

# GRADUATE COLLEGE

[www.grad-college.iastate.edu/](http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/) (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/>)

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The Graduate College and graduate faculty at Iowa State University are responsible for the quality of graduate education, for administering students' graduate programs, and for promoting research support from various governmental, industrial, and private agencies.

The graduate faculty in various programs handle admission and classification of graduate students, establish requirements for advanced degrees, and have charge of instruction and research at the graduate level. Graduate faculty members also teach graduate courses, serve on program of study (POS) committees, and direct work of master's and doctoral students. All graduate courses offered for major or nonmajor credit are taught by graduate faculty members or graduate lecturers.

Graduate study was offered soon after the university was founded, and the first graduate degree was conferred in 1877. Experimentation and research also started early, first in agriculture and shortly thereafter in home economics, engineering, science, and veterinary medicine. In 1913, the graduate faculty was organized formally and an executive graduate committee was appointed. In 1915, the graduate faculty held its first meeting, and in 1916, it granted the first doctor of philosophy degree.

Graduate education is vital to the quality of university teaching. The creative efforts of graduate faculty members and graduate students result in knowledge necessary to help society solve problems in educational, scientific, technological, and socio-economic areas. The Graduate College encourages educational exchange and contact with undergraduate areas of the university to promote improved teaching on both the undergraduate and graduate levels. A part of this exchange is accomplished by the publication of books and technical articles which are made possible by graduate research.

The degrees Master of Arts, Master of Science, and Doctor of Philosophy are research oriented. In many fields master's degrees are also awarded without a thesis, but a written report of independent study, called a creative component, is generally required. Coursework only degrees are available for those individuals interested in advanced study directed toward meeting vocational or professional objectives. Information on other types of master's degrees can be found in the Graduate College Handbook, Appendix E (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/appendix.php?id=E>).

The Graduate College Handbook (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/>) lists policies and procedures of the Graduate College.

## Graduate Appointments

Graduate assistantships, fellowships, and research grants have been established at Iowa State University to encourage graduate work and to promote research. Such appointments and research opportunities are available through the various departments of instruction and the research centers on campus.

Graduate assistantships, the most common form of graduate student support, are available in three categories: the research assistantship, the teaching assistantship, or the administrative assistantship. A half-time graduate assistantship (20 hours per week) permits the holder to enroll for a maximum of 12 semester credits. Recipients of these assistantships are assessed fees at full Iowa resident rates regardless of the number of credits for which they register. These students may also be eligible for tuition scholarship awards (50% of in-state tuition for most master's students and 100% of in-state tuition for most Ph.D. students and certain terminal master's students). Students who are graduates of a regionally accredited college or university in the United States or of a recognized institution in another country whose requirements for the bachelor's degree are substantially equivalent to those of Iowa State University, and who present the requisite undergraduate or graduate preparation, may apply for these appointments.

Starting in Fall 2024, master's scholarship awards are:

- 75% of full-time tuition per semester for each student on an assistantship appointment of 1/2-time or more or
- 37.5% of full-time tuition per semester for each student on assistantship appointment of 1/4-time or more, but less than 1/2-time.

For fall and spring semesters, a student must be on appointment for at least three months to qualify for a tuition scholarship. For summer session, a student must be on appointment for at least four weeks during the term to qualify for a tuition scholarship. For all terms, appointments must have been processed by the Graduate College before the end of the first full month of classes (i.e., usually around the fifth week of the fall or spring semesters). Graduate tuition scholarships not used by the due date of the second fee payment installment will be forfeited. Students who will not be on appointment for the summer session may still be eligible for the resident (GA) tuition rate. This tuition rate is restricted to a summer session following a nine-month appointment. No action is required to receive the resident tuition rate in the summer for students who held assistantships the prior fall and spring terms.

Students placed on academic probation are eligible for assistantship appointment only on a term-by-term basis and need special permission

to be approved for tuition scholarships. Students admitted as nondegree students are not eligible for assistantship appointments. Further information may be obtained by contacting the appropriate graduate program.

The satisfactory completion of one appointment, plus satisfactory academic performance, will ordinarily make a student eligible for reappointment. After a period of three years of full-time study for the master's degree or five years for the doctorate, the student will not normally be continued on assistantship support (shorter periods may be stipulated by the student's program or department).

## Postdoctoral Study

Opportunities are provided for postdoctoral study through the extensive research programs of the university. Inquiries should be directed to the appropriate program, institute, or to the Postdoctoral Scholar Coordinator in the Graduate College.

## Graduate Study by Staff Members

Any full-time member of the research, instructional, or extension staff at the rank of instructor, research associate, or assistant scientist may carry up to six course credits per semester and three credits per summer session, subject to the approval of the head of the program or section and provided it does not interfere with other duties. This privilege may be extended to members of the research, instructional, or extension staffs at the rank of assistant professor with approval of the college dean and the Dean of the Graduate College. Staff members at the rank of professor or associate professor cannot become candidates for graduate degrees from ISU.

## Distance Education

Iowa State offers many graduate degree and certificate programs off-campus. For a listing of the degree programs, registrations for courses, and more information about distance education, consult the Iowa State University Web site at <https://iowastateonline.iastate.edu/>.

Other information about graduate requirements is available in the Graduate College Handbook at <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/>.

## Graduate Courses Taken by Undergraduates

Courses at the 400 and 500 levels listed in the ISU Catalog may be used in the plan of study even though they were taken by the student as an undergraduate at ISU.

