

**M.S.E. in Higher Education
Administration**
Program Handbook

Department of
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
University of Kansas

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Program Overview

KU's master's degree in higher education administration aims to equip education professionals for successful careers in administrative roles at colleges and universities. This graduate program enables students to deepen and apply their understanding of higher education institutions. Additionally, it provides students the chance to learn from expert scholars and practitioners, as well as fellow classmates, who bring diverse leadership experiences to the program.

Enrollment Options:

Full-time enrollment

Full-time students enroll in a cohort-based program with two years of hands-on graduate assistantship experience. Graduate assistantships include full tuition sponsorship of up to 9 credits each fall/spring during the academic year.

Part-time enrollment

Current college or university professionals who work full-time in higher education environments can enroll any semester with rolling admission.

Career Outcomes in Higher Education Administration

After completing their master's program, students who aspire to careers in educational leadership are likely to accept positions in areas similar to the following:

- Academic advising
- Residence life and housing
- Student conduct
- Financial aid
- Admissions and enrollment management
- Health and wellness
- Student involvement, activities, and leadership
- Multicultural and diversity services
- Orientation and transition programs
- Fraternity and sorority life

Many graduate students who complete a master's degree in higher education administration decide to pursue doctoral programs in areas such as student affairs, educational policy, business management, and more.

Mission of the School of Education and Human Sciences:

Within the University, the School of Education and Human Sciences serves Kansas, the nation, and the world by:

- preparing individuals to be leaders and practitioners in education and related human science fields
- expanding and deepening understanding of education as a fundamental human endeavor
- helping society define and respond to its educational responsibilities and challenges

To accomplish this mission, the School of Education and Human Sciences

- offers an extensive curriculum leading to academic degrees and professional licensure
- requires faculty and students to engage in scholarship
- provides a wide range of professional services to schools, other institutions, and individuals

Department Directory

Program Faculty

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- **Dallas Doane**, Ed.D., Associate Professor of Practice & MSE Director
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- **Lisa Wolf-Wendel**, Roy A. Roberts University Distinguished Professor & Sr. Associate Dean, EdD Program Coordinator
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Program Staff/School Support

- **Erin Tarnowicz**, Administrative Assistant, MSE Programs in ELPS
 - JRP 421, etarnowicz@ku.edu
 - Registration; Degree Progress Reports; Enrollment troubleshooting
- **Tracy Rockers**, Graduate Student Services Manager, SOEHS
 - JRP 214D, tracy.rockers@ku.edu
 - Graduation/Commencement; School level admissions information

Program Admissions

Admission to the M.S.E. in Higher Education Administration will require successful submission of the following application materials:

- Resume
- Personal Statement
- Official Transcripts of All Institutions Attended
 - Degree or non-degree seeking applicants must have a bachelor's degree (as evidenced by an official transcript from the institution the degree was obtained).
- Completed Application
- Application Fee of \$65 for domestic students and \$100 for international students

For international applicants, the following additional requirements apply:

- [Proof of English proficiency](#)
- English translation of transcripts
- In most cases, KU can evaluate international transcripts internally. In cases where Graduate Admissions cannot, the applicant will be asked to produce an external evaluation through a service such as WES.

The deadline for the full-time program is generally early January. The deadline for the part-time program is early July for fall, early December for spring and early May for summer admission. For inquiries about admissions, please contact department administrative assistant, Erin Tarnowicz.

Enrollment

Course Enrollment Procedures

The University course enrollment process is completed entirely online. The schedule of courses for upcoming semesters is available at <https://classes.ku.edu/>. All active students are notified by the University as the enrollment period approaches. Subsequent changes in enrollment are handled online through add/drop procedures, or with the use of paper forms after the first few weeks of the semester. In addition to speaking to their advisor prior to making a change in enrollment, students should also review the [Considerations and Impacts of a Drop or Withdrawal](#). Enrollment may impact financial aid eligibility and enrollment in locations or courses outside the School of Education and Human Sciences may have a different tuition and fee cost.

Students should be mindful of enrollment deadlines listed on the [Academic Calendar](#). Failure to enroll in at least one course before 12:00am on the first instructional day of the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters for full-term courses is considered enrolling late and students will be charged a [late enrollment fee](#). As such, it is important for students to be aware of issues such as enrollment holds that might inhibit or postpone enrollment.

Leaves of Absence

If a student does not wish to or cannot enroll in courses for a given semester or year, the student must request a leave of absence using the [Leave of Absence Request form](#) found on the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs website. A leave of absence may be granted when circumstances temporarily prevent a student from continuing graduate study (e.g., cases of illness, emergency, financial hardship, military service), due to family responsibilities, or when a student wishes to

pursue full-time activities related to long-range professional goals. All requests for a leave of absence should be discussed with the advisor and program coordinator.

