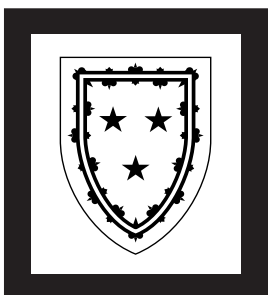


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General Degree Requirements

Prerequisites and additional requirements for specific degrees will be found in the appropriate departmental sections. It is the graduate student's responsibility to become fully acquainted with regulations and requirements of the university, the college and the department in which the student plans to pursue a course of study.

Course Load

MSU recognized nine hours of courses for credit is a full-time load for graduate students. Students with graduate assistantships may be considered full-time when enrolled for six hours of graduate credit. Students with federal loans should refer to the Federal Loan Agency's definition of a full-time load, which may vary from the MSU definition. The maximum graduate course load, including any undergraduate course work or deficiency, may not exceed 12 hours during the fall or spring semesters. For each five-week summer term, six-seven hours of coursework constitutes a maximum load. Students with graduate assistantships should refer to the sections below.

•Overload Exceptions

If an course overload exception is to be made in any individual instance, a graduate student must have a cumulative GPA of no less than 3.0. Permission to exceed the credit hour limit can be granted only by the collegiate graduate coordinator and dean of the college in which the student is a major. A Graduate Course Overload form, located on-line or in the dean's office, must be completed by the student and signed by the dean to authorize exceptions. Under no circumstances will an overload exception be granted to a student who does not have a cumulative 3.0 GPA. Graduate students petitioning to take more than 16 hours in any semester must have approval of the dean, the collegiate graduate coordinator, and the university graduate coordinator in the Office of the Provost/Academic Affairs.

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate teaching and research assistantships are available in most departments for highly qualified graduate students.

Non-resident graduate students awarded an assistantship may be charged the equivalent of in-state tuition during the semesters in which they are actively employed. In-state tuition equivalencies do not modify residency status. A student who has, or will have an approved graduate assistantship may request an in-state equivalency for one summer during his/her graduate career. Assistantships may only be awarded to an individual student for a maximum of four semesters (excluding summers). Stipends for assistantships may vary between departments.

Graduate assistants are expected to familiarize themselves with university policies and to fulfill their professional re-

sponsibilities to the university. An applicant for a graduate assistantship must be admitted to a graduate program as a degree-seeking student and enrolled in graduate courses during the semester of employment. Course load requirements for graduate assistants are described below.

Applications for assistantships should be filed with the chair of the department of the student's major field of interest no later than May 1, prior to fall enrollment; October 1, prior to spring enrollment; and March 1, prior to summer sessions.

•Assistantship Grade Point Average Requirements

A graduate student who has been admitted conditionally will become eligible for consideration for a graduate assistantship upon completion of nine hours of graduate coursework with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0. Exceptions may be made for one semester only in cases of assistantships in academic departments when an otherwise ineligible student has required expertise. In such cases, this rule may be waived upon petition by the student, with approval by the departmental chair, the collegiate dean, and the university graduate coordinator.

•Graduate Assistant Course Load

To be eligible for an assistantship, students must be admitted to graduate program at MSU, have earned a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0, and be enrolled in a minimum of six graduate credit hours at Murray State. Graduate students in their final semester of coursework may petition (in writing) the University Graduate Coordinator to qualify for an assistantship while enrolled in fewer than six graduate hours. Non-resident graduate assistants seeking the in-state tuition equivalency must be enrolled in a minimum of six hours of graduate coursework (during fall and spring semesters) and working a minimum of 15 (but not more than 22) hours per week. During the summer sessions, students must be enrolled for a minimum of three hours of coursework in any summer session in which they receive a graduate assistantship.

To maximize academic success, graduate assistants should not carry a course load exceeding 12 hours (or 13 hours if the student is taking a 4-credit hour course). Combined, a graduate assistant's course load and adjusted workload should not exceed 15 hours per semester.

If a course overload exception is to be made in any individual instance, the graduate assistant must have a cumulative GPA of no less than 3.0. A Graduate Course Overload form, available on-line, must be completed by the student and signed by the appropriate authorizing parties. Graduate Assistants petitioning to take more than a combined class and workload of 16 hours in any semester must have approval of the dean, the collegiate graduate coordinator, and the university graduate coordinator in the Office of the Provost.