- Up to 9 credits earned as an ISU undergraduate may be used to meet the requirements of the graduate degree.

- These credits must be approved by the student's Program of Study Committee and DOGE.
- Up to 6 of these credits may be at the 400 level.
- Up to 6 of these credits could have been used to meet the undergraduate degree requirements.
- Grades of B or better are required in the courses that led to these credits.
- These credits must have been earned when the student was classified as an undergraduate, not as a nondegree undergraduate (special) student.

Graduate programs may accept 300-level courses taken by the student as an undergraduate at ISU to meet background deficiencies or to demonstrate proficiencies in subject matter necessary for the degree. These courses are not eligible for inclusion on the POSC form but may be articulated for transfer internally. The student would be required to meet the minimum number of credits required for the degree without the inclusion of these undergraduate-level courses.

## Courses Taken as a Nondegree Undergraduate Student

A person classified as a "nondegree undergraduate" student may not use courses taken under that status in a graduate degree program. A student who has received the baccalaureate degree must register as a graduate student if they are to receive graduate credit for courses.

## Graduate Majors

A complete list of all graduate majors can be found on the Graduate College website, <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/academics/programs/apprograms.php>, with links to admission requirements and program websites.

The Graduate College oversees the admission of students to pursue a graduate degree or credential or to take graduate courses in nondegree student status. The Office of Admissions and the various graduate programs partner with the Graduate College to sustain an admissions process that respects institutional standards and the diverse needs of faculty and students across all realms of advanced study and scholarship. The Graduate College sets baseline admission requirements for the university and makes admission decisions. Graduate programs share specific admissions requirements to prospective students via their websites and the Graduate College Program Pages (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/academics/programs/apprograms.php>).

## Application process

All application materials for graduate study are submitted via the online application.

The Graduate College establishes dates to open and close applications for particular academic terms. Graduate programs may establish deadlines earlier than the date on which the application closes by which applicants must submit all required materials to be considered for admission.

Departments and programs convey recommendations concerning admission to the Graduate College. Final decisions regarding admission rest with the Dean of the Graduate College. The Graduate College, or the Office of Admissions acting on behalf of the Graduate College, will seek to ensure the authenticity of application materials. Graduate programs are expected to uphold ethical practices as they evaluate applicants by using principles of holistic review. Official letters to applicants to report the outcomes of their applications are sent from the Dean of the Graduate College.

## Application requirements

### Required Application Documents

1. Online graduate application
2. Unofficial transcripts from all previously attended institutions for undergraduate and post-baccalaureate study.
  - a. Official transcripts are only required from applicants admitted to the Graduate College. Electronic copies provided by the applicant are not considered official.
3. Applicants whose first language is not English must submit a valid, official test report from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or from an approved alternative examination. Applicants who otherwise will need to submit scores are exempt if they hold baccalaureate or higher degrees from countries where the only official language is English.
4. A statement of purpose for each major to which the applicant is applying.
5. Additional documents such as letters of recommendation, résumé/ curriculum vitae (CV), statement of purpose, writing samples, publications, portfolio, etc. may be required by programs.

## Admission standards and requirements

A baccalaureate degree, or equivalent from a suitably accredited college or university is required. Evidence of a conferred baccalaureate is needed by the start of the second semester of graduate study. Any exceptions to this admission standard must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College.

A cumulative grade point average of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale, or equivalent, in undergraduate work or in previous graduate work is expected. Recommendations from graduate programs to admit applicants who do not meet this standard will be reviewed by the Graduate College. The GPA may also be met through one of the following:

- Undergraduate degree with GPA greater than 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale)
- Completed 9 to 14 credits of graduate coursework with grade B or better in all courses.
- Completed 15 or more credits of graduate coursework with GPA above 3.00 and no F grades.

Minimum scores for tests of English are shown below. Graduate programs may set higher minima for applicants to their programs.

Students whose first language is English or those who earned degree from countries where the only official language is English (<https://secure.grad-college.iastate.edu/tools/graduate/international-scores/Graduate%20English%20Information.pdf>) are exempt from the language proficiency requirements.

Applicants whose native language is not English must demonstrate proficiency in English equivalent to a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of at least 550 on the paper-based test, or 79 on the internet-based test as a part of the admissions process. International students may also submit IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scores in lieu of the TOEFL. The ISU Graduate College minimum is 6.5. PTE scores of at least 53 and Duolingo scores of at least 105 are also acceptable for meeting the English requirement for admission, but not for meeting the Graduate College English requirement. Duolingo is approved for admission through Spring 2025.

## Special applicants

**Non-degree seeking** - Nondegree seeking graduate students are those who are not seeking a graduate degree. There is a limit of nine credits taken in this status that may be used to satisfy graduate degree requirements. Non-degree seeking students are not eligible for financial aid.

**Undeclared** - Undeclared graduate students are those who meet the Graduate College minimum requirements for admission but have not been admitted to a degree-seeking program. There is a limit to the number of courses taken in this status that may be used to satisfy degree requirements. Admission as an undeclared graduate student can only be recommended by the program if the applicant is not accepted for degree-seeking admission to that major. [effective fall 2024]

**Re-admission** - Previous applicants to the Graduate College who did not enroll within one academic year of admission must submit a new application and pay the required fee because the prior application is no longer valid.

