

**COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY  
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**GRADUATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**



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# **GRADUATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this manual is to provide general policies and procedures for graduate studies at Colorado Mesa University. This manual and the procedures herein are administered through the Office of Graduate Studies and Director of Graduate Programs. Additional program specific policies may be found in the Graduate Bulletin for any particular graduate degree offering and course of study.

### **Mission Statement for Graduate Education at CMU:**

The mission of CMU graduate education is to instill value, excellence, integrity, collaboration, efficiency, innovation, and inclusiveness in the delivery of its graduate programs. These values are central to the University's role in encouraging a creative environment for scholarship, research, teaching, and learning. It is the goal of graduate education at CMU to produce scholars, researchers and practitioners educationally empowered as critical thinking citizens and agents of innovation, opportunity and change.

## **II. OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

The Office of Graduate Studies and Director of Graduate Programs is responsible for administering graduate policies pertaining to the development, implementation, review and assessment of graduate programs in conjunction with the Graduate Studies Advisory Committee, the Office of Academic Affairs and the Faculty Senate. The Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs serves as the Director of Graduate Studies.

### **Mission Statement for the Office of Graduate Studies:**

The Office of Graduate Studies collaborates with colleagues across campus to provide leadership and counsel in several key areas: recruitment and admissions; curricular design, implementation, and evaluation; student services and student life activities; career services and ongoing program evaluation and assessment. The Office of Graduate Studies also works to assure innovation in program offerings, professional development for graduate students and fostering an environment that allows programs to thrive, evolve and grow.

## **III. GRADUATE STUDIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Graduate Studies Advisory Committee (GSAC) is responsible for reviewing and/or recommending policy and policy changes regarding graduate programs and their delivery. The committee will act in an advisory role for the approval of new proposals for graduate programs by the Graduate Curriculum Committee. The GSAC will also act as an advisory body on the coordination of the assessment and evaluation of existing graduate programs, by individual departments offering graduate programs. The GSAC communicates with the Faculty Senate on issues of policy and makes recommendations to the Office of Graduate Studies and to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The GSAC is composed of a faculty member from each discipline that offers a graduate degree, appointed by the Department Head of the specific program. Two faculty members will be appointed by the Faculty Senate from programs that do not offer graduate degrees. The Chair of the Graduate

Curriculum Committee and a graduate student member appointed by the ASG president will also serve on this committee. The student member does not have voting privileges. Ex-officio (non-voting) members include the Director of Graduate Programs (AVPAA), and the Director of the Library or designee. The Chair of the GSAC will only be called to vote to break a tie. The Director of Graduate Programs also serves as chair of the GSAC and is responsible for calling meetings, preparing the agenda and arranging for the recording of the minutes. Members, other than ex-officio members, will initially be assigned to serve one- two- or three year terms until replaced or renewed to full three year commitments.

#### **IV. GRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

The Graduate Curriculum Committee is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate and as such is governed by the Faculty Senate and the Policy and Procedures Manual for Faculty Senate Standing Committees and the Bylaws of the Graduate Curriculum Committee therein. The purpose and responsibility of the Graduate Curriculum Committee is to review graduate curricula and curricular policy, review and comment on graduate program documents, and to make recommendations to the Faculty Senate regarding curricular changes, modifications to graduate program proposals, and make recommendations on the approval of new program proposals. The Faculty Senate will recommend any approved changes, modifications or comments to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for consideration of implementation, action or revision. The Graduate Curriculum Committee may also communicate directly, by way of the GCC Chair, with the GSAC regarding questions or issues related to new and existing graduate programs under consideration. The Director of Graduate Programs (AVPAA) will also serve as an ex-officio member on the Graduate Curriculum Committee.

#### **V. PROGRAM APPROVAL POLICIES**

New program proposals will be submitted to the Graduate Curriculum Committee for review, with recommendations to the Faculty Senate. The recommendation will also be forwarded as an information item to the GSAC. Advisory comments by the GSAC will be communicated to the Faculty Senate and will serve as commentary and opinion for the Faculty Senators to use in their considerations and deliberations. Details of the criteria and materials required for submission of new proposals for graduate programs is found in the *Faculty Senate's Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual*.

#### **VI. GRADUATE ADMISSIONS**

##### **A. Purpose.**

To define the Colorado Mesa University general policy and provide guidelines for graduate admissions.

##### **B. General Admissions**

Admission to any CMU graduate program shall be based on the academic and personal qualifications of individual applicants without discrimination in regards to any characteristic of protected status. The graduate selection processes at CMU will identify students whose academic ability, past performance, and motivation indicate a high potential for completion of a graduate studies program.

The minimum requirements for admission to any CMU graduate degree program will be as follows:

1. A completed Application for Graduate Studies Form, accompanied by the appropriate application fee, will be sent to Office of Admissions or the Office of Graduate Studies for processing. Unofficial copies of any transcripts can accompany the original application, but official copies will be required before acceptance into any graduate program is granted. Electronic copies of the application will be forwarded to the respective department offering the elected program. Once the application has been processed and forwarded, additional materials required for a full application (letters of recommendation, test scores, official copies of transcripts, etc.), will be sent to the Office of Graduate Studies and copies will be sent to the Graduate Coordinator or designee of the specific department for review. The Graduate Coordinator of each graduate program will forward all materials to the individual program graduate selection committee for consideration. All original documents will be held in the Office of Graduate Studies.
2. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university must be completed before admission into any graduate program at CMU with the exception of any 3+2 program (e.g. MBA 3+2). Some programs may require a specific undergraduate foundation. Candidates who are accepted into a specific program but are lacking in academic preparation may be required to complete additional or leveling coursework. If academic credit was earned at other institutions, the graduate applicant will be responsible for transcripts being sent to the CMU Graduate Studies Office. See F. Transfer of Graduate Credit from other Institutions section, below.
3. A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on the most recent 60 college or university semester hours. The department head or Graduate Coordinator, in consultation with faculty in specific programs, can make recommendations for admission of non-degree seeking students who do not meet this criterion, or international students who have had professional transcript evaluation/conversion, to the Director of Graduate Programs, Office of Graduate Studies, for admission approval.
4. Individual graduate programs may also have preadmission test requirements (e.g. GMAT, GRE, etc.) that are outlined in specific program admission policies. Other criteria, such as letters of recommendation, may be required by individual programs as well.
5. Acceptance for admission is determined by the specific program's graduate committee, which will act as the program selection committee for new or readmitted applicants. Final approval for admission will be subject to department head approval with notification to the Director of Graduate Programs, Office of Graduate Studies. The Department Head will notify prospective students regarding admission decisions. Action by the program's graduate committee, and communications with prospective candidates will conform to established dates and deadlines based on the academic calendar for individual graduate programs



