating University policies.

## **Fellowships administered by the Graduate School**

**University fellowships.** Funded from Graduate Alumni Fellowships, R.C. Edwards Fellowships, and George R. MacDonald Fellowships, University fellowships are Universitywide awards administered by the Graduate School. Fellowships are awarded on a competitive basis to nominees selected by the departments. Scholarly potential and academic excellence are the sole criteria for the awards.

**Graduate Doctoral Diversity Fellowship.** To increase the number of students from underrepresented groups pursuing doctoral degrees at Clemson, the University established the [Graduate Doctoral Diversity Fellowship Program](#). Funding for the fellowship is provided by the Office of Inclusion and Equity and managed by the Graduate School. The Graduate Diversity Fellowship Committee made up of representatives from the Division of Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of Access and Equity, and the Graduate School, offers a variety of financial assistance opportunities for eligible minority students pursuing doctoral degrees at Clemson University.

Other externally funded programs are available for underrepresented minority students, including [SREB Doctoral Scholars Program](#) and [South Carolina Professional Association for Access and Equity](#) (SCPAAE) Scholarships. More information on these programs can be found on the Office of Access and Equity's [Graduate Doctoral Diversity Fellowship](#) webpage under the "Other Funding Opportunities" topic.

## **Deadlines**

Deadlines for fellowship applications vary. Students should refer to fellowship announcements from their college and program for information on application deadlines and guidelines for submission.

## **Tax liability**

Tax laws change annually and in unpredictable ways at both the federal and state/local levels. Students receiving any financial aid, including assistantships and fellowships, fee waivers, and other support, should consult a qualified tax adviser. The Internal Revenue Service offers guidelines for tax responsibility for fellowship and other stipend awards under the topics "[Scholarships, Fellowship Grants, Grants, and Tuition Reductions](#)" (for U.S. citizen students) and under the topic "[Taxation of](#)

[Non-resident Aliens](#)” (for non-U.S. citizen students). The Graduate School is not authorized to provide tax advice.

### 3.4. Hours of Employment

Graduate students (exclusive of full-time University employees) who are enrolled in classes or research hours may not be employed by the University for more than 28 hours per week, even in instances where graduate hourly employment and graduate assistantships are combined. No portion of hourly employment shall be used to qualify students for benefits afforded those on graduate assistantship appointments. International students must abide by immigration regulations pertaining to on-campus employment (see [International student employment](#) below).

Employment on an hourly basis for a portion of a semester or session is permitted. The student must meet minimum requirements for [continuous enrollment](#) to accept hourly jobs.

### 3.5. International Student Employment

International graduate students are required to hold proper immigration status before any assistantship can be paid or attending benefits ensue. Special employment regulations for international students are governed by the Code of Federal Regulations and the Department of Homeland Security/U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). To ensure compliance with the Code of Federal Regulations, detailed information about international student employment and application procedures are available in the [International Services Office](#), 108 Long Hall; 864-656-3614.

#### Graduate assistantships

International graduate students interested in receiving any type of assistantship should submit scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the Test of Written English (TWE) to Clemson University. International students seeking graduate teaching assistantships whose native language is not English and whose secondary education (and beyond) was not taught fully in English are also required to pass the Test of Spoken English (TSE). Specialists in English as a Second Language (ESL) administer this test at Clemson University. Some departments also have other requirements, such as videotaped oral presentations. Successful scores on all English language tests, the interview, and the presentation (if required) must be completed before the student can begin an appointment as a teaching assistant. See also [English proficiency for international teaching assistants](#).

#### Hourly off-campus

Permission for off-campus employment must first be requested through the international student advisors in the Office of International Affairs. Off-campus employment generally is unavailable to international students during the first academic year and should not be considered a means of financial support. Students with F-1 visas may apply to the USCIS for limited off-campus work authorization after their first year of study.

## **Hourly on-campus**

Non-academic employment opportunities are available on-campus on a first-come, first-considered basis. Once all appropriate requirements are met, applications may be made directly to the hiring source.