**Re-entry** - Applicants who previously were active students within the Graduate College, have not registered for four or more consecutive fall and spring semesters, and seek readmission to the same degree program should submit a re-entry application through the reinstatement process.

**In-Session** - Current graduate students who seek to pursue additional graduate degrees should complete an in-session status change application. The DOGE or DOCS (or designee) is responsible for approving the admission to the new major.

## Registration

Registration processes are administered through the Office of the Registrar. Policies regarding tuition, fees, and residency should be directed to the Registrar.

All students who attend classes at ISU must register and pay assessed tuition and fees. The ISU Office of the Registrar's website at <http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/students/registration> (<http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/students/registration/>) is the official source of information about registration for all students at ISU. Specific dates for registration are listed:

- on the Registrar's Web page,
- on the University Calendar, and
- in the Iowa State Daily

## Full-Time Status

During the academic year, graduate students not on assistantship must be registered for a minimum of nine credits to be considered full-time students or five credits to be considered half-time students. Students on an assistantship appointment during the academic year are considered full-time.

## CREDIT LIMITS

Registration in credit courses is limited to a maximum of 15 credits per semester (10 credits for summer session) for graduate students, per Board of Regents. See the Graduate College Handbook Ch.2.1.2 (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/chapter.php?id=2>) at for more details.

## Doctoral Post Prelim (Required Registration)

Even when Ph.D. graduate students have completed coursework, they are required to register and pay tuition and fees after successfully passing their preliminary oral examination, whether or not university facilities and equipment are used, or staff is consulted—either in person or in absentia.

After the preliminary oral examination is passed (with either full or conditional pass) and if university facilities, equipment, and staff time are used, the Ph.D. candidate must register for the appropriate number of credits in the major program and pay the appropriate graduate tuition and fees. The Ph.D. candidate may register for GRST 6810 and pay the

Doctoral Required Registration tuition and fees if all other coursework is completed.

The Ph.D. candidate must be aware that registration for GRST 6810 is allowed only after the Ph.D. candidate passes the preliminary oral examination; is required only in the fall and spring semesters, and not during the summer term; is not allowed after the completion of the final oral examination; and does not defer student loans.

If students take the final examination during the interim between terms (including the first day of classes), registration can be for the term either before or after the examination is held.

## Auditing

Audit registration means taking courses without receiving formal credit. Audit provisions are as follows: Instructors must approve ALL audits; students must register for audits by day 10 of the semester; changes to or from an audit must be made in the first 10 days of the semester; students are assessed tuition and fees as though they were taking the course for credit; and the course DOES NOT count in determining full-time student status.

Audited courses do not appear on the student's permanent record unless the "Request for Audit(s) to Appear on Transcript" form is completed and signed by the student, course instructor, and major professor. Copies of this form, which are available from the Graduate College or from the Graduate College's web site at <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/student/forms/> must be filed with the Graduate College.

After the fifth-class day, if a student changes a regular course to an audit, that course will appear on the student's permanent record as a drop. Audits are not acceptable as registration for loan deferments or for meeting visa requirements.

## Grading

Grades are the permanent official record of a student's academic performance. Iowa State uses A through F grading for most courses. S, P, and NP grades are given in some courses. The standard four-point scale is used to calculate a grade point average.

## Grade Point Average (GPA)

All courses taken as a graduate student will be calculated into the graduate GPA, except for Creative Component/Research (5990 and 6990) credits, which are not used in the calculation of the GPA. The GPA is determined by dividing the number of grade points earned by the total number of ISU cumulative hours. The grade given when an incomplete (I) is resolved is figured into the cumulative grade point average, but not into a particular semester's average. Marks of I, S, P, NP, T, and X are not counted in the grade point average; a mark of F (even if taken S/F) is counted in the grade point average. In the case of repeated courses, only the grade achieved the most recent time the course is taken is used in

computing the grade point average. (However, grades in courses that are noted as repeatable courses in the catalog, such as certain repeatable seminars, will all be used in calculating the grade point average.)

### Grading Research and Creative Component Credits

Creative Component/Research credits may be graded as A, B, C, D, I, S, or F. Plus and minus grades are optional. These credits are not calculated in a student's GPA.

### Pass (P)/Not Pass (NP) Course Credit

Pass/Not Pass courses are those that a student, with the approval of the major professor, may take for personal enrichment, but not for satisfying prerequisites or deficiencies in the undergraduate background. P/NP marks may not be used in a POS (except for the Spring 2020 semester), nor do P/NP marks contribute to the student's GPA. Full credit for P/NP courses is used in calculating tuition assessment and credit load limitations. For more information, see the Graduate College Handbook.

### Satisfactory/Fail (S/F) Grading

S/F grading is not the same as P/NP grading. S/F grading is by instructor option; all students in a particular course receive S/F grading. P/NP grading is generally a student option. A P mark is equivalent to at least a C grade whereas an S mark is equivalent to at least a B grade at the graduate level. No special registration procedures are required for S/F grading. An S mark in a course taken S/F is not counted in the grade point average, but an F mark in a course taken S/F is counted in the grade point average and is equivalent to an F in a regularly graded (A-F) course. No more than 20 percent of the total credits (excluding creative component, thesis or dissertation research) in the program of study may be earned on an S/F basis.

S/F grading may be used only for approved courses offered as seminars, symposia, workshops, special topics, and research. Programs must submit requests for S/F grading to the Dean of the Graduate College. The Graduate College Catalog and Curriculum Committee reviews and approves or rejects all S/F courses.