Time Limits

The University sets time limits on enrollment for graduate students; students are expected to complete all MSE requirements within 7 years from initial enrollment. Students who require additional time to complete the degree must submit a petition for program time extension using the School of Education and Human Sciences [Petition for Time Extension form](#).

Good Academic Standing

Students must maintain a cumulative 3.0 (B) GPA in order to be in good academic standing. Students earning less than a 3.0 cumulative GPA will be placed on academic probation and will normally be given a semester to improve their GPA to a 3.0. Two continued semesters with a GPA below 3.0 may result in dismissal, although in cases where improvement is noted, the student may be given an additional semester to raise their GPA.

Grading

The program uses the traditional SOEHS grading scheme: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, etc. We expect students to earn B's and A's in order to remain in good academic standing. Although grades of C+ and C will count for graduate credit, a course grade of C- will not. Any student who earns a C- in a course must repeat the course.

Incomplete Grades

Faculty *may* assign an 'I' (Incomplete) grade if you are unable to complete some portion of the assigned coursework because of a significant unanticipated illness, accident, work-related responsibility, family hardship, or verified learning disability. An Incomplete grade is not intended to give you additional time to complete course assignments or extra credit unless there is indication that the specified circumstances prevented you from completing course assignments on time.

Per SOEHS policy, all 'I' and 'WG' grades must be resolved prior to enrolling in the ELPS 886 Theory to Practice (Capstone) course, where the culminating portfolio is completed.

Annual Student Progress Review (MSE)

The MSE program requires all students to participate in an Annual Student Progress Review once per year. The review is conducted collaboratively with the GA supervisor and the MSE Director, and is centered on an assessment aligned with the NASPA/ACPA Professional Competencies. The assessment is formative in nature and designed for continuous improvement and to support the students' growth. The review meeting typically includes a discussion on the student's work performance, academic progress, and future professional development.

Grievance Procedures

The Educational Leadership & Policies Studies Department follows the [School of Education and Human Sciences Grievance Procedure](#).

Note: This procedure does not apply to graduate students in matters related to their employment as teaching assistants. A separate grievance procedure outlined in the [Memorandum of Agreement between the University of Kansas and the Board of Regents and the Kansas Association of Public Employees](#) is available for that purpose.

Petitions

The MSE program recognizes that, in limited circumstances, students may wish to request exceptions to program requirements or policies. Students may submit petitions to request consideration of such exceptions.

Students seeking to submit a petition should first consult with the MSE Program Director to discuss the request and determine the appropriate petition process. This ensures that the student receives guidance on required documentation, applicable policies, and any additional steps needed for petitions that extend beyond the ELPS department. Some petitions relate to program-level requirements and may be reviewed and decided internally within the department. Other petitions involve School or University policies and therefore require additional review or approval by offices outside the department. When applicable, the program will advise students on the appropriate process and required approvals.

For petitions requiring School or University review, students will be directed to the appropriate office or provided with the most current form and submission instructions. To ensure accuracy and compliance with current policies, School and University forms are not reproduced in this handbook.

Curriculum

The [University Academic Catalog](#) is the definitive source for requirements and regulations for every academic program; students are subject to the requirements in the catalog of the year they are admitted. The degree requirements listed in the Catalog have been approved by established University Governance procedures. Degree and program requirements and course descriptions are subject to change. This handbook serves as a supplement to provide further details on the requirements, policies, and procedures described in the Catalog.

Students should consult the university catalog and program advisor for the most up-to-date information regarding the required sequence of courses. An example sequence of courses is provided below.

Full-time Student Example Long-range Plan

Table 1 Full-time Student Example Long-range Plan

	Prefix/Number	Course Title
Fall 1	ELPS 781	Student Services in Higher Education (fall only)
	ELPS 780	Introduction to Higher Education (fall only)
	ELPS 883	The College Student [Student Development] (fall only)
Spring 1	ELPS 782	Higher Education and Society (spring only)
	ELPS 884	College Student Access/Persistence/Success (spring only)
	EPSY 882	Higher Education in the US [History] (spring only)
Fall 2	ELPS 885	Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education (fall only)
	ELPS 786	Intro to College Leadership (fall only)
	ELPS 879	Higher Education Law & Policy (fall only)
Spring 2	ELPS 886	Theory to Practice (spring only) ¹
	EPSY 715	Research in Education (Online)
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¹ Requires successful completion of a minimum of 24 credit hours toward the MSE in higher education

Part-time Student Example Long-range Plan

Table 2 Part-time Student Example Long-range Plan

	Prefix	Course Title
Fall 1	ELPS 780	Introduction to Higher Education (fall only)
	ELPS 781	Student Services in Higher Education (fall only)
Spring 1	ELPS 884	College Student Access/Persistence/Success (spring only)
	ELPS 882	Higher Education in the US [History] (spring only)
Fall 2	ELPS 883	The College Student (fall only)
	ELPS 885	Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education (fall only)
Spring 2	EPSY 715	Research in Education (online only)
	ELPS 782	Higher Education and Society (spring only)
Fall 3	ELPS 786	Intro to College Leadership (fall only)
	ELPS 879	Higher Education Law & Policy (fall only)
Spring 3	ELPS 886	Theory to Practice (spring only) ¹
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¹ Requires successful completion of a minimum of 24 credit hours toward the MSE in higher education