Course Levels

Courses at the 500 level are restricted to graduate students and to undergraduates with at least junior standing. Exceptions to this regulation must be approved in writing by the appropriate collegiate dean and the Provost. **A graduate student enrolled in a 500 level course will be required to do substantially more work than an undergraduate student in the same course.** This requirement, which shall be clearly specified in the course syllabus, may take the form of research or other work appropriate to the discipline.

Courses numbered 500 and above taken while enrolled as a graduate student may be counted for credit toward a master's degree if they are approved as part of the student's graduate program. Students desiring graduate credit for 500-level classes must be admitted to graduate studies prior to scheduling any 500-level course. Under no circumstances will 500-level courses apply to a graduate degree if taken while the student is classified as a post-baccalaureate or undergraduate student.

Courses numbered 600 or above are open only to graduate students. **In all master's programs, at least half of the total formal coursework, EXCLUDING THESIS, PRACTICUM, INTERNSHIP, or CO-OP CREDIT, must be in courses open only to graduate students (600-level).**

Grading System

The following system of grades is used for the evaluation of course work:

- A..... exceptionally high quality, valued at four points for each credit;
- B..... good, valued at three points for each credit;
- C..... accepted for graduate credit (see overall GPA policies), valued at two points for each credit;
- D..... not accepted for graduate credit;
- E..... failure, no credit, valued at no points but counted as hours attempted;
- P pass, credit valued at no points and no hours attempted;
- AU.... audit, no credit;
- I..... incomplete, computed as hours attempted and no quality points;
- X..... absent from examination, computed as hours attempted and no quality points;
- W..... withdrawal, no hours attempted and no quality points;
- WP... withdrawal passing, no hours attempted and no quality points;
- WE... withdrawal failing, computed as hours attempted and no quality points;
- R..... A grade to be used in restricted approved instances in specific approved courses to denote either completion of a course for which credit is deferred until additional course work is completed, **or** that the course must be repeated. This grade may be given for courses numbered 698, 699, 798, and 799. It will change to a grade of *I* (or an *E* at the department's discretion) if work has not been completed within two years from the time the *R* grade is given.

A grade of *I* (incomplete) means that some relatively small part of the semester's work remains undone because of sickness or other reason satisfactory to the instructor. **This work must be completed during the next semester or summer session in which the student enrolls in the graduate program if credit for the course is to be gained.** If these conditions are not met, the grade automatically becomes a failing grade. This procedure is not applicable to incompletes recorded for individual study such as special problems, practicum, research or thesis.

A grade of *X* must be changed by special examination within one month (two weeks during the summer term) after the student enrolls in the graduate program if credit for the course is to be gained.

Changes in grades (other than an *I* or *X*) must be processed before the end of the semester following the semester in which the grade was recorded. Grade changes will not be allowed after a degree is conferred.

A student who fails to return within one year forfeits the privilege of making up work or taking examinations to earn credit for courses in which a grade of *I* or *X* was received.

Grade Point Average Requirement

A candidate for a master's degree or a specialist in education degree must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in all the approved program graduate courses before the degree is conferred. No credit shall be granted for a grade below *C*.

A graduate course repeated does not remove the original grade received in the course. In calculating grade point averages, a repeated course shall be considered an additional course.

Grade Change Policy

Grades are recorded in the Registrar's Office as reported by the faculty at the end of each term. No grade filed in that office may be changed except upon a written statement signed by the instructor certifying an error has been made.

When an error is made in reporting a grade, the instructor may make the necessary change in the Registrar's Office within the next regular semester following the recording of the grade. A grade will not be changed after a degree is conferred.

The policy concerning the changing of *X* and *I* grades is addressed above.

Grade Appeals Policy

Murray State University recognizes that differences of opinion or interpretation may arise between students and faculty members regarding the assignment of course grades. The university urges students first to seek resolution through informal discussion with the appropriate faculty member. The following policy has been adopted as a formal avenue for the resolution of a student grievance or appeal, in the event that such differences cannot be resolved informally. The university recognizes the right of students to present a grievance to an established committee and to have that grievance considered on its merit through an expeditious and orderly process. Situations involving academic misconduct should be directed to the University Judicial Board.