### Grievances about Grades

A graduate student who feels that a course grade has been unjustly assigned, and whose attempts to resolve the matter with the instructor have failed, may appeal through the grievance procedures described in Ch.9.5.1. of the Graduate College Handbook (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/chapter.php?id=9#9.5>).

### Probation

If a graduate student does not maintain a cumulative 3.00 grade point average on all coursework taken, exclusive of research credit, they may be placed on academic probation by the Dean of the Graduate College. Grades earned by graduate students in undergraduate courses are included in the calculation of the grade point average. Academic probation judgments are made on the basis of grades in coursework

only. New, first-term, degree seeking graduate students who fall below a 3.00 GPA at the end of their first semester will be given a one term grace period to bring their grades back to a 3.00 GPA. These students will receive an academic probation warning, but not be placed on academic probation unless their cumulative GPA is below a 3.00 in a subsequent semester.

While on academic probation a student will not be admitted to candidacy for a degree and, if appointed to a graduate assistantship, the student will not receive a graduate tuition scholarship unless approval is given by the student's home department's academic college. If a student is to qualify for a tuition scholarship, they must be removed from probation by the tenth-class day of the term.

To ensure that registration does not take place without a review by the program, the Graduate College places a hold on future registrations by a student on probation. Before the student registers for each term, the program must review the student's record and recommend in writing if the Graduate College should permit further registration. Before graduation is approved, the student must complete all courses listed on the program of study with a minimum grade of C and have achieved a 3.00 GPA or greater.

## English Proficiency - Admission

Applicants whose native language is not English must demonstrate proficiency in English equivalent to a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of at least 550 on the paper-based test, or 79 on the internet-based test as a part of the admissions process. International students may also submit IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scores in lieu of the TOEFL. The ISU Graduate College minimum is 6.5. PTE scores of at least 53 and Duolingo scores of at least 105 are also acceptable for meeting the English requirement for admission, but not for meeting the Graduate College English requirement. Duolingo is approved for admission through Spring 2025.

## English Requirement - graduation

Graduate students whose native language is not English and who did not graduate from a U.S. institution must take an English Placement Test at the beginning of their first semester of enrollment. This test is administered by the Department of English. A student who does not pass this examination is assigned to one or more courses in the English 99 and 101 series. This course work must be completed during the first year of study. (There is a developmental course fee for the English 99 course.). Non-native English speaking ISU graduate students who meet or exceed the TOEFL scores (640 or above on the paper-based test or 105 on the internet-based test) are exempted from taking the English Placement Test. (Self-enrollment in English 99 or 101 courses remains possible).



## Oral english certification test - teaching assistantships

New teaching assistants (TAs) whose native language is not English are evaluated for their ability to communicate effectively in English before their assistantship assignments are made. The Oral English Certification Tests (OECT) are given before the beginning of each semester. The testing dates are announced on the International Teaching Assistants (ITA) program website. Registration for the test is held online through links posted on the ITA program homepage, <https://cce.grad-college.iastate.edu/speaking/english-180-courses> (<https://cce.grad-college.iastate.edu/speaking/english-180-courses/>), two to three weeks before the test is administered. TAs and faculty with questions about OECT testing should contact the Center for Communication Excellence (CCE) in the Graduate College. A prospective teaching assistant who does not pass these tests is required to successfully complete coursework and be retested. English 1800 is a series of communication courses designed to help new teaching assistants. Students focus on pronunciation, listening, question-handling, teaching and lecturing skills, and analyzing the culture of U.S. university life. Because enrollment is restricted, TAs cannot register for the courses online. TAs must contact the CCE immediately after they receive the test scores to obtain permission to enter the course.

## Changes in graduate program or status

Students who have been admitted to a graduate program and to the Graduate College may request to transfer at a later date to another major or degree.

**Prospective graduate students applying for a Fall 2024 admission term and beyond who wish to change their program of study (POS) in their application may do so, under certain conditions, by contacting their graduate program.** Once approved by the program, the Office of Admissions can then make the change in Workday.

Applicants will be allowed to request a change to their Program of Study when the following conditions are met:

1. The original and new Program of Study are housed within the same department.

e.g., An applicant who applied to the Analytical Chemistry, Ph.D. POS changes to the Physical Chemistry, Ph.D. POS. Both of these POSs are housed in the Chemistry department. Similarly, an applicant who applied to the Ph.D. program in Analytical Chemistry may instead be recommended for admission in the M.S. program in Analytical Chemistry instead.

2. The applicant is seeking admission to a POS that is housed in more than one department and they are switching departments. In other words,

the student's departmental home, or academic unit has changed, but their major and degree pursuit has not.

e.g., An applicant is interested in the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Ph.D. program in EEOBA (CALS), but they want to switch to EEOBS (LAS)

3. An applicant seeking admission to the Double Degree program may choose to pursue only one of the two programs that make up the double degree program upon graduate program request.

e.g., A student is applying to the Business Administration, M.B.A. & Architecture, M.Arch. Graduate Double Degree, but they decide to pursue only the Business Administration, M.B.A.

Applicants must submit a new application in the following situations:

1. The original and new Program of Study are housed within different departments.

Most Program of Study changes will be completed through a new application for admission submitted by the applicant or admitted student. The standard application fees and fee-payment options will apply. A new application is required because the new department or interdepartmental program needs the opportunity to review the student's information before deciding whether to accept the student in their desired program of study.