- a. Students who do not enroll in the semester in which they are admitted and who do not notify the program must reapply for admission.
- b. Prospective students may apply for admission to a CMU graduate program as either a degree or non-degree seeking student.

#### C. International Student Admission

Students who are not United States citizens or permanent residents are considered International Students. The CMU Admissions Office is responsible for issuing certificates of eligibility to attend CMU Graduate School. Before issuing the appropriate certificate of eligibility, the CMU Admissions Office must confirm that the student has the necessary English language proficiency, spoken and written; official evidence of satisfactory financial sponsorship, and payment of the first semester of health and repatriation insurance. The CMU Graduate Studies Office assists students in maintaining non-immigrant status and provides support for them in acclimating to the campus environment.

International applicants must satisfy all requirements for admission that apply to U.S. citizens as set forth above. In addition, international applicants are required to:

1. Provide a professional transcript evaluation of all courses taken at a college/university outside the United States on which the application for admission is being based.
2. Furnish evidence of proficiency in English. This is accomplished by taking the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or comparable test (as determined by the CMU Registrar), within the past two years and have the score, with the communication subsection score, sent directly to the Colorado Mesa University Graduate Studies Office by the testing service. A minimum score of 550 on the TOEFL may be required for some CMU graduate programs.
3. Complete the Certification of Financial Responsibility Form, provide evidence of sufficient financial resources, and the exact amount expected from each source of income (this is required for students who need a Student Visa).
4. Submit a Health Form to the CMU Graduate Studies Office attesting to the good health and current immunizations of the applicant, with proof of major medical insurance coverage.

International students on F-1 or J-1 visas are not eligible to enroll as non-degree seeking students. Students on F-1 visas are required to register for a full-time course load.

#### D. Conditional Admission

Applicants for admission may be accepted into a graduate program with the provision that they complete deficiencies as noted in and by the date specified in their acceptance letter. Following the date specified in the acceptance letter, the program's Graduate Program Coordinator, in consultation with the program's Graduate Committee, and with approval by the Department Head, will notify the applicant of final action to be taken on their admission; whether they will be fully accepted or dropped from the program. This decision by the program faculty will be based on the student's academic performance in completing the noted deficiencies. A notice of any action will be sent to the Director of Graduate Programs, Office of Graduate Studies.

E. Admission Appeals

An applicant who has been denied admission to a graduate program or who has received Conditional Admission may request reconsideration by writing to the Graduate Program Coordinator of the Academic Department within 30 days of the date of denial. Requests should include the reasons for requesting reconsideration, along with supporting materials and information that was not submitted with the original application. The Graduate Program Coordinator will consult with the program faculty and the Program Graduate Committee and the academic Department Head to resolve the appeal. The Department Head will act as final authority on the appeal process.

F. Transfer of Graduate Credit

Requests for credit to be transferred toward a graduate degree at Colorado Mesa University are reviewed and a decision as to accepting them is recommended to the program's Graduate Committee by the student's graduate program advisor in collaboration with the Colorado Mesa University Registrar's Office. The desired transferred credit must represent graduate-level work relevant to the degree being sought, with course content and level of instruction resulting in student competencies at least equivalent to those of currently enrolled students at CMU as determined by the program faculty. Students seeking transfer credit will be asked to provide the following:

- Published course description, and learning objectives
- Course requirements, including assignments and grading criteria
- Information on the course syllabus, textbook, types of tools, and methods used to engage students in learning
- Official transcripts sent directly to CMU from the prior institution noting the earned credit for the course

The following guidelines may also apply:

- Grades earned on transferred courses must be equivalent to B or better. A grade of equivalent of, B- is acceptable, whereas a grade of C+ is not transferable.
- Graduate internship credit transferred from another institution will be considered for transfer credit. Requirements may vary by academic departments. Other courses taken on a pass/fail or satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis do not receive transfer credit.
- Thesis credit, or credit for a master's project, does not receive transfer credit unless the thesis or research project is a collaborative or joint effort between CMU and another accredited institution offering graduate programs and degrees.
- Students, after beginning their graduate program of study at CMU, and wishing to take one or more courses at another institution for graduate credit, must first consult their program Graduate Advisor. Permission may be granted following the procedure for transferring the credits earned at other institution as described above.
- Non-credit courses, including lifetime learning seminars and programs, or courses taken for Continuing Education will not receive transfer credit.

Upon approval, up to nine semester credit hours for a master's degree and 18 credit hours for the doctorate degree may be transferred from another approved and accredited institution, but not from another earned degree.