•Definitions

Complainant: one who files a grievance, complaint or appeal within the scope of this policy.

Respondent: one against whom a grievance is filed.

Days: counted when classes or exams are scheduled, excluding weekends.

Faculty: all persons, whether full or part-time, who are responsible for, assist in, or administer the instructional program. (See Section 2.1 of the *Faculty Handbook* for a complete definition.)

Grievance: a written allegation or complaint that there has been a violation, misinterpretation, or improper application of existing policies, rules, regulations, practices, and/or procedures which a student believes to be unfair, inequitable, or a hindrance to his/her effective performance.

General Degree Requirements

•Limitations

A grievance procedure must be initiated within the first twenty (20) days of the semester immediately following the semester or term during which the incident of grievance is alleged to have occurred, exclusive of summer session. Any special circumstance or request involving the time limitation set forth above will be considered and evaluated by the appropriate academic dean. Documentation of any revision of the time limitation will be included in the grade appeals form.

A faculty member has the responsibility to retain all course material and/or records not left in the student's possession which contribute to the final course grade. These materials must be kept for the 20-day period of the following semester during which a student may appeal a grade, or in the event of an appeal, until conclusion of the appeal process.

•Procedures

Step 1. Before a formal grievance may be filed with the Academic Appeals Board, the complainant should first seek resolution with the instructor. In the event that the instructor is a teaching assistant, the faculty supervisor should also be present during these discussions.

Step 2. Students should check with the department advisor to determine whether or not there are collegiate grievance procedures.

Step 3. Should the matter not be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, discussion should be sought with the appropriate department chair. In the event that the chair is the respondent of the grievance, discussion will be held with the academic dean.

Step 4. Should the discussions as outlined in Steps 1 and 2 not prove satisfactory to the complainant, discussion should be sought with the appropriate academic dean, if the dean has not been previously consulted.

Step 5. Once all means of resolution on the collegiate level have been exhausted, the complainant should present a completed grade appeals form to the registrar (Registrar's Office) within fifteen (15) days of the collegiate decision. Grade appeals forms are available in the registrar's office and in the office of each collegiate dean.

Step 6. The registrar shall immediately forward the grade appeals form to the chair of the Academic Appeals Board who in turn will notify the faculty member/respondent that a formal grievance has been filed. The faculty member/respondent will be provided a copy of the completed grade appeals form.

Step 7. The chair of the Academic Appeals Board shall convene that committee within twenty (20) days of the receipt of the grade appeals form. (The Academic Appeals Board is defined in Section 1.6.3.1. of the *Faculty Handbook*.) Prior to the hearing, both complainant and respondent may elect to choose an advisor for the purposes of collecting data and/or presenting his/her position to the board. Complainant and respondent have the right to be accompanied by their advisors during any open meeting of the board at which the board's agenda includes that particular grievance. The board holds the prerogative to call for pertinent testimony from any party involved in the grievance, or any party whom the board believes could clarify the grievance.

Step 8. The written recommendation of the Academic Appeals Board shall be forwarded to the provost for final disposition. Copies of the recommendation shall also be sent to the appropriate academic dean, the complainant, and the respondent, within ten (10) days of the completion of the hearing, unless an extension of time is sought by the board. Telephone notification

to the complainant of the availability of the recommendation shall fulfill the terms of this requirement. The text of the recommendation and all pertinent testimony and gathered data shall be kept in confidence.

NOTE: If at any point in this process, the student alleges that actions have taken place that may be in violation of Murray State University Non-Discrimination Policies, this process must be suspended and the matter directed to the Office of Equal Opportunity.

Transfer Credit

A maximum of 12 graduate hours may be transferred from a regionally accredited graduate school after a student has been admitted. All transfer credit must be approved by the student's advisor and collegiate graduate coordinator. Departments and colleges may set more restrictive policies concerning the kind and amount of transfer hours they will accept. All transfer credit must have been earned within the eight-year period allowed for the degree. The student must have an overall GPA of at least 3.00 on graduate work at Murray State University and a grade of **B** or better in any course that the student wishes to transfer to Murray State. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate a request for transfer of credit. Graduate transfer credit will not be posted to the student's transcript or included in the calculation of the student's GPA until the point of graduation.