Professional Development Activities

Table 3 Professional Development Activities

	Suggested Activities
Fall 1	Revise resume in preparation for summer internship search
	Participate in HESA professional development activities
	Network with campus alumni through HEA alumni events
Spring 1	Utilize SOEHS Travel Fund to attend a Professional Conference such as ACPA, NASPA, or another group (eligible once per calendar year)
	Collaborate with peers and professionals from different functional areas within higher education to gain a well-rounded perspective.
	Maintain a professional presence on LinkedIn and other relevant social media platforms
Fall 2	Meet with University Career Services for mock interviews to refine your interview skills and receive feedback
	Revise resume to prepare for spring job search
	Develop a professional portfolio showcasing your work, achievements, and skills
Spring 2	Utilize SOEHS Travel Fund to attend a Professional Conference such as ACPA, NASPA, or another group (eligible once per calendar year)
	Create a professional development plan integrating your professional and personal life after graduate school
	Complete your capstone integrating your theory into practice

Statement on ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies

The MSE in Higher Education Administration learning outcomes and coursework are guided by the professional competencies for student affairs educators. Students should familiarize themselves with these competencies and continually reference them during coursework.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of graduating with the MSE in Higher Education Administration:

Outcome 1: Foundations of the Field

- Students will engage with higher education as a discipline by demonstrating an awareness of the historical contexts that have shaped higher education, as well as its contemporary organizational structures and functions.

Outcome 2: Law, Policy, & Leadership

- Students will evaluate the legal, policy, ethical, and social issues that impact institutional administration and leadership by integrating conceptual frameworks and practical considerations.

Outcome 3: College Student Learning, Development & Success

- Students will articulate college students' varied pathways to and through higher education across different contemporary institutional contexts.

Outcome 4: Scholarly Application & Assessment

- Students will apply scholarly knowledge and design assessment strategies to inform practical decision-making.

Outcome 5: Reflexive Practice

- Students will engage in reflective leadership to inform their practice in higher education, applying theory and data to address diverse institutional settings and student needs.

Curricular Map

Table 4 Curricular Map

		Program Student Learning Outcomes				
Course	Title	1	2	3	4	5
ELPS 780	Introduction to Higher Ed.	B	B			B
ELPS 781	Student Services in Higher Ed.	B	B	B		B
ELPS 782	Higher Education and Society		B	B		B
ELPS 786	Intro. to College Leadership		B			I
ELPS 882	Higher Education in the US	B				B
ELPS 883	The College Student			B		B
ELPS 884	Access, Persistence, & Success			B		B
ELPS 885	Assessment & Program Eval.				B	I
ELPS 886	Theory into Practice (Capstone)	I, A*	I, A*	I, A*	I, A*	I, A*
ELPS 879	Higher Education Law & Policy		B			I
EPSY 715	Understanding Research in Ed.				B	B

* Advanced outcome measured through culminating portfolio assignment

Advising & Mentoring

Program Director

The MSE program director meets with prospective students, oversees admissions, curriculum planning and scheduling, enrollment, communication with students regarding program milestones, and engages in other general program oversight. The program director often advises students into their first semester courses.

Advisor Assignment

During MSE orientation, students are assigned a faculty member as an advisor. Initial advisor assignments are made by the program faculty based on student background and interests and considering each faculty member's current number of active advisees. The program director will be the faculty advisor for all part-time students.

Changing Advisors

Changes to the student's advisor assignment may be made by consulting with the current advisor, the new advisor, and the program director. Advisor changes may be made at any time during the program and must be approved by the new advisor and the program director.

Advisor–Advisee Expectations

Advisor-advisee roles are somewhat different in a structured, cohort-based program than they are in a more traditional graduate program in which students must make course choices each semester. We recommend that advisors meet with each of their advisees at least once per semester, although more frequent communication is recommended.

Students are expected to:

1. Know and understand the requirements necessary for their graduation.
2. Meet with their faculty advisor regularly.
3. Learn how to use online registration tools.
4. Be honest and forthcoming about their academic progress and performance in their coursework.
5. Monitor and keep informed about their progress toward the completion of graduation requirements.

Faculty Advisors are expected to:

1. Know and understand the requirements for students in the ELPS department and/or School.
2. Encourage students to engage fully in the coursework, internships, and graduate assistantship/work.
3. Assist students in thinking about and planning for their careers after graduation.
4. Disseminate information to students regarding internships, scholarships, organizations, and other opportunities for intellectual growth.