## **VII. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. Master's Degree**

1. A minimum of 30 credit hours is required for any master's degree. Additional graduate hours may be required as specified by individual programs.
2. All credits in a master's degree program must be designated minimally at the 500 level. In the 3+2 MBA program, all credit used for the MBA portion, or graduate portion of other 3+2 programs, must minimally be at the 500 level. The student's Graduate Advisor, in consultation with the student's Graduate Committee, must approve all courses applied to graduation requirement.
3. Up to nine credit hours of course work completed as a non-degree student may be credited subsequently to a degree program, with the approval of the Graduate Program Coordinator in consultation with the student's Graduate Advisor and the program's Graduate Committee.
4. A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is required on all work completed in a graduate program. Requirements of grade restrictions for individual courses may vary by academic department. In general, grades of C or below will not count toward graduate credit and must be retaken for grade improvement if required. No course can be retaken more than once.
5. Students with a cumulative grade point average of less than 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. The student has one semester to improve to good standing. Two semesters of probationary status will result in termination.
6. All master's degrees require a culminating activity in the form of a thesis, practicum, research project or capstone experience. In addition, some programs require a qualifying examination for advancement to candidacy approximately midway through the program, and may require an oral defense at the termination of the program. Refer to the academic department for specific culminating degree requirements or to find out if a qualifying examination is necessary.
7. All theses and projects involving research that utilizes human subjects, regardless of invasiveness, (i.e. surveys to physical manipulation), must comply with Colorado Mesa University's *Institutional Review Board* policies governing research and be reviewed and approved by the Human Subjects Committee of the IRB. Any projects utilizing animals or animal models must be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). The Office of Sponsored Programs is the contact point for such approvals. The Office of Sponsored Programs will supply notification to the Office of Graduate Studies on all actions regarding the acceptance, rejection or mandatory modification of proposed projects that fall under the purview of the IRB/ HSC or IACUC.
8. A graduate student has six calendar years from the date of first registration in the Colorado Mesa University graduate program to complete the master's degree. Departments or programs may set shorter time requirements.

## B. Doctoral Degree

1. A minimum of 60 credit hours is required for the doctoral degree. Additional graduate hours may be required as specified by individual programs.
2. All credits in the doctoral degree program must be designated minimally at the 500 level. The student's Graduate Advisor, in consultation with the student's Graduate Committee, must approve all courses applied to the graduation requirement.
3. Up to 18 credit hours of course work completed as a non-degree student may be credited subsequently to a degree program, with the approval of the Graduate Program Coordinator, in consultation with the student's Graduate Advisor and the program Graduate Committee.
4. A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is required on all work completed in a graduate program. Requirements of grade restrictions for individual courses may vary by academic department. Grades at or below a B will not count toward graduate credit and must be retaken for grade improvement. No course can be retaken more than once.
5. Students with a cumulative grade point average of less than 3.0 will be placed on academic probation with one semester to achieve good standing. Students with a GPA of 2.5 or less will be terminated. Two semesters of probationary status will result in termination from the program.
6. The doctoral degree requires a culminating activity in the form of a thesis, practicum, research project, or capstone experience. In addition, some programs require a qualifying examination for advancement to candidacy approximately midway through the program, and may require an oral defense at the termination of the program. Refer to the academic department for specific culminating degree requirements or to find out if a qualifying examination is necessary.
7. All research or capstone experiences involving research that utilizes human subjects, regardless of invasiveness, (i.e. surveys to physical manipulation), must comply with Colorado Mesa University's *Institutional Review Board* policies governing research and be reviewed and approved by the Human Subjects Committee of the IRB. Any projects utilizing animals or animal models must be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). The Office of Sponsored Programs is the contact point for such approvals. The Office of Sponsored Programs will supply notification to the Office of Graduate Studies on all actions regarding the acceptance, rejection or mandatory modification of proposed projects that fall under the purview of the IRB/ HSC or IACUC.
8. Doctoral programs will also require a formal paper and oral presentation in defense of the culminating activity. Eligibility to take the exam will be determined by the Graduate Program Director in the discipline, based on the completion of program specific criteria. Examinations will be graded as Pass/Fail as determined by members of the student's Graduate Committee. The result of the exam will be forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies.
9. A student has six calendar years of continuous enrollment, from the date of first registration in the Colorado Mesa University graduate program, to complete the doctoral degree. Departments or programs may set shorter time requirements. The student will be notified by the academic department at the end of the fifth year or after 10 semesters that they have one academic year or two semesters to complete their program requirements.

10. Other criteria and requirements for doctoral programs may exist. Refer to specific guidelines for each academic department.

## **VIII. AWARD OF DEGREE**

### **A. Graduation Procedure**

1. All graduate students must apply for graduation no later than February 15 for fall graduates and September 15 for spring graduates. Each student who plans to graduate is required to submit to the Registrar's Office an Intent to Graduate Form and a Degree Plan Form. The Degree Plan Form must be signed by the academic Graduate Advisor and committee members, or program designee and the Department Head prior to being submitted to the Registrar's Office.
2. Graduation requirements are checked in accordance with the specific degree plan, the Colorado Mesa University catalog, the Graduate Policies and Procedure Manual, and any individual program requirements that are department specific and specified in the CMU catalog. If in an instance where these two documents differ, the Graduate Policies and Procedure Manual takes priority. The catalog used to meet graduation requirements is normally the one published for the academic year during which the student first enrolls, and remains continuously enrolled, after admission to CMU. The student may specify this or a later version of the catalog under which he or she wishes to be evaluated, and must meet all the requirements in that catalog. The student may select any subsequent catalog up to and including the current one, provided the student was in attendance at CMU during that academic year. However, a student may not choose to meet some requirements in one catalog and other requirements in another catalog.
3. CMU reserves the right to modify or change catalog provisions, based on existing mechanisms, from time to time in order to fulfill the CMU Role and Mission. Any such changes or modifications may be implemented as applicable to all students at the time the changes are made, unless there is written approval stating otherwise from the Office of Graduate Studies and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. CMU reserves the right to terminate or modify program requirements, content, and the sequence of program offerings from time to time for educational or financial reasons that it deems sufficient to warrant such actions.