The Office of Admissions will include previously submitted transcripts, exam scores, and other materials from the prior application in the new application, completing any action items the student has already provided at the request of the program. This should be included in the email to request the change.

The student will be prompted in the MyAccount to submit materials required of their new program of study that were not brought over or required by their previous program. Programs can waive any actions items that they require in the Admissions Staff Portal should they choose to.

**After a student has been admitted for Fall 2024 or later, they will need to submit a new application for admission to change their program of study in most cases. In the following situations, students can request to change their programs of study after matriculation by contacting their graduate program for permission to make this change. If approved by the program, the program will then reach out to the Graduate College to make that change:**

1. The student was admitted to a degree program and is recommended by the program to "level-down" to a master's or certificate program. With program approval, the Graduate College will administratively change the student's program of study in this situation.

2. The student is in a POS that is housed in more than one department, and they are switching departments. In other words, the student's departmental home, or academic unit, has changed, but their major and degree pursuit has not. With program approval, the Graduate College will administratively change the student's program of study in this situation.

3. The student is changing their program focus or adding/removing a graduate co-major or minor. With program approval, the Graduate College will administratively change the student's program of study.

**Beginning in the Fall 2024 semester, graduate students will be able to initiate changes to their program foci, co-majors, and minors, and approvals will route to program DOGEs and the Graduate College for review.**

## Curriculum Change from Active Graduate to Active Undergraduate Status

Individuals who are in good standing in the Graduate College and who wish to transfer to an undergraduate curriculum must contact Office of the Registrar.

## Curriculum Change from Inactive Graduate to Active Undergraduate Status

Individuals who were admitted to the Graduate College more than one year ago and who do not have active graduate status but who wish to change their status from inactive graduate to active undergraduate must follow the same procedures required of reentering undergraduate students and must begin the process by filing a completed "Undergraduate Reentry" form with the Office of the Registrar. When considering reinstatement, the undergraduate college may consider the student's overall fitness for continued studies including information about the student's conduct, employment, and education since the student's last enrollment.

## Undergraduate Admission to Concurrent Graduate Degree/Certificate Programs

Several programs provide opportunities for qualified ISU juniors and seniors majoring in those curricula to apply for admission to a master's degree before they complete their bachelor's degree.

The graduate degree will be awarded only at the same time as, or after, the undergraduate degree is conferred. For a complete listing of the concurrent degree programs, consult Ch. 4.3.2 (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/chapter.php?id=4#4.3>) of the Graduate College Handbook.

Interested students must submit an application for admission to the concurrent program for consideration.

Students interested in a research career may apply for graduate research assistantships during their last two years of study. Students should contact the graduate programs about applying to the graduate program early in their undergraduate careers. For more information about seeking admission to concurrent undergraduate/graduate degree programs that are not pre-approved by the Graduate College, or "individualized programs", the application process, and transferring credits, consult Ch. 4.3.2 of the Graduate College Handbook.

## GRADUATE STUDENTS IN CONCURRENT UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Graduate students interested in enrolling in a concurrent undergraduate program should contact the Office of Admissions to obtain admission information (even if the student has been previously admitted as an undergraduate).

- Official enrollment and fee payment will be as a graduate student.
- The graduate credential will be awarded at the same time or after the undergraduate degree is conferred.
- Students may be appointed to graduate research assistantships.
- With approval of a student's Program of Study (POS) Committee, up to 6 ISU credits taken while in concurrent status may be applied to a bachelor's degree and a graduate credential that requires up to 41 credits. For master's degree programs that require at least 42 credits, students may instead, with POS approval, count up to 12 such ISU credits.
- For students pursuing a concurrent bachelor's degree and graduate certificate, with POS committee approval, up to 3 or 6 credits may be double counted when the certificate requires 15 or 18 credits or more, respectively. No double counting is permitted for certificates that require fewer than 15 credits.
- Credits transferred from the graduate permanent record to the undergraduate permanent record are no longer available for use on a graduate program of study.
- A student in a bachelor's and master's concurrent degree program cannot be on a doctoral track during the concurrent program.

## Veterinary Medicine Students in Concurrent Graduate Degree/Certificate Programs

Students may be concurrently enrolled in the professional curriculum leading to the D.V.M. degree and in a graduate program leading to the M.S. or Ph.D. degree after completion of 90 undergraduate semester credits. The graduate program may be in the College of Veterinary Medicine or in another college.

Interested students must submit an application for admission to the concurrent program for consideration.

## Concurrent Master's Degrees

Students may complete two-degree programs that lead to two concurrently awarded master's degrees by following these requirements:

- Complete and submit an application for admission for both master's programs.
- File separate Academic Plans and Committees for each degree,
- File separate applications for graduation for each degree,
- Complete separate projects or theses for each degree, if applicable,
- File separate "Final Oral Exam Requests" for each degree, if applicable, and
- Pass separate final oral examinations, if applicable.

Two awarded master's degrees require at least 22 hours of non-overlapping graduate credit in each major. If the two degrees are thesis or non-thesis degrees, they require two terminal projects (theses or creative components, respectively). Coursework-only degrees do not require a final project. These two degrees do not have to be awarded during the same term, since requirements for each are completed separately.