Regular and Timely Feedback

The M.S.E. in Higher Education Administration portfolio is completed during a student's final semester of enrollment. Although the portfolio is often a course-based culminating experience and is not subject to university policies governing culminating efforts that require a faculty advisor, the program is committed to ensuring that students receive regular and timely feedback throughout the portfolio development process.

Students will receive clear expectations, evaluation criteria, and submission deadlines at the beginning of the semester. The capstone advisor will provide structured opportunities for feedback on portfolio components and progress throughout the semester, including feedback on major submissions within approximately two weeks of receipt whenever possible. Students are expected to actively engage with instructor feedback, meet established deadlines, and communicate any concerns that may affect their progress. Through ongoing feedback, progress monitoring, and opportunities for revision, the portfolio process is designed to support student learning and successful demonstration of the program's learning outcomes.

Graduate Student Responsibilities

All graduate students are responsible for informing themselves of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' requirements and policies. Students should visit the [Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs website](#) for the most up-to-date requirements and policies. Graduate students are also expected to be familiar with the regulations and requirements of their Graduate Divisions and of their home academic departments and programs. Members of the Graduate Faculty and staff members in the Graduate Divisions are expected to be ready to answer questions and offer counsel.

It is each graduate student's responsibility to know and observe all regulations and procedures relating to the graduate degree program the student is pursuing. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception be granted because students plead ignorance of, or contend that they were not informed of, requirements, regulations, procedures, and deadlines. Responsibility for following all policies and meeting all requirements and deadlines rests with the student.

Academic Misconduct

The Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies expects students and faculty members to demonstrate academic integrity in conducting their coursework and research. Academic misconduct will not be tolerated in our program. An instructor may, with due notice to the student, treat as unsatisfactory any student work which is a product of academic misconduct. Cases of academic misconduct may result in any or all of the following penalties: reduction of grade, admonition, warning, censure, transcript citation, suspension, or expulsion. The following information about Academic Misconduct is discussed in Article II, Section 6 of the rules and regulations of the University Senate. "Academic misconduct by a student shall include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work; unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures; falsification of research results; plagiarizing of another's work; violation of regulations or ethical codes for the treatment of human and animal subjects; or otherwise acting dishonestly in research."

AI Expectations for Students

The following are general guidelines applicable to MSE students. Students should note that faculty members will vary in their approach. Students are encouraged to review individual faculty members' expectations. The general guidelines are:

1. Ask questions about course policies and make sure expectations around the use of generative AI in assignments and courses are clear.
2. Avoid use of generative AI in ways that conflict with course and University policies.
3. Disclose use of generative AI and in what ways AI was utilized.

Additional Recommendations

- Students should learn to use generative AI responsibly and ethically. This includes understanding how large language models are created; how they generate output of text, code, and media; why the output must be scrutinized and its use evaluated through an ethical lens; how generative AI is being used in various disciplines; why there are times we should not use generative AI; and how generative AI should be cited when it is used.
- Students should be free to ask AI-related questions. They should be encouraged to ask instructors about AI-related policies, procedures, and use in their classes, and they should not be treated with suspicion when they do.
- Students must join in trust-building efforts with faculty.

Culminating Experience

A culminating experience is required for all master's programs in the School of Education and Human Sciences. This requirement may take the form of a comprehensive exam, thesis, project, or capstone course, and is intended to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate proficiency of program learning outcomes and readiness for professional practice or further academic study. The M.S.E. in Higher Education Administration fulfills this requirement through an applied portfolio project completed in ELPS 886 Theory to Practice during the final spring semester of enrollment.

Within the portfolio assignment, students are expected to demonstrate proficiency across the program's core learning outcomes: foundations of the field, law and policy, student learning and development, assessment and scholarly application, and reflexive practice.

The capstone portfolio will be evaluated by a committee of three faculty members from the Higher Education Administration program, using a standardized rubric aligned with the program's learning outcomes. Evaluation will focus on the quality of artifacts, integration of theory and practice, clarity of reflection, and overall demonstration of professional readiness. Students must satisfactorily complete all aspects of the portfolio in order to successfully complete the capstone requirement and graduate.

Students who do not meet the minimum performance standard may be required to revise and resubmit portions of the portfolio in accordance with faculty feedback. Additional guidelines, timelines, and expectations for the capstone experience are provided within the ELPS 886 course materials.

As the culmination of the M.S.E. degree, enrollment in ELPS 886 requires the following:

- Completion of all M.S.E. core coursework
- Good academic standing; or in other words, a 3.00 cumulative GPA or higher
- No grade of (I) incomplete or (WG) withheld grade

Graduate Assistantships

In the Higher Education Administration program, all full-time students are required to hold a graduate assistantship throughout their time in the program. This requirement bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, fostering a deeper understanding of higher education administration. This experiential learning opportunity not only enhances their practical skills but also allows them to apply the theories and concepts learned in the classroom to real-world challenges.