### **B. Conditions and Timetable for Graduation**

1. Formal course work for a graduate degree should be completed in a timely manner within limits set by each degree program. Students are urged to form their thesis, practicum, or project committees by the end of the first semester for the master's degree seeking students and by end of the second semester for doctoral degree students. Refer to specific departmental guidelines for timetables specific to different degree programs.
  - Students will select their committee members in consultation with and with the approval of their graduate program Academic Advisor as determined by specific program requirements. The Academic Advisor will coordinate the selection process for committee members with department faculty. Outside members (outside the academic department offering the program) are encouraged to participate as one member of the committee, if individual programs allow for such instances.

- The composition of the graduate student committees will conform to individual program guidelines and policies.
  - Once committees are formed, notice of the composition of the committee will be forwarded to the program Department Head, Graduate Coordinator and the Office of Graduate Studies.
2. Colorado Mesa University will confer the graduate degree when the following conditions have been met:
    - Submission of the required application for degree from the Program Director to the Office of the Registrar.
    - Positive recommendation for the of the student’s Program Advisor, majority of the student’s Graduate Program Committee and the program Department Head.
    - Certification by the Program Director that all requirements of the degree being sought have been completed.
    - Written notice of a positive or negative recommendation will also be forwarded to the Director of Graduate Studies.
    - Achievement of the grade requirements as defined by this document or specific program requirements if grade requirements are higher.
    - Satisfactory completion of a project, practicum, or thesis, as required by the individual program.
    - Satisfactory completion of a final oral presentation or defense, as required by the individual program.
  3. The Registrar will promptly notify the candidate and the college or school if graduation is not approved for any reason.

## **IX. COURSE GUIDELINES**

### **A. Course Numbering**

Graduate courses are numbered 500 and above, and are used to satisfy the requirements of graduate programs. Master’s degree programs must have a minimum of 30 semester hours of courses numbered at 500 and above, with the exception of the 3+2 MBA program. Doctoral degree programs must have a minimum of 60 semester hours of courses numbered at 500 and above, including the master’s level courses. Requirements may vary by department. The amount of allowed research, thesis, practicum or capstone course hours is defined by individual programs.

### **B. Prerequisites**

Generally, the minimum prerequisites for applying to a graduate program would be 12 semester credit hours of upper level (300 – 400 level) coursework in the graduate field of interest, although programs are permitted to require more semester hours of upper level courses. Students may be admitted with fewer than the number of required courses for a program. In this case, the program might require additional coursework for full admission; these courses will be specified on the admission letter and will be termed “leveling courses.”

Leveling courses taken to meet undergraduate deficiencies or prerequisites cannot be used to meet graduate degree requirements, nor are they computed into the *graduate*

grade point average. If a grade of C or lower is earned in the leveling course, the graduate department may deem that this prerequisite has not been met. Additionally, a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.0 is required from the baccalaureate granting institution.

C. Graduate Coursework

Graduate students have higher expectations placed upon them than undergraduate students. These expectations take the forms of scholarship, participation, leadership, and integrity. Graduate coursework is designed to advance the student personally and professionally through the process of critical thinking, data analysis, information literacy, and quality research.

D. Master's Coursework

Coursework progressing toward the master's degree should illustrate the student's commitment toward mastery of a subject beyond that expected of an undergraduate student. This mastery should be evidenced in the student's attendance, participation in discussions, mentoring of others, research quality, and, general interactivity within their field of study. Students in a master's program should be able to assess the quality of research articles in their field, ascertain and interpret analyses of data, and evaluate the validity of arguments from a variety of sources. In addition, writing at the master's level should be noticeably above that of the undergraduate level. These advances should take the form of engaging the body of literature on a topic, scholarly writing to include literature reviews, appropriate formatting, and extensive analysis of sources of information. As a result of master's coursework, the student should possess the ability to explore, manage and converse regarding information in the field, with the integrity necessary for consistency with other professional peers.

E. Doctoral Coursework

Doctoral coursework should be a learning experience for both the student and the faculty member. The nature of doctoral coursework is to push boundaries of known knowledge, and to create and explore new ideas, processes, artistic endeavors, or other scholarly works that engage members of the discipline. In this process of exploration, the doctoral student is expected to engage in a scholarly project in their field or conduct research to contribute to existing bodies of knowledge at a professional level. This effort should include taking what the student knows, incorporating new material and ideas, and advancing the field. The result of Doctoral coursework and other requirements will be for the student to accomplish a scholarly body of work, acceptable to the professional community in the field.

F. Undergraduate Courses for Graduate Credit

Undergraduate courses may not be taken for graduate credit. Within undergraduate courses that are dual-listed (for example 460/560), the graduate student is expected to perform at a higher level than the undergraduates in the course. Note: At least 70% of a student's graduate degree program must be comprised of courses that are at the 500 level and not dual-listed.

G. Repeating Courses

Graduate students may repeat a maximum of six hours (two courses) of graduate credit. No course may be repeated more than once. When a course is repeated, the last grade earned is computed into the student's graduate GPA. The previously attempted courses and grades remain in the academic record but are not computed in the overall average.

H. Course Load

Graduate students taking six semester credit hours per semester are considered full-time graduate students. Students taking less than six credit hours are considered part-time graduate students.

I. Transfer Credit

Students may transfer up to nine semester credit hours from another accredited institution into their Master's Degree Plan, or 18 semester credit hours for a doctoral degree program, provided they meet the General Transfer Policies of Colorado Mesa University and are approved by the academic advisor and the Department Head. The number of transfer hours varies by department. Transfer work is not used in the calculation of the graduate GPA.