•Transfer Credit to Repeat MSU Courses

If a graduate student takes a course at Murray State and chooses to repeat that course at another institution, permission from the student's graduate advisor and collegiate graduate coordinator must be secured. A repeated transfer course is not added to the student's GPA calculation. A course substitution form must be forwarded to Graduate Admissions in Sparks Hall.

Correspondence and Experiential Credit

Murray State University does not grant graduate credit for correspondence courses or for portfolio-based experiential learning.

Challenge Examinations

Murray State University does not grant graduate credit for the completion of a challenge examination or any national testing for credit in any course.

Military Service Credit

Contingent on the approval of the graduate advisor, the collegiate graduate coordinator, and Graduate Admissions, six hours of graduate credit may be accepted toward a master's degree for completion of U.S. Military Command and General Staff College as recommended by the American Council on Education.

Graduate Degree/Course Time Limits

All course work used to fulfill master's degree programs or specialist in education requirements must be completed within the eight-year period prior to awarding the degree, beginning with the date the student initially enrolls in a class for graduate credit. Example: A graduate course begun in August 2002 must be used for a degree no later than August 2010. Failure to complete a degree in eight years will result in the loss of all credits taken outside of the time limits and the

student being unable to continue with the approved program unless an extension is sought and granted. Graduate degree grade point averages are based on the courses listed on the graduate program form and applying to the program being sought. Any courses excluded by the eight-year rule shall not be included in the computation of the grade point average.

Students may request a time extension through their advisor and their program graduate coordinator. Time extensions must be approved by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Academic Council. Extensions are considered on a case-by-case basis. Students are strongly discouraged from requesting more than one extension. In the case where all graduate coursework has expired, no time extensions will be granted.

Since graduate students do not always enroll for courses in consecutive semesters, it is important to note the following:

- Enrolled graduate students need not apply every semester unless they have not been enrolled for five consecutive semesters, or have completed their graduate programs;
- Each graduate course must be used toward a degree within eight years of enrolling in that course.

Master's Thesis Requirements

Many graduate programs require a thesis for which a maximum of six hours of credit may be earned (consult program curriculum under the appropriate departmental section). If a thesis is required, the student's departmental advisor should be consulted early in the first term of graduate study. The advisor will assist the student in choosing a thesis topic, a thesis director, and a thesis committee (to consist of three to five members, including the director). Typically, thesis courses are not scheduled until the student is at least mid-way through a graduate program.

The thesis title, the thesis director, and members of the committee must be approved by the collegiate graduate coordinator who will formally appoint the committee and notify Graduate Admissions.

Students using human subjects in their research must seek approval and follow the guidelines of the MSU Institutional Review Board.

•Thesis Approval

Two weeks prior to the date on which the degree is to be conferred, the original and four copies of the signed thesis are to be submitted in unbound form to Graduate Admissions. Failure to meet this deadline may result in postponement of the student's degree conferral until the following semester.

Complete procedural and structural instructions are contained in *Guidelines for the Preparation of Master's Theses*, available from the collegiate graduate coordinator and the MSU website. It is the responsibility of the student to secure and comply with these guidelines.

Students who change from thesis track to non-thesis track in a graduate program possibly may not receive credit for the 698 and 699 Thesis courses.

Tests

Nationally recognized tests of aptitude are required by some colleges, departments, and programs of the university. Test scores may be used for admission, for candidacy, or as a condition of degree completion. Test score requirements for specific degrees will be found in the *Graduate Bulletin* under the appropriate departmental sections.

Summative Evaluation

In addition to completing required courses, students in master's degree programs will be expected to demonstrate that they have successfully met program standards through summative evaluation procedures administered near the end of the course of study. Murray State University also uses information on student performance gathered in summative evaluations for purposes of program improvement.

Comprehensive Examination

A student should refer to the section containing degree requirements of the student's graduate program for information regarding the comprehensive examination, if required by the department.

A student normally takes the comprehensive examination during the semester in which the student graduates; however, a student who has completed 24 hours toward the master's degree may also elect to take the examination.