## Recent changes to Graduate School policy, annotated

An annotated table of changes made to the handbook since 2015, when it was first published as PDF document, is located at the end of this document.

These changes begin with the 2015–2016 academic year, when the *Graduate School Policies & Procedures Handbook* was first published as an interactive PDF document.

Policy Affected	Date of Change	Explanation/Notes
<b>Combined bachelor's/master's plan</b>	Fall 2015	Number of required credit hours, course level, and maximum research hours were added to clarify requirements.
<b>Dismissal and admission appeals</b>	Fall 2016	Dismissal policy and procedure wording updated to clarify roles of program coordinator, Graduate School dean. Dismissal Appeals changed from subtopic to topic.
<b>Academic renewal</b>	Fall 2016	Updated form <a href="#">GS00</a> , <i>Request for Academic Renewal</i> and clarified that Graduate School approval of form indicates consideration for readmission.
<b>Readmission</b>	Fall 2016	New policy outlines conditions and procedures for readmission to the University following a dismissal because of an undocumented/unapproved leave of absence.
<b>Continuous enrollment</b>	Fall 2016	Updated policy. Topic updated to cross-reference new Leave of Absence policy and Readmission policy. Includes section on failure to maintain continuous enrollment.
<a href="#">Leave of absence</a>	Fall 2016	The new policy outlines conditions under which a student may request a time-specific leave of absence and the procedure for doing so. Includes new form GS-LoA.
<b>Academic Grievance Policy</b>	Fall 2016	“Procedures for Academic Grievance Committee” updated to replace the requirement for transmission of paperwork by certified mail with transmission via secure email.
<b>Application for resident status</b>	Fall 2016	Under “State resident status,” clarified the procedure and added a link to form GS35, <i>Request for Certification of South Carolina Residency</i> .
<b>Academic Grievance Policy</b>	Spring 2017	Updated to include IGRB proceedings prior to full review by Academic Grievance Committee. The committee structure was redefined to accommodate the new College structure.
<b>The time limit for doctoral programs</b>	Spring 2017	The time limit for completion of all doctoral program requirements (including master's en route to Ph.D. plans) updated from five years to eight years.
<b>Graduate faculty status</b>	Fall 2017	New policy and guidelines added.

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<b>Advisory committee</b>	Fall 2017	Committee structure and member qualifications updated.
<b>Theses and dissertations (ETD)</b>	Fall 2017	Clearer timelines for thesis and dissertations and strict adherence to deadlines approved by Academic Council for Fall 2017.
<b>ETD embargo</b>	Fall 2017	Policy and procedure for thesis/dissertation embargo (delay of publication) updated.
<b>Form GS6-Bachelor-to-Graduate</b>	Fall 2017	Name of the form used for <i>Request for Combined Education Plan</i> (formerly GS6BSMS) updated for clarity since combined plans are not limited to B.S. and M.S. programs.
<b>Withdrawing from the University</b>	Fall 2017	Official registrar's withdrawal form approved by Academic Council for Fall 2017. Replaces online withdrawal via iROAR. <i>Discontinued 2018–19; withdrawal is done via iROAR as of this time.</i>
<b>Doctoral residency</b>	Fall 2018	Outlines and expands upon conditions and alternatives for doctoral candidate residency, given expansion over time of off-campus, online, and part-time doctoral study options.
<b>Dismissals</b>	Fall 2018	Determines which entities oversee dismissal; details infractions that warrant dismissal, sanctions, and criteria for student return following dismissal, where applicable.
<b>Preparing graduate teaching assistants for the classroom</b>	Fall 2018	Describes expectations of GTAs and lays out GTA training framework.
<b>English language proficiency for international teaching assistants</b>	Fall 2018	Defines state and institutional requirements for teaching-related language proficiency for international graduate teaching assistants.
<b>Refreshments at defenses</b>	Fall 2018	Students undergoing oral examinations may not provide refreshments, gifts, or other inducements to committee members or attendees.
<b>Approval of thesis/dissertation research proposal</b>	Fall 2018	Facilitates process by which advisory committee and Graduate School approve the student research/manuscript proposal concurrent with results of oral or comprehensive exams. The procedure includes a new form, GS-Research Approval, <i>Approval of Thesis/Dissertation Research Proposal</i> .
<b>Application for resident status</b>	Fall 2018	Form GS35, <i>Request for Certification of South Carolina Residency</i> , discontinued; all requests for residency information are referred to the Office of Residency Classification.
<b>Graduate Student Plan for Success</b>	Fall 2020	Form GSPS, <i>Graduate Student Plan for Success</i> , replaces forms GSR1 and GSR2 and goes to the Director of Graduate Student Success for processing
<b>Leave for military commitments</b>	Fall 2022	New entry to handbook describing the procedure guidelines for degree - seeking graduate students who need to take leave for military commitments.
<b>Medical Withdrawal</b>	Fall 2022	Includes mental and physical health conditions. Students should contact Student Health Services to inquire about how their Student Health Insurance coverage will be affected.
<b>Graduate faculty status</b>	Fall 2022	Defines the three categories of graduate faculty. Addresses the time-frame graduate directing faculty may remain on a student's advisory committee if they