Transfer credit shall not be accepted if the work was used to obtain a degree or is included as part of another degree at any institution. A maximum of 6 semester credit hours may be taken as "non-degree seeking" and transferred in with the approval of the Program Director as with on-site non-degree seeking credits.

Transfer credit must be approved by the department and must have received a grade of "A" or "B", regardless of sign (+, -). Transfer credit cannot be used to make up "C" "D," "F," or "U" grades received in required courses at Colorado Mesa University.

Only courses graded by "letter" grades are transferable. Courses graded "S/U" or "P/F" are not transferable (includes thesis, dissertation, practicum, and capstone credits that may be awarded letter grades at other institutions).

Transfer courses must be numbered as graduate level (5XX, 6XX, 7XX) according to the graduate transcript. Transfer courses must be from accredited institutions of higher education that offer equivalent level degrees or graduate level coursework.

J. Testing Out of Coursework

There are no provisions for testing out of coursework leading to either the master's or doctoral degrees.

K. Final Requirement

The final result of the doctoral program is the dissertation, capstone scholarly project, or other comparable program specific requirement.

L. Time Limit for Degree Completion

The maximum time allowed for the completion of the master's degree is six calendar years beginning with the first semester of enrollment in a master's program after admission has been granted. Maximum time allowed for completion of the Master of



Science degree in Nursing is four years. The maximum time allowed for the completion of the doctoral degree is six calendar years from the first semester of admittance into the doctoral program. The student may submit a written request for a time extension to their advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator. Departments or programs may set shorter time requirements.

#### M. Scheduling

Not all graduate courses are offered each semester. Understanding this, the student, in consultation with his/her Graduate Advisor, should chart the course of their graduate studies before they have completed twelve credit hours of coursework at Colorado Mesa University. The respective Degree Plan shall list all courses, including those needed for any remediation and/or weaknesses deemed by the Academic Advisor, and any practicum, thesis, and/or research requirements necessary to complete the specific degree. The Degree Plan shall have the signature of the student, the Graduate Academic Advisor, and the Department Head. Upon completion of the Degree Plan and all requirements, the student shall be awarded the graduate degree.

### X. ACADEMIC POLICIES

#### A. Grade System

1. Grades of “A,” “B,” “C,” “D,” and “F” are used and computed in the GPA. Other marks used are “I” (incomplete); “W,” (withdrawn); “NC,” (no credit); and “P,” (passing). At the discretion of graduate programs, Pass/Fail or “P/F”) grades may be allowed for research, practicum, and thesis courses. Grades of “I,” “W,” “NC,” and “P” are not counted in determining the GPA. Courses for which “C,” “D,” “F,” “I,” “W,” or “NC” grades are awarded shall not count in graduate degree programs and shall not satisfy program deficiency requirements.
2. Incomplete (“I”) grades are temporary grades given to a student only in an emergency case and at the discretion of the instructor.
3. At the end of the semester following the one in which an “I” is given, the “I” becomes the grade that is submitted by the instructor to the Registrar’s Office. If the instructor does not submit a grade by the deadline for that semester, the grade becomes an “F.” A grade of “I” given spring semester must be addressed by the end of the following fall term.
4. Extension of the time to complete work may be made in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the instructor. A student with an “I” grade, however, may not change the “I” by enrolling in the same course another semester. Grades can be changed, using the Special Grade Report, within the first two weeks of the semester following the receipt of the original grade by the Registrar’s Office. However, students wishing to appeal an assigned grade must follow the academic appeals procedure, as outlined in the undergraduate Student and Academic Policies Guide as specified under the “Student Grade Appeal Procedure” section, and must initiate the appeals process within 4 weeks, following receipt of the contested grade.

#### B. GPA Requirements

1. Students may not apply coursework with a grade of “C” toward graduation requirements for a master’s degree or doctoral degree. Students may have the option

to repeat a course for grade improvement to a B or better, depending on individual program guidelines.

2. As allowed by specific program requirements, students may repeat a maximum of two different courses at the graduate level, for up to 6 credit hours. No course may be repeated more than once. When a course is repeated, the last grade earned is computed into the student's GPA. The previously attempted courses and grades remain in the academic record but are not computed in the overall average. Transcripts will contain a statement indicating the grade point average has been re-computed and stating the basis for re-computation.
3. To remain in good graduate standing, a graduate student must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better. If the cumulative graduate GPA falls below 3.0 the student shall be placed on academic probation. Students have one semester to show progress toward good standing. Probationary students with 9 or more earned semester hours of graduate work shall be terminated whenever progress toward good standing is not demonstrated.
4. A student may appeal termination by submitting a written petition to his or her program's Department Head within 6 weeks of the official notice of termination. This petition must provide justification for continuation in the program.

#### C. Student Program Termination

A student may be terminated from his/her degree program for one or more of the following reasons:

1. the student's GPA falls below 2.50;
2. the student is placed on probation a second time;
3. the student fails to maintain the 3.0 cumulative GPA for two semesters;
4. the student fails the written and/or oral comprehensive examination or its approved equivalent as specified by specific program requirements;
5. the student submits an unsatisfactory thesis or practicum paper;
6. the time established for the degree program expires before the degree requirements are completed; and/or
7. the student has not maintained B grades in all courses.

Appeals of termination shall be submitted in writing to the Program Department Head within 4 weeks of official notice of termination. The appeal decision by the department head can be further appealed to the Graduate Studies Advisory Committee within 2 weeks of the department head's decision. Further appeal(s) shall be in writing within in 2 weeks of the GSAC ruling, to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The VPAA has the final decision on the appeal.