## Master's Degrees

General requirements for all master's degrees are as follows:

### General Requirements

The Graduate College Handbook outlines the general requirements for completion of a graduate degree at ISU. Faculty in a major field have the responsibility for establishing educational objectives for their graduate program, including specific course requirements and research requirements appropriate to the master's programs in the major. These requirements may place additional responsibilities on the student, the major professor, or the student's program of study (POS) committee beyond those listed in the Graduate College Handbook as deemed appropriate to the goals of the major program.

Faculty and graduate students are active participants in the academic programs of Iowa State University. As active participants, they have a collective impact on the success of those programs and of the university in fulfilling its mission. Each graduate program is encouraged to implement a mechanism for responding to feedback from graduate students as a valuable resource for continuing improvement.

## Appointment of the Student's Program of Study (POS) Committee

New graduate students at ISU may be assigned a temporary academic advisor by the major program in the first semester of the student's residence. This faculty member guides the student in selection of a

field of study and in development of a graduate program of study until the major professor and POS committee are selected. After the POS committee has been selected, it guides and evaluates the student during the remainder of graduate study.

A thesis master's POS committee consists of at least three members of the graduate faculty. It must include two members, including the major professor, from the major or program. The committee must include member(s) from different fields of emphasis so as to ensure diversity of perspectives. A term member of the graduate faculty may participate in the direction of a student's master's research as a co-major professor if a member of the graduate faculty serves as a co-major professor and jointly accepts responsibility for the direction of a program of study. A non-thesis master's degree needs a minimum of one committee member. Programs may establish requirements for more than one member. For more information on duties and makeup of the committee as well as changes to the committee makeup, see Ch.6 (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/chapter.php?id=6>) of the Graduate College Handbook.

**Academic Plan.** The student and major professor develop the academic plan with the consultation and approval of the POS committee. This agreement between the student and the Graduate College should be submitted as early as possible for approval. It is recommended that the committee be formed, and the committee and academic plan be submitted as early as the second semester of graduate study. In no case can the committee and academic plan be formed later than the term before the final oral examination for master's students.

**Residency.** There is no on-campus residency requirement for the master's degree.

**Credits.** Unless otherwise noted, at least 30 credits of acceptable graduate work must be completed in all master's programs. At least 22 graduate credits must be earned from Iowa State University.

**Transfer Credits.** At the discretion of the POS committee, and with the approval of the program and the Graduate College, graduate credits earned as a graduate student at another institution may be transferred if the grade was B or better. Such courses must have been acceptable toward an advanced degree at that institution and must have been taught by individuals having graduate faculty status at the institution. If a student wishes to transfer credits from graduate courses taken at or through another university as an undergraduate student, it is the student's responsibility to provide verification by letter from that institution that these graduate courses were not used to satisfy undergraduate requirements for a degree.

A transcript must accompany the academic plan in order to transfer credits. The POS committee may ask for other materials, such as a course outline or accreditation of the institution, to evaluate the course.



Transfer courses not completed when the academic plan is submitted must be completed the term before the student graduates. A transcript must then be submitted to the Graduate College for review and final approval.

Research credits earned at another institution are generally not transferred. In rare circumstances, the transfer of S or P marks may be accepted for research credits only. It is the responsibility of the POS committee to obtain a letter from the responsible faculty member at the other institution stating that research credits recommended for transfer with S or P marks are considered to be worthy of a B grade or better.

**Major.** A major is an approved area of study leading to a graduate degree. The exact number of credits in a major is not prescribed.

**Minor.** Minors are available in many disciplinary and interdepartmental graduate programs. Some programs offer only a minor. In other programs, students may declare either a major or a minor. Programs offering a major are not required to offer a minor. A student may not major and minor in the same discipline for a single degree or across multiple degrees. To illustrate, a student earning a Ph.D. in computer science may not minor in statistics for their Ph.D. program if they are also pursuing an M.S. in statistics.

The minor subject area must be tested at the final oral examination and cannot be placed on the transcript after graduation unless it was approved as part of the student's academic record. A minor cannot be added to a degree that has already been received.

## Specific Master's Degrees

The number of credits in a major for a master's degree will vary according to various degrees. General credit requirements for all master's degrees include: a minimum of 30 graduate credits is required for all master's programs at ISU; at least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU; any transfer of graduate credits from another institution must be recommended in the academic plan by the POS committee; and graduate credit earned as a graduate student will be approved for transfer only if a B grade or better was earned. A transcript must accompany the academic plan. A complete listing of specific master's degrees can be found in Appendix D (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/appendix.php?id=D>) of the Graduate College Handbook. A complete listing of all master's degrees can also be found online, <http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/academics/gradprograms/index.php>. (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/academics/gradprograms/>)

## Master's Double Degree Programs

A double degree requires fulfillment of the requirements for two graduate majors for which two differently named master's degrees and two diplomas are granted at the same time. For double degrees with a thesis

or creative component, the final project (thesis or creative component) must integrate subject area from both majors.

The requirements for all students who are interested in pursuing double degree programs are listed below:

- The interested student must apply to an approved double degree program through the Office of Admissions or submit an individualized proposal for a double degree program to the Graduate College.
- Only **one** POS committee and academic plan will be submitted for the two degrees.
- For double degrees involving a creative component, there must be at least two graduate faculty members on the double degree POS committee. For double degrees involving a thesis, there must be at least three graduate faculty members on the double degree POS committee. Such POS committees for double degrees must include co-major professors from each of the majors.
- Although specific degree programs may require more, the program of study must include at least 48 hours of non-overlapping graduate credit (24 for each major) in the two degrees, and no less than 75% of the sum of the credits from each separate degree.
- If one or both of the degrees has a thesis or creative component, one final oral examination must be held covering the combined thesis or creative component. One thesis is submitted to satisfy the requirements of both degrees.
- If a thesis or non-thesis is combined with a coursework only degree, the thesis/non-thesis project should include information for both degrees.