Higher Education Graduate Assistant (HEGA) Days

In early spring, admitted full-time students will be invited to interview for open graduate assistantship positions during HEGA Days. Students will be made aware of open positions in January, including position descriptions, pay and benefits, and an opportunity to rank their interest in certain functional areas. HEGA happens in person on campus. When a student cannot attend HEGA in person, a virtual option will be made available.

Admission to the MSE in Higher Education Administration program does not guarantee a graduate assistantship.

HEGA Benefits

A higher education graduate assistantship affords students with the following benefits:

- 9 credits of sponsored tuition during the fall and spring semesters in which they hold a GA position. The sponsored tuition totals 18 credits per academic year.
 - Summer is not included. The MSE is designed to be completed during the fall and spring semesters.
- In addition to the tuition sponsorship, a salary is paid to the student for the hours worked.
- Optional Group Health Insurance
 - .50 FTE GAs are eligible for the [Graduate Student Health Insurance](#). They receive a reduced premium (“Incentivized Plan”) compared to the general student population (“Voluntary Plan”) and 75% of the premium is paid by the employer. See HR’s [3G Health Insurance Page](#) for more information.
- GAs in Housing & Residence Life also receive room & board.

Policies for holding a GA

There are a number of policies students should be aware of when holding a graduate assistantship. Students should reference the [GA Appointment Eligibility Policy](#), which outlines the following, among others:

- Duties and expectations of GAs
- Minimum enrollment required to hold a GA
- Required academic standing and satisfactory academic progress
- Required background check process
- Procedures related to holding a GA after graduation

Dismissal from GA Position/Losing a GA position

Graduate Assistantship supervisors must adhere to their office and KU HR policies regarding performance improvement for graduate assistants who perform unsatisfactorily. If a performance issue arises, the GA supervisor and student must promptly notify the program director. If dismissed, the student must secure a new GA position or alternative employment by the end of the following semester to remain enrolled in the program; exceptions may be approved in a limited number of circumstances decided by the program faculty. It is important for students to understand that their tuition benefits are contingent upon holding a graduate assistantship.

If a GA position is cut due to unforeseen circumstances outside of the student's control, the program will attempt to secure another GA position for the student. Another position is not guaranteed.

Internships

Students may, and often do, seek additional applied experience in higher education administration through a for-credit internship. The following guidelines apply for the for-credit internship:

- The experience must be agreed upon by the student's advisor and the internship course director. Generally, the internship should be at an institution of higher education, supplement the student's goals, and provide supervised practice.
- The experience must be a minimum of 150 hours. The internship is generally completed over the summer but may be split between semesters.
- The internship may be paid or unpaid.
- The internship must be approved before seeking credit. Under no circumstances will internship credit be applied retroactively.

Graduate Scholarships and Financial Aid

Since 1958, the KU School of Education and Human Sciences has offered financial support through academic scholarships to thousands of students. These scholarships are awarded to students in addition to the scholarships made available through the university as a whole.

Federal Financial Aid

Students should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine eligibility for federal graduate student loans and other forms of financial aid. Completing the FAFSA is the first step in accessing federal financial support.

SOEHS Scholarships

MSE students are eligible to apply for scholarships through the School of Education and Human Sciences (SOEHS). The scholarship application portal typically opens each year in December and

closes in early February. Students are responsible for monitoring deadlines and submitting materials on time.

Scholarships are competitive and awarded based on a combination of merit and financial need. Students are strongly encouraged to complete all application components—particularly required essays—carefully and thoughtfully.

SOEHS scholarships are awarded for the fall and spring semesters. To remain eligible, students must be enrolled in a minimum of 6 credit hours per term during the award period. Students may find more information on the SOEHS website [here](#).

Conference Travel and Research Support

MSE students may apply for financial support to present at academic or professional conferences once per academic year. Funding amounts vary depending on the student's role in the conference (e.g., presenter, panelist, or attendee). In addition, SOEHS provides limited funding to support research-related expenses. These funds are competitive and intended to assist with costs directly associated with student research. Students may find more information about SOEHS travel and research support on the SOEHS website [here](#).

Emergency Financial Assistance

Students experiencing unexpected financial hardship may apply for support through the [KU Emergency Aid Network](#), which provides short-term assistance in times of need.

Applying for Graduation

If you plan to graduate in the spring semester and wish to have your name included in the KU Commencement program and receive information about graduation weekend, you must apply for graduation by the first Monday in March. This is a KU policy. If you miss the deadline, you can still apply for graduation, but your name will not appear in the KU Commencement program. Students earning a graduate certificate must also apply for graduation, but they will not be recognized in any of the KU graduation ceremonies.

If you are graduating in the summer, you can apply for graduation at this time and participate in the May events. Summer graduates' names will be included in the following spring KU Commencement program.