#### D. Readmission

A student, who has been terminated from his/her degree program for one of the above reasons, may appeal for readmission to the program after a one semester suspension (does not include summer term). In this case, a percent of the credit for coursework (excluding thesis and dissertation) previously earned at Colorado Mesa University can be applied to the degree after readmission. All limitations regarding times will be reset as though the student was entering the program for the first time. All appeals and requests for readmission to graduate degree programs will be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, no later than one month from the start of the fall academic semester,

and reviewed in collaboration with the Program Director, Department Head and faculty. If the appeal is denied, then a further appeal can be submitted to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, within three calendar weeks. The decision of the VPAA is final and not contestable.

#### E. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of appropriating the written, artistic, or musical composition of another, or portions thereof; or the ideas, language, or symbols of same and passing them off as the product of one's own mind. Plagiarism includes not only the exact duplication of another's work but also the lifting of a substantial or essential portion thereof.

Regarding written work in particular; direct quotations, statements which are a result of paraphrasing, summarizing the work of another, and other information which is not considered common knowledge must be cited or acknowledged. As long as a student adequately acknowledges his or her sources and as long as there is no reason to believe that the student has attempted to pose as the originator, the student shall not be charged with plagiarism even though the form of the acknowledgement may be unacceptable. However, students should be aware that most professors require certain forms of acknowledgment and some may evaluate a project on the basis of form.

#### F. Appeals

1. Student appeals regarding policies instituted by their program or all graduate programs must first be addressed to the department head in which the program is housed. If these are not successfully resolved, the appeal may be directed to the Director of Graduate Programs, Office of Graduate Studies. Such appeals must be made in writing within four weeks of the event being appealed, and must be accompanied by adequate justification. The burden of proof regarding evidence in the appeal rests with the student.
2. The process for appeals regarding course grades is described in the grades section of this Manual.
3. Appeals regarding constitution of supervisory committees, thesis committees, supervision of research and/or admission to candidacy must be first reviewed by the Department Head in which the program is housed. Further appeals can be submitted to Director of Graduate Studies, Office of Graduate Studies within four weeks following review and decision by the Department Head. Such appeals must be made in writing, and accompanied by adequate justification. The burden of proof regarding evidence in the appeal rests with the student.

#### G. Committees

1. Supervisory and/or Thesis Committee: There may be a supervisory committee for each student in a graduate program. The supervisory committee's role is to oversee the student's progress toward completion of the degree, and, where required by a program, administer comprehensive examinations and decide whether the student is to be admitted to candidacy. Students in graduate programs with required master's theses are required to have a thesis committee. The thesis committee is required include the supervisory committee, and the chair of the thesis committee is required to be a CMU faculty member and have specialized competence in the area of study

- covered by the thesis/dissertation. Subject to these constraints, individual graduate programs can develop policies for the composition and functions of this committee.
2. Policies for size, membership and nominating process of the supervisory committee will be decided by each graduate program.

#### H. Multiple Graduate Degree Programs

A student at CMU can only enroll in one graduate degree program at any one time. Students may not work on two or more graduate degree programs at the same time.

### **XI. FACULTY WORKLOAD**

- A. The normal teaching load for full-time Academic Faculty is 24 semester credit hours per academic year. This load is usually distributed as 12 semester credit hours per semester. Overload compensation is authorized only when teaching assignments exceed the normal distribution.
- B. In addition to their teaching load, faculty members shall evaluate student performance, confer with students, serve on committees when appropriate and participate in scholarly activity, as well as other service and professional activities. The full-time faculty is expected to devote at least 40 hours per week during the academic year to meeting their teaching, advising, scholarship, and service obligations. Additionally, faculty are expected to establish, post, and keep a minimum of five office hours weekly spread over a minimum of four days excluding scheduled breaks. Faculty may use a different configuration of office hours with the approval of the Department Head.
- C. Faculty teaching graduate level courses may qualify for variations in credit hour reassignment based on the following criteria:
  1. Grant monies have been procured for use within the department.
  2. Reassigned time may be granted, by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the President, for first time graduate course preparation.
  3. There may be load adjustment for oversight of multiple graduate projects, theses, dissertations, and/or research, as determined by the program department head and agreed to by the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
  4. For each three hours of graduate teaching, faculty may earn one credit of reassigned time, as determined by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the President.
  5. Each Department Head may adjust graduate teaching loads according to the needs of the department, and seek approval of proposed load adjustments with the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the President.

## **XII. RESEARCH STANDARDS**

Research is an important component of graduate studies. Specific research requirements and activities are defined by each degree program.

### **A. Human Subjects and Animal Research**

All research conducted by graduate students that involves human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the Human Subjects Committee (also known as the Institutional Review Board or IRB). All research conducted by graduate students that involves animals must be reviewed by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Graduate student research to fulfill course, thesis, or dissertation requirements is also subject to this regulation. Students should meet with their advisor if they intend to do research with humans or animals. Human subject research can include something as simple as an interview or survey. Failure to obtain approval from the IRB before beginning a research project can be grounds for rejecting a thesis or dissertation, and constitutes a serious breach of academic research ethics and federal law.

### **B. Research Misconduct**

Research misconduct includes fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing or performing research, abuse of confidentiality, or other practices that seriously deviate from those commonly accepted in the academic community for proposing, conducting, and reporting on research. Specific policies for research misconduct and sanctions can be obtained from the Office of Sponsored Programs.

## **XIII. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **A. Admissions and Records**

Services will be provided for the graduate student, including website access to admission information and forms, orientation, planning tools, analysis of admission applications, advising, and other services similar to those needed by undergraduate students.

### **B. Financial Aid**

Financial assistance programs will be made available to graduate students based on need and merit, similar to those for undergraduates, including online notification and award acceptance.