## Drake University Law School/Iowa State University Combined Degree

To provide training in the complementary fields of law and political science with a minimum amount of academic duplication, special arrangements for a combined degree program have been approved with the Drake University Law School. ISU and Drake offer a combined J.D./M.A. in political science. Drake Law School students are permitted to transfer the equivalent of nine semester credits of specified law courses to ISU for credit for the political science program. Because of the difference in grading systems, the Law School grades are transferred as passes, provided the student has achieved a grade of C or better in those courses at Drake. Applicants for the combined program must meet the regular entrance requirements of, and be admitted to, both the Drake Law School and the ISU Graduate College.

## Doctor of Philosophy General Requirements

The degree Doctor of Philosophy is strongly research oriented. The primary requirements for the degree are:

- High attainment and proficiency of the candidate in their chosen field.
- Development of a dissertation which is a significant contribution to knowledge and which shows independent and creative thought and work.
- Successful passing of detailed examinations over the field of the candidate's major work with a satisfactory showing of preparation in related courses. General requirements for Ph.D. candidates follow.

The Graduate College Handbook outlines the general requirements for completion of a Ph.D. degree at ISU. Faculty in a major field have the responsibility for establishing educational objectives for their graduate program, including specific course requirements and research requirements appropriate to the Ph.D. programs in the major. These requirements may place additional responsibilities on the student, the major professor, or the student's program of study (POS) committee beyond those listed in the Graduate College Handbook as deemed appropriate to the goals for the major program.

Faculty and graduate students are active participants in the academic programs of Iowa State University. As active participants, they have a collective impact on the success of those programs and of the university in fulfilling its mission. Each graduate program is encouraged to implement a mechanism for responding to feedback from graduate students as a valuable resource for continuing improvement.

### **Appointment of the Student's Program of Study (POS) Committee**

The POS committee for a doctoral program consists of at least five members of the graduate faculty. It must include at least three members, including the major professor, from within the student's major or program. The committee must include member(s) from different fields of emphasis so as to ensure diversity of perspectives. An associate member of the graduate faculty may participate in the direction of a student's dissertation research as a co-major professor if a member of the graduate faculty serves as a co-major professor and jointly accepts responsibility for direction of the dissertation.

### **Changes to POS committee**

Recommendations for changes in the POS committee must have the approval of the student, the Graduate College, major professor, DOGE, and all committee members involved in the change. These changes must be approved before the preliminary or final oral examination is held.

### **Academic Plan**

The student and the major professor develop the academic plan with the consultation and approval of the POS committee. Early selection of a major professor, appointment of a POS committee, and development of an academic plan are very important. It is recommended that the committee be formed as early as the second semester of graduate study.

In no case can the committee be formed later than the term before the preliminary oral examination.

### **Credits**

A minimum of 72 graduate credits must be earned for a Ph.D. degree. At least 36 graduate credits, including all dissertation research credits, must be earned at Iowa State University. There is no specific university requirement regarding the number of credits to be taken inside or outside the major/program.

### **Transfer Credits**

At the discretion of the POS committee, and with the approval of the program and the Graduate College, graduate credits earned as a graduate student at another institution may be transferred if the grade was B or better. Such courses must have been acceptable toward an advanced degree at that institution and must have been taught by individuals having graduate faculty status at that institution. If a student wishes to transfer credits from graduate courses taken at or through another university as an undergraduate student, it is that student's responsibility to provide verification by letter from that institution that those graduate courses were not taken to satisfy undergraduate requirements for a degree.

A transcript must accompany the academic plan in order to transfer credits. The POS committee may ask for other materials, such as a course outline or accreditation of the institution, to evaluate the course. Transfer courses not completed when the academic plan is submitted must be completed before the term in which the student graduates. A transcript must then be submitted to the Graduate College for review and final approval.

Research credits earned at another institution are generally not transferred. In rare circumstances, the transfer of S or P marks may be accepted for research credits only. It is the responsibility of the POS committee to obtain a letter from the responsible faculty member at the other institution stating that research credits recommended for transfer with S or P marks are considered to be worthy of a B grade or better.

### **Major**

A major is the area of study or academic concentration in which a student chooses to qualify for the award of a graduate degree. Majors are listed on the Graduate College website here: <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/academics/programs/apprograms.php>. Opportunities also exist for majoring in more than one area of study (co-major programs).

### **Minor**

Students may request a minor in any program approved to grant a graduate degree so long as the graduate program offers a minor and in programs approved to offer only a minor. Requirements for declared minors are determined by the minor program and the faculty member

representing the minor field on the student's POS committee. The minor subject area must be tested at the preliminary oral and final oral examinations. A minor cannot be added to a program of study after the preliminary oral examination has been taken, nor can a minor be placed on the transcript after graduation, unless it was approved on the graduate student's academic record. A student may not minor and major in the same field. A minor cannot be added to a degree that has already been awarded.