Appendix A

Graduate Regulations in the School of Education & Human Sciences

The School of Education and Human Sciences follows the regulations and policies of the University and the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs (for example: [Academic probation](#), [enrollment status](#), [grading policies](#), etc.). In some cases, the School of Education and Human Sciences and departmental policies are more restrictive than those of the broader University. Students are encouraged to work closely with their department and advisor for specific program requirements. Below include a description of the key School of Education and Human Sciences policies related to graduate studies.

Good Academic Standing

Evaluation of graduate student academic standing includes, but is not limited to, consideration of performance in and progress through a graduate program according to program expectations.

Graduate students must maintain an expected level of performance throughout their program. Criteria for evaluating satisfactory performance include, but are not limited to:

1. For degree- and certificate-seeking students, a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher and, for non-degree-seeking students, a cumulative graduate GPA of 2.0 or higher. Students must have a 3.0 minimum GPA to graduate with a KU graduate degree.
2. For students enrolled in dissertation, master's thesis or project hours the expectation is that students will make satisfactory academic progress. Earning a grade of NP in one semester or earning a grade of LP in consecutive semesters indicates a lack of satisfactory academic progress and will result in probation and may result in dismissal.
3. Academic and scholarly integrity;
4. Compliance with academic policies at the university, school, and departmental level; and
5. For degree- and certificate-seeking students, satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree or certificate, as determined by the program. Progress may be determined by factors including:
 1. Satisfactory completion of coursework, milestones, exams, or other program components on a specified timeframe; and
 2. Official time to degree and total time in program.

Failure to maintain an expected level of performance will result in a student not being in good academic standing. Lack of good academic standing will result in the graduate program placing the student on probation or dismissal from the program. For more information, please see the policies on [academic probation](#) and [dismissed enrollment](#).

Academic Probation

Upon falling below a cumulative graduate grade-point average of 3.0, computed with the inclusion of grades earned at KU for all courses acceptable for graduate credit, or earning a grade of NP (no progress) in thesis, project or dissertation, or consecutive semesters of LP (limited process), the student is placed on probation by the School. The grades of SP, LP, NP and I, for which no numerical equivalents are defined, are excluded from the GPA computation.

If the student's overall graduate grade-point average has been raised to 3.0 by the end of the next semester of enrollment after being placed on probation, the student may be returned to good academic standing. If not, the student is not permitted to re-enroll and will be dismissed unless the graduate division of the School acts favorably on a departmental recommendation for the student to continue enrollment.

Requirements for all Master's Degrees

Students must acquaint themselves thoroughly with departmental requirements for the degree, which may be in addition to general requirements and those of the School of Education and Human Sciences. Consistent with Graduate Studies & Postdoctoral Affairs' general regulations, it is the student's responsibility to know and observe all university, school, department, and academic program regulations and procedures relating to the graduate program.

In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception be granted because a student pleads ignorance of or contends that he or she was not informed of requirements, regulations, procedures, or deadlines. Petitions for other reasons may be accepted. Consult with your department and/or advisor for information on this process.

Responsibility for following all policies and meeting all requirements and deadlines rests with the student.

All master's programs require a graduate class in social science research methods (i.e. EPSY 715), successfully completed during the first 12 hours.

Students are required to make satisfactory progress towards their degree as determined by the faculty in their department and may be placed on probation or dismissed for failure to do so.

All graduate students enrolled in master's programs must be enrolled the semester they complete master's degree requirements. Master's students who complete degree requirements during the first week of summer session or within the first two weeks of the fall or spring semester are not required to be enrolled for that term unless they were not enrolled during the previous semester. These dates can be verified on the [Graduate School calendar](#).

Master's Program Time Constraints

Normal expectations are that most master's degrees are typically completed in two years of full-time study. However, master's degree students are allowed seven years for completion of all degree requirements assuming satisfactory progress.

In cases in which compelling reasons or circumstances recommend a one-year extension, the Graduate Division, on recommendation of the department/committee, has authority to grant the extension. In cases where more than eight years are requested, the School of Education and Human Sciences Associate Dean for Graduate Studies considers petitions for further extensions and, where evidence of continuous progress, currency of knowledge, and other reasons are compelling, may grant them.

Some departments may have more stringent rulings about time restrictions. Students should ask about the policy in effect in the department in which they plan to study. View the current Lawrence and Edwards Campus policy on [master's program time constraints](#).

Continuous Enrollment

Students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment (fall & spring) while in their academic program.

A student may petition the Graduate Division through the department for a leave of absence if they experience extraordinary circumstances (e.g. cases of illness, emergency, financial hardship, military leave), to pursue family responsibilities, or to pursue full-time activities related to long-range professional goals. Appropriate documentation related to these extraordinary circumstances may be requested from the student directly. Evidence of progress towards degree will also be a determining factor in the decision to grant a leave of absence. If approved, a leave of absence is typically granted for one year, with the possibility of extension upon request. The time taken for a leave of absence does not count against the student's time to degree. However, after an absence of five years, a master's candidate loses status as such and must apply for readmission to the program and the Graduate Division.