### **C. Bookstore**

Textbooks, reference materials, and other supplies necessary to support the graduate program will be absorbed into the present operation of the bookstore. Many distance students will use the online book ordering option now available at the bookstore.

### **D. Health Services**

For students who do not have health plans, Colorado Mesa University offers discounted health insurance plans, as well as basic health clinic services (irrespective of insurance) for a \$15 co-pay, and mental health services for no additional costs beyond tuition and fees. Fees are subject to change with approval by the college administration and Board of Trustees.

E. Counseling and Career Services

Current career and counseling services will absorb the graduate students. Each graduate student will be assigned a faculty advisor/mentor to assist in program and career planning.

F. Testing Services

The Testing Center will serve as a proctored testing site for online and distance students when needed.

G. Tutoring and Academic Services

The Testing Center does not yet provide tutoring services for graduate students, but it may provide study skills seminars for graduate students who demonstrate a need. Established operations and procedures are already in place to provide accommodations for students with physical or cognitive learning needs.

H. Library

As each graduate program begins its developmental process, the staff at Tomlinson Library will assist in assessing the library's current assets in comparison with documented needs. The assessment will examine the four areas necessary to the support of graduate programs: textbooks, periodical literature, government publications, and online database support. Online database capabilities will need to be expanded as needs are identified. Additional library resources will be required as graduate programs are added to Colorado Mesa University.

The library will serve as a repository for copies of theses, dissertations and capstone projects for public inspection.

I. Academic Computer Services

Through Academic Computer Services, all students have computer and Internet access available on campus and from their homes. In addition, online learning support for faculty and students is offered through the Help Desk and the Coordinator of Distance Education. Colorado Mesa University shall provide adequate resources for distance education, such as a learning management system. There will be a need for graduate students to access advanced statistical software programs in the college computer labs.

J. Student Housing

On campus housing is not currently available for graduate students, however remote campus housing may be available. Students will be able to access information will be made available via a web link regarding rental agencies, apartment complexes, and other housing options.

K. Office of Graduate Studies

The Office of Graduate Studies and the Director of Graduate Studies are located in Tomlinson Library, Room 308.

#### **XIV. REVISIONS TO THE MANUAL**

##### **A. Process**

Modifications to the originally approved document shall follow the process outlined herein. The President of the University, in consultation with the Vice President of Academic Affairs, will consider and offer final approval to any revisions to the Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual as necessary.

Potential revisions, from faculty, departments or other bodies (e.g. Faculty Senate), to this manual shall be reviewed by the Graduate Studies Advisory Committee.

##### **B. Revision Petition**

A petition for a document change should include the following information:

1. Identification of Current Policy (reference specific section and area)
2. Description of requested change
3. Rationale for requested change

##### **C. Review Cycle**

The Graduate Advisory Committee will review petitions for revisions on the following annual cycle:

1. Submission of petition for document change, on or before December 1
2. Committee review of petitions which may include a meeting between the committee and petitioners, following the submission of the petition
3. Campus faculty review and submission of written comments on proposed revision, early in the spring semester for 10 working days
4. Committee review of comments and final review of recommended changes by March 1
5. Submission of recommended changes to VPAA, March 15
6. Submission of recommended changes to the President by April 1
7. The President will make a final ruling on the proposed changes by April 15

#### **XV. GRADUATE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**

##### **A. Introduction**

The mission of the University and the Office of Graduate Studies is to deliver graduate programs, and promote and support excellence in graduate education for individual students, faculty, departments, and the University as a whole. The office supports a set of common goals, common standards, and best practices that apply to graduate programs in all disciplines.

The graduate culture at CMU values excellence, integrity, collaboration, efficiency, innovation, and inclusiveness in the delivery of its graduate programs. These values are central to the school's role in encouraging a creative environment for scholarship, research, teaching, and learning. In addition it assists departments in recruiting, supporting, retaining, and graduating outstanding scholars. These efforts aim to produce scholars, researchers and practitioners educationally empowered as critical thinking citizens and agents of innovation, opportunity and change.

To accomplish this, the Graduate School collaborates with colleagues across campus to provide leadership in several key areas: recruitment and admissions; curricular design, implementation and evaluation; student services and student life activities; career placement; and ongoing program evaluation and assessment. Through regional collaborations, the Graduate School assures innovation in program offerings and professional development for our students as well as fostering an environment that allows programs to thrive and evolve with changing demands and external progress.

**B. CMU Graduate Program Learning Outcomes:**

While individual programs will have student learning outcomes and assessment rubrics specific to their disciplines, below are general learning outcomes for all students completing a graduate degree at CMU.

A student graduating with a master’s or doctoral degree from CMU will demonstrate:

1. creativity and the ability to think critically and analytically;
2. the ability to work individually and in collaboration with others, in contributing to the scholarly advancement in their field;
3. advanced written and oral communication skills and the ability to access and analyze information from various literary sources; and
4. the ability to recognize and articulate moral and ethical challenges within their discipline and demonstrate leadership.