## Time Limits

The Graduate College's time-to-degree limit for all graduate students, both master's and Ph.D., is seven years. **Graduate programs may establish more restrictive time-to-degree limits.** For example, at the program's discretion, a student beginning a Ph.D. degree program at ISU with a master's degree could be expected to complete the program within three or four or five years, while a student beginning a Ph.D. degree program without the master's degree could be expected to complete the program within five or six or seven years. This is an option that would be enforced at the department level. Requests to extend the seven-year time limit will be considered in situations involving medical or other extenuating circumstances. Cases in which the student leaves ISU during their graduate career and later returns are dealt with individually by the POS committee and the Graduate College.

The inclusion in the academic plan of coursework that is beyond the time limits ("expired" courses) must be justified in the Expired Course Petition. This petition will be required for students with expired courses are part of the academic plan submission. m.

## Preliminary Examination

The Graduate College requires a preliminary oral examination of Ph.D. degree students; most programs add a written portion to the preliminary oral examination. The Ph.D. degree preliminary oral examination rigorously tests a graduate student's knowledge of major, minor, and supporting subject areas as well as the student's ability to analyze, organize, and present subject matter relevant to the field. A "Request for Preliminary Examination" must be submitted to the Graduate College at least two weeks before the proposed date of the examination.

The following conditions should be met before the "Request for Preliminary Examination" is submitted to the Graduate College:

- Admitted to full admission status in a Ph.D. granting program,
- Committee and Academic Plan approved no later than 3 months before the preliminary oral examination,
- English requirement met,
- Not on probation,
- Time limit not exceeded (see Chapter 4 (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/chapter.php?id=4&search=preliminary%20oral%20exam&section=4.4#ttd>)),

- Qualifying examination (if required by program) passed,
- Registration for a minimum of one credit, or for Examination Only (GRST 6810B) if no course work is needed, during the term in which the preliminary oral examination is taken.

A preliminary oral examination will not be scheduled for a student on academic probation. Upon successful completion of the preliminary oral examination, the student is admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. If the graduate student fails all or part of the preliminary oral examination, the committee provides two options: gives a not pass and allows the student to retake the examination after six months or gives a not pass and does not allow the student to retake the examination. Six months must elapse between the first attempt and the next. The entire POS committee must be convened for the preliminary oral examination. The preliminary oral examination must be passed at least six months prior to the final oral examination. An exception to the rule is allowed if a request signed by the major professor(s) and the program's DOGE is approved by the Dean of the Graduate College.

## Dissertation

A doctoral dissertation must demonstrate conclusively the ability of the author to conceive, design, conduct, and interpret independent, original, and creative research. It must attempt to describe significant original contributions to the advancement of knowledge and must demonstrate the ability to organize, analyze, and interpret data. In most instances, a dissertation includes a statement of purpose, a review of pertinent literature, a presentation of methodology and results obtained, and a critical interpretation of conclusions in relation to the findings of others. When appropriate, it involves a defense of objectives, design, and analytical procedures. Dissertation research should be worthy of publication and should appear in appropriate professional journals or in book form.

Responsibility for writing and editing of the dissertation rests with the student, under the supervision of the major professor, and not with the Graduate College. The Graduate College does not permit joint authorship of dissertations. It is the responsibility of the major professor to supervise the preparation of preliminary and final drafts of the dissertation, so as to assure the highest level of quality when the student presents the dissertation to the committee for final approval. Copies of the dissertation must be submitted to the POS committee at least two weeks before the final oral examination.

All theses and dissertations will be submitted electronically after the final oral examination is held. Please refer to the Graduate College Dissertation/Thesis website (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/current/thesis/>) for requirements, fees, and other pertinent information.

Shortly after the submission of the "Application for Graduation," a one-time, nonrefundable thesis fee is billed by the university accounting system. In addition, a graduation fee will be assessed by the Registrar's Office. This fee is nonrefundable if a student does not cancel their graduation by the Graduate College's cancellation deadline.

## Final Oral Examination

The Ph.D. final oral examination, conducted after the dissertation is finished, is oral and often limited to a defense of the dissertation. To receive the degree at the end of a given semester, the student must hold the final oral examination before the final oral examination deadline for the semester.

The candidate is responsible for initiating the "Request for Final Oral Examination," which must be submitted to the Graduate College at least two weeks before the examination. The entire POS committee must be convened for the final oral examination. For more information on the final oral examination, see Ch. 7.1.2 of the Graduate College Handbook.

## Graduate Student Approval for Graduation

The Graduate College requires final approval from the student's program, which includes approval from the the major professor(s) and the DOGE(s), including co-major DOGE if applicable, after the student has passed the final oral examination and completed any necessary changes on the dissertation/thesis requested by the committee. A paper dissertation/thesis signature page is not required.

- A student must submit their final dissertation/thesis to ProQuest. A creative component student must submit their creative component to the ISU Digital Repository.
- Once the Graduate College receives approval from the program that the student is ready to graduate, a student's dissertation, thesis, or creative component will be reviewed for final approval.
- Final clearance of academic requirements will be made when current term grades have been submitted and evaluated by the Graduate College.

All incompletes from previous terms must be completed by the deadline for completion. An incomplete, non-report, or failing grade that a student receives for the term of graduation will result in removal from that term's graduation list. The student will need to complete a new Application for Graduation for the new term of graduation.

If a conditional pass was recommended at the final oral examination, the major professor and the committee members, if so specified, must notify the Graduate College that the conditions have been met before a degree will be conferred.