If a student has been actively enrolled in a graduate program and has not applied for a leave of absence, but has not been enrolled for one academic year, they will be discontinued from their program. If they wish to return, they will need permission from the department and will need to submit the Permit to Re-Enroll form and must reapply for graduate admission.

Transfer Credit

The transfer credit option allows master's students to count graduate coursework completed at a regionally-accredited institution toward their KU degree. Students can transfer up to 9 credit hours toward their master's degrees. The department, advisor, School of Education and Human Sciences, and Dean of Graduate Studies & Postdoctoral Affairs must approve the transfer request. The course(s) and grade(s) will then appear on the student's KU transcript as the KU course equivalent.

Some restrictions apply to what non-KU courses can be counted toward a KU master's degree:

- Only courses taken for graduate credit and graded B or higher (3.0 on a 4.0 scale or higher) can be transferred.
- The courses in question cannot have counted toward any previously completed undergraduate or graduate degrees.
- Courses must be current (taken within the last 7 years).
- KU does not accept transfer credit for educational institutes, workshops, or work/life experience.
- Courses must be approved by the student's department as fulfilling a specific, regular degree requirement (including elective coursework) and should be equal in rigor to KU's graduate coursework, as reflected in the course description and syllabus.

To begin the transfer process, students should contact their departments to submit the required transfer materials, including an official transcript reflecting the courses from the other institution to be transferred in, as well as descriptions and/or syllabi for the courses in question. The department,

advisor, and department chair will then determine whether the course may count for KU credit and, if so, what KU course is equivalent. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies makes the final approval of transfer credits.

Count Toward Degree

The count toward degree process is distinct from transfer credit, which only applies to courses taken at another institution. In the count toward degree process, a student may be allowed to count graduate coursework taken as a graduate non-degree seeking student at KU toward a graduate degree. No more than 9 credit hours may be counted in this way, assuming the degree-granting department endorses the request and the courses in question meet the University's criteria for transfer credit as specified under the Transfer Credit description above. The student must contact the department to complete a Count Toward Degree form, which must then be submitted to the School of Education and Human Sciences Graduate Associate Dean for review and approval. If the form is approved, the School of Education and Human Sciences and the department will include the counted courses when verifying that degree requirements have been met.

Students should be advised that graduate coursework taken as a non-degree-seeking student already counts into the calculation of the student's graduate GPA, but the count towards degree form is still required for the coursework to count toward completion of degree requirements. The change is not otherwise reflected on the student's transcript.

With the exception of coursework completed via a pre-approved co-enrollment arrangement, graduate coursework completed as an undergraduate degree-seeking or undergraduate non-degree seeking student may not be counted toward a graduate degree at KU.

Graduate courses taken at KU may count toward both a graduate degree and graduate certificate(s) as long as the student is admitted and enrolled in the intended program prior to completion of the last required course. If the courses were taken as a non-degree seeking student, a Count Toward Degree form must be submitted prior to approval for graduation or approval of the certificate.

Reduced Hour Degree

Kansas Board of Regents policy defines 30 hours as the minimum for master's degrees at KU. Departments may petition for a reduced-hour master's degree for individual students. A reduction in hours is distinct from a transfer of credit and is reserved for those students especially well-prepared to complete a graduate-level degree and who are able to maintain a superior grade point average. If approved, a student will be allowed to complete his or her degree by enrolling in up to 6 fewer hours of graduate credit than is typically required for that degree. No coursework is transferred and no modifications to the transcript are made. This policy is enacted in rare circumstances.

To find out more about reduced-hour degrees, please contact your department directly. The department must support the request and the School of Education and Human Sciences Graduate Associate Dean must approve it before the reduced degree requirements will be granted.

Appendix B

University Policies and Degree Requirements

This section contains information on requirements and policies of the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs, hereafter referred to as “the University”. It is not a complete list of all policies pertaining to graduate students. Only those policies that *most commonly* affect graduate students are included.

Policies are described in general terms and are intended to help students understand what is expected. They do not reflect the exact language of the official policy and should not be confused with official policy. Specific information and restrictions as well as links to relevant forms may be accessed by clicking on the policy headings. Links to the official policies in the KU policy library are found at the bottom of each policy description. Students are accountable to and should familiarize themselves with the University's official policies.

GENERAL POLICIES

The following University policies apply to ALL graduate students regardless of degree, program, or department. These are minimum general requirements. Your department or program may have more restrictive policies in any of these areas.

[Admission](#)

Degree or non-degree seeking applicants must have a bachelor’s degree (as evidenced by an official transcript from the institution the degree was obtained).