**C. Common Assessment of Graduate Programs and Courses Matrix**

<i>CMU Learning Outcome</i>	<i>Assessment Method</i>	<i>Scoring Method</i>	<i>Benchmark</i>	<i>Measurement Cycle/ Responsibility</i>	<i>Results/Use of Results</i>
1. demonstrate creativity and the ability to think critically and analytically	<b>Direct:</b> Scholarly project defense (1a)	Evaluation rubric developed by graduate faculty	90% of students will score 86% or higher on evaluation rubric	Spring/ Faculty	Curriculum revision; revision of teaching methodologies; review of textbook/learning materials selection
1a. Common assessment across programs	Comprehensive Exam or GRE(1a)	Minimum score	90% of students will score 86% or higher on exam (GRE exam 70 percentile)	Spring/ Faculty	
1b. Discipline-specific assessment	Course exams in (1b)	Embedded assessment score	90% of students will score 86% or higher on exam	Fall/ Faculty	
	<b>Indirect:</b> Manuscript preparation (1b)	Number prepared/	80% of students will submit	Spring/Fall/ Program	



<i>CMU Learning Outcome</i>	<i>Assessment Method</i>	<i>Scoring Method</i>	<i>Benchmark</i>	<i>Measurement Cycle/ Responsibility</i>	<i>Results/Use of Results</i>
		submitted/ accepted for publication	manuscripts for publication	Director	
	Employer surveys (1a)	Satisfaction score	90% of employers will choose strongly agree/agree on embedded questions on student exit survey	Spring (1 year and 3 years) / Program Director	
2. demonstrate the ability to work individually and in collaboration with others, in contributing to the scholarly advancement in their field	<b>Direct:</b> Practicum/ Preceptorship/ Internship Evaluations (2b)	Evaluation rubric developed by graduate faculty and external reviewer	90% of students will score 86% or higher on evaluation rubric	Spring/ Faculty	Curriculum revision; revision of teaching methodologies; explore further opportunities for interdisciplinary learning; review appropriate learning experiences
2a. Common assessment across programs	Scholarly project defense in (2b)	Evaluation rubric developed by graduate faculty	90% of students will score 86% or higher on evaluation rubric	Spring/ Faculty	
2b. Discipline-specific assessment	<b>Indirect:</b> Employer survey (2a)	Satisfaction score	90% of employers will choose strongly agree/agree on embedded questions on student exit survey	Spring (1 year and 3 years)/ Program Director	
	Group/ Collaborative Projects evaluation (2b)	Evaluation rubric developed by graduate faculty	90% of students will score 86% or higher on evaluation rubric	Spring/Fall/ Faculty	
3. demonstrate advanced written and oral communication skills and the ability	<b>Direct:</b> scholarly project defense (3a)	Evaluation rubric developed by	90% of students will score 86% or higher on	Spring/ Faculty	Curriculum revision; revision of teaching

<i>CMU Learning Outcome</i>	<i>Assessment Method</i>	<i>Scoring Method</i>	<i>Benchmark</i>	<i>Measurement Cycle/ Responsibility</i>	<i>Results/Use of Results</i>
to access and analyze information from various literary sources		graduate faculty	evaluation rubric		methodologies; review of textbook/learning materials selection; review of clinical placements for appropriate learning experiences
3a. Common assessment across programs	Comprehensive Exam or GRE exam (3b)	Minimum score or grade	90% of students will score 86% or higher on exam (70 percentile on GRE exam)	Spring/ Faculty	
3b. Discipline-specific assessment	Core and Cognate course exams or papers (3b)	Minimum score or evaluation rubric developed by graduate faculty	90% of students will score 86% or higher on exam	Spring/Fall/ Faculty	
	Practicum/ Preceptorship/ Internship Evaluation (3b)	Evaluation rubric developed by graduate faculty and external reviewer	90% of students will score 86% or higher on evaluation rubric	Spring/ Faculty	
	<i>Indirect:</i> Manuscript preparation (3b)	Number prepared/ submitted/ accepted for publication	80% of students will submit manuscripts for publication	Spring/Fall/ Program Director	
	Student exit survey (3a)	Satisfaction score	90% of employers will choose strongly agree/agree on embedded questions on student exit survey	Spring/ Program Director	
	Employer survey (3a)	Satisfaction score	90% of employers will choose strongly agree/agree on embedded	Spring (1 year and 3 years)/ Program Director	

<i>CMU Learning Outcome</i>	<i>Assessment Method</i>	<i>Scoring Method</i>	<i>Benchmark</i>	<i>Measurement Cycle/ Responsibility</i>	<i>Results/Use of Results</i>
			questions on student exit survey		
	Student Awards/Honors (3b)	Type and frequency of A/Hs	10% of students will receive awards/honors for scholarly achievements	Spring/Fall/ Program Director	
4. demonstrate the ability to recognize and articulate moral and ethical challenges within their discipline and demonstrate leadership	<b>Direct:</b> Comprehensive Exam or GRE Exam (4a)	Embedded assessment score on case study	90% of students will score 86% or higher on exam (70 percentile on GRE exam)	Spring/ Faculty	Curriculum revision; revision of teaching methodologies; review of textbook/learning materials selection; explore further opportunities for interdisciplinary learning
4a. Common assessment across programs	Scholarly project defense in (4a)	Evaluation rubric developed by graduate faculty	90% of students will score 86% or higher on evaluation rubric	Spring/ Faculty	
4b. Discipline-specific assessment	Core and Cognate course exams or papers (4b)	Embedded assessment score or evaluation rubric developed by graduate faculty	90% of students will score 86% or higher on exam	Spring/Fall/ Faculty	
	Practicum/ Preceptorship/ Internship Evaluations (4b)	Evaluation rubric developed by graduate faculty and external reviewer	90% of students will score 86% or higher on evaluation rubric	Spring/ Faculty	
	<b>Indirect:</b> Student exit survey (4b)	Satisfaction score	90% of employers will choose strongly agree/agree on embedded questions on student exit	Spring/ Program Director	

<i>CMU Learning Outcome</i>	<i>Assessment Method</i>	<i>Scoring Method</i>	<i>Benchmark</i>	<i>Measurement Cycle/ Responsibility</i>	<i>Results/Use of Results</i>
			survey		
	Employer survey (7b)	Satisfaction score	90% of employers will choose strongly agree/agree on embedded questions on student exit survey	Spring (1 year and 3 years)/ Program Director	