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		leave Clemson. Provides directives regarding special faculty serving as graduate directing faculty.
<b>Family leave (graduate assistants)</b>	Fall 2022	Replaces “Parental leave” and is more inclusive (covers: birth, adoption, death, caring for family with serious health conditions, etc.). <i>The student must be guaranteed an assistantship upon returning from family leave to fulfill the remainder of their contract.</i>
<b>Credit by examination</b>	Fall 2022	Revised: Written examinations administered for revalidation of courses beyond the 6-year time limit for master’s degree seeking students are <i>available only to students currently enrolled at Clemson University.</i>
<b>Continuous enrollment</b>	Fall 2022	Language revision: <i>terminated</i> changed to <i>dismissed</i> .
<b>The time limit for departing/retiring faculty serving as major advisor/committee chair</b>	Fall 2022	New entry to handbook indicating the time limit and conditions to be met for departing/retiring faculty to continue to serve as the major advisor/committee chair for a student’s advisory committee. Also includes rules for students regarding the reformulation of their advisory committee.
<b>Transfer credit</b>	Fall 2022	Revised: Allows for more graded coursework for doctoral students to be transferred in.
<b>Approval of thesis/dissertation research proposal</b>	Fall 2022	The procedure includes a new form, GS-Research Approval, <i>Approval of Thesis/Dissertation Research Proposal.</i>
<b>Academic probation</b>	Spring 2023	Only students’ cumulative GPA will be considered for probation. Changed “pass/fail” to pass/no pass (P/NP). Included a sentence about NP research credit hours and that this can lead to dismissal. Added a sentence about being enrolled in two or more degree programs simultaneously and the 3.0 GPA is required for each program. Students are not officially placed on probation unless the letter grade resolution of the incomplete and/or NG grade results in a cumulative GPA lower than a 3.0. Added greater detail and clarity to the “Procedure for students” section.
<b>Academic Renewal</b>	Spring 2023	Added that this policy also applies to students who withdrew from the University on their own because they recognized they were not successful. Added explanation that students will be assigned “X” grades for previous courses. Added explanation that students who are readmitted under this policy will need to follow the current academic year’s policies, procedures, and guidelines in both the Graduate School’s P&P Handbook and the program’s handbook. Added more detail to the “Procedure for students” and a direct link to the GS00 form. Added “Procedure for faculty” section.
<b>Certificate Program Requirements</b>	Spring 2023	Identified the two classes of graduate certificates recognized at Clemson University (post-baccalaureate and post-master’s). Clarified that a paper certificate may be given to the student upon completion. Clarified that the number of credit hours required to complete a certificate varies by certificate program. Removed the statement about tuition and fees for the certificates. Clarified that the Graduate Certificate Curriculum Planning form (similar to a plan of study) must be completed no later than the beginning of their last semester of classes. Changed the allowed fraction of 6000 level courses required for a post-baccalaureate graduate certificate from 1/3 to 2/3. Require that at least 1/3 of the