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Admission to Graduate Study](#)

[English Proficiency Requirements](#)

The University requires all applicants, international or domestic, to demonstrate English proficiency for admission to any graduate program at KU. There are multiple ways to prove English proficiency:

- Declaration of native or native-like speaker status on the online application for graduate study.
- Official scores from an English proficiency standardized test (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS-Academic, or PTE), sent by the testing agency to the University of Kansas. Official scores must be less than two years old. Scores must be reported to KU directly by the testing service. Self-reported scores or unofficial scores are not accepted. TOEFL scores should be sent by ETS to KU institution code 6871. IELTS should be sent to KU Graduate Admissions via the e-delivery service. PTE score sheets containing the Score Report Code and Registration ID should be emailed to graduateadm@ku.edu for verification.

- Graduation with a baccalaureate degree (or higher) earned in residence from an accredited English-medium college or university or an accredited college or university in the United States. Degrees earned online may not be used to verify English proficiency. Note: this option is not sufficient for employment as a Graduate Teaching Assistant.
- AEC Curriculum: Students who haven't taken one of the listed tests may complete coursework through the KU Applied English Center (AEC) to demonstrate English proficiency.
- US Military Employment: If you are employed as an officer in the U.S. military with documentation of selection or promotion to the rank of Major or higher (or the equivalent U.S. Navy or Coast Guard rank), then you will be considered fully proficient and will not be required to complete AEC testing.

Additional English Competency Requirements for GTAs:

English proficiency requirements for GTAs are governed by the Kansas Board of Regents and must be met separately from the English proficiency requirement for admission to a KU graduate program. Detailed information on English proficiency requirements for GTAs may be found on Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' Spoken English Competency page.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [English Proficiency Requirements for Admission to Graduate Study](#)
- [Spoken English Language Competency of Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants, Kansas Board of Regents Policy](#)

Enrollment

For graduate students, advising on enrollment and course selection take place at the department level. While individual units may have additional enrollment requirements, for students who are required to enroll full-time (e.g. students holding a GTA/GRA/GA appointment, international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa, students receiving federal financial aid, etc.) the University defines full-time enrollment it as follows:

Fall and Spring semesters:

- Enrollment in 9 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s). *See Doctoral post-comprehensive enrollment.
- Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a Competency-Based Education (CBE) program

Summer sessions:

- Enrollment in 6 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 3 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;
- Enrollment in 3 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s).
- Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a CBE program

Graduate students are not normally permitted to enroll for more than 16 hours a semester or more than 8 hours in summer session.

While these are KU's definitions of full-time enrollment, other institutions may have different definitions. Be sure to consult with your financial aid and/or health insurance providers before making enrollment decisions.

Students not enrolled by 11:59pm the day before the first day of classes will be assessed a late enrollment fee. The University Registrar then deactivates the KU ID of any not enrolled by the last Friday in October (for Fall) or last Friday in March (for Spring). Students who wish to enroll after that must submit a Permit to Re-Enroll to be reactivated.

Students who wish to leave their graduate program should inform the department of such plans in writing so that a Voluntary Withdrawal form may be submitted on their behalf. Please note that voluntarily withdrawing from your program does **not** automatically withdraw you from coursework. You must also withdraw from all classes in Enroll & Pay via the "Withdraw from the University" option.

Deadlines for adding, changing, dropping, or withdrawing from all courses, as well any fines associated with the change, are set by the University. **Deadlines vary from year to year. Students should carefully review the current Academic Calendar.**

You may also wish to consult the Registrar's page on Effects of Dropping or Withdrawing on your Transcript.

Your graduate program coordinator (or similar title) is available to guide you through any enrollment scenarios or questions that come up. In order to avoid problems on your record, please consult with them prior to dropping or changing enrollment.

Related Policies:

- [Discontinued Enrollment](#)
- [Enrollment](#)
- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)

- [Graduate Coursework Expiration Dates](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#)

Graduate Credit (Including Transfer Credit)

The University's Graduate Credit policy defines KU's conditions for the following:

- Definition of graduate credit for the purposes of a course "counting" towards a graduate degree or graduate certificate at KU;
- Transfer of graduate credit to KU from an outside institution;
- Reduction in the required number of graduate hours for Master's students;
- Counting credit hours taken as non-degree seeking student towards a later graduate degree at KU;
- Counting credit hours taken as a certificate seeking student toward another graduate degree.

Transfer Credit

The transfer credit option allows master's students to add graduate-level coursework completed at another institution to their KU transcript to count toward their KU degree. Upper-level coursework taken as an undergraduate, even courses numbered at the graduate level, is not eligible for transfer in any case. Additional restrictions apply to what non-KU graduate courses and the number of credit hours that can be counted toward a KU master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below, as well as consulting with their DGS. In all cases, transfer credit must first be approved at the department or program level. To begin the transfer process, students should consult with their DGS to submit the required transfer materials. These include a transcript reflecting the courses to be transferred and descriptions and/or syllabi