An application for the comprehensive examination must be filed in Graduate Admissions during the first three weeks of the semester in which the student plans to take the examination.

The comprehensive examination is usually administered three weeks prior to the conclusion of the semester.

Application for Degree

Application for the degree should be made and the degree fee paid during the first three weeks of the semester in which the student expects to graduate. If a student does not graduate after making application, the student must reapply for the degree. Degree applications are available in Graduate Admissions or on the MSU website.

Graduate Student Checklist

Once a student is admitted to a graduate program at MSU, the checklist below may assist as progress toward completion of a degree is made:

- **Graduate Program Form** - This form was included along with the letter of admission. Students should contact their academic advisor, and with the advisor's assistance, complete the proposed program form during the first nine weeks of the first semester of study. Any changes to this plan must be made by official course substitution forms.

- **600-level courses** - In all master's programs, at least half of the total formal coursework, excluding thesis, practicum, internship, or co-op credit, must be in courses open only to graduate students (600-level).

- **GRE or GMAT results** - If the student's program requires the GRE or GMAT, the student must request that an official score report be sent directly to MSU from the Educational Testing Service. If the student did not do this at the time of the exam, he/she should contact ETS (www.gre.org or www.gmat.org).

- **Grades** - Graduate students receive no credit for earning a grade below C. A graduate course repeated does not remove the original grade received in the course. In calculating grade point averages, a repeated course shall be considered an additional course. A 3.0 minimum GPA is required for a degree to be conferred.

- **Language requirement** - Students enrolled in programs with a language requirement should make certain that the language requirements have been met and documented.

- **Thesis** - If a thesis is required, the student's departmental advisor should be consulted early in the first term of graduate study. Thesis guidelines are available from Admission Services and the MSU website.

General Degree Requirements

• **Applying for a degree** - Students must apply for the degree and pay the degree fee at the beginning of the semester in which they intend to graduate. If the program requires a comprehensive exam, students will apply to take that exam at the same time.

Second Master's Degree

Students desiring to pursue another master's degree at Murray State University shall have completed all requirements for a previous master's degree at Murray State University or another accredited university. In general, the same basic requirements for general admission, admission to candidacy, and other conditions previously stated in this catalog relative to a master's degree are also applicable to a second master's degree with the following exceptions:

1. A maximum of nine semester hours of completed graduate work from any previous graduate degree or program may be applied toward an additional degree if the courses are appropriate for the degree and are approved by the department and if they fall within the eight-year time limit for completion of the master's degree.

2. If the new master's degree involves certification, all requirements for the certificate must be met prior to the completion of the degree.

3. Candidates for Specialist Degrees must check with their advisors concerning the program regulations on second degrees.

Candidates for an additional master's degree must file an application for admission to graduate school and identify their subsequent program prior to registration for additional coursework. The student must then contact the advisor assigned from the department offering the subsequent program and plan a complete program of studies. Individual programs have specific requirements which must be met before pursuing a subsequent master's degree. Normally, any deficiencies in preparation for a subsequent master's degree must be resolved during the first semester of enrollment.

held responsible for any communication from university offices sent to the address last given, and may not claim indulgence on the plea of having changed lodgings or name and therefore of not having received the communication. The original demographic information from the student's initial admission to the university remains on the transcript, and any approved changes are added to the permanent record when the proper legal documents are presented to the Registrar's Office

Transcripts

Transcripts will be released at the written request of the student and in conformity with existing state and federal statutes pertaining to the release of student academic records. There is a fee for this service. Request forms and instructions are available on the MSU website.

The official academic record is the property of the university. Consequently, the university reserves the right to withhold the release of a transcript of that record if the student has an obligation to the university, and reserves the right to maintain the information contained in the permanent record according to established practice and in compliance with state and federal laws.

Documents received from third parties (including college transcripts, test scores, etc.) are the property of Murray State University. These documents cannot be released by Murray State to other institutions or agencies nor can they be returned to the student. Students needing to send other school transcripts, test scores, etc., should contact the original source.

Name and Address Changes

After registration, a student who has a name or address change is expected to notify the Registrar's Office in writing or by updating the information via the PIN system, and will be