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		total credit hours required for the graduate certificate be taken from Clemson University.
Master's Degree Requirements	Spring 2023	Changed the credit requirements for a minor from 6 credits to 9 credits to be consistent with our peers. Removed the section that repeats the course revalidation policy, and instead direct readers to that policy elsewhere in the handbook. The GS-Research Approval form, Advisory Committee Thesis/Dissertation Research Approval is required, and should be submitted after the student fulfills the requirement of obtaining approval of their thesis proposal by their advisory committee.
Dual Master's Degrees	Spring 2023	Changed from 1/6 of the graded graduate coursework credit hours to 1/5. In the case of two master's degrees, each requiring 30 graded credit hours, the student pursuing dual master's could earn both degrees after taking 54 credit hours with two 3 credit courses double counting between the two degrees. The advisory committees must approve this. Added a statement in the Procedure for Student, which indicates the importance of discussing the intention to pursue both degrees with both graduate coordinators as early as possible. Revised a requirement into a recommendation: at least one committee member serve on both committees.
Master's En Route to Doctoral Degree	Spring 2023	In previous handbooks, the master's en route was mentioned, but never had a full description. This new policy provides details for students and faculty, and explains the form completion and double counting of credit hours.
Specialist in Education Degree Requirements	Spring 2023	Used the word "typical" when describing the credit requirements for this degree. The intent is to provide guidance, but also allow flexibility consistent with recent changes in SACSCOC guidelines.
Doctoral Degree Requirements	Spring 2023	Added the word "typically" to describe the credit hour requirements of doctoral degrees. This is to provide guidance but also allow for flexibility consistent with recent changes in credit hour requirements from SACSCOC. Clarified that the comprehensive exam will be conducted according to the policies described in the program's graduate handbook. Clarified that a majority decision from the committee is required to PASS the comprehensive exam. Clarified that a second opportunity to take the comprehensive exam must be approved by the majority of the committee. Made it clear to students that they have a right to file a grievance if they feel the comprehensive exam was unfairly conducted in a way that is inconsistent with departmental, college, or university policies. Clarified that the minimum 12 credit hour coursework requirement and the minimum 18 credit hour research requirement must be satisfied in addition to the minimum total credit hour requirements for the doctoral degree (typically 30 hours beyond the master's and 60 hours beyond the bachelor's degree). Added a doctoral minor to be consistent with peer institutions.
Duplication of Graduate Degrees	Spring 2023	Changed language to reflect that under exceptional cases the graduate coordinator may request approval from the Dean of the Graduate School to accept a candidate for the same degree in the same field of study. The graduate coordinator must describe why the student's prior degree and the Clemson degree the student intends to pursue are sufficiently distinct.

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Plan of Study Deadlines	Spring 2023	Removed the early deadline requirement for submitting an initial Plan of Study either by the middle of the second semester (for master's students) or by the beginning of the fourth semester (for doctoral students). Committee selection should be completed by the middle of the second semester (for master's students) or by the beginning of the fourth semester (for doctoral students). The deadline for the final Plan of Study (used for degree audits) remains unchanged. It is recommended that students submit an initial plan of study before enrolling in the majority of the credit hours required for their degree, after discussing with their advisory committee. Added language to remind students that individual programs may have earlier deadlines for submitting an initial Plan of Study.
Posthumous Degree	Spring 2023	Clarified that posthumous degrees may be awarded based on the recommendation of the advisory committee and the Dean of the Graduate School. Simplified the process to allow the advisory committee to submit recommendations directly to the Dean of the Graduate School without the department chair's involvement in this step. Added that doctoral posthumous degrees may be recognized during doctoral commencement/hooding ceremonies and that the student will be an alumnus of Clemson University. Added that when minimal progress has been made toward the degree, a certificate of achievement will be sent to the student's family, which may also be recognized during commencement ceremonies. These students will also be recognized as an alumnus of Clemson University.

This table of changes was last updated in March 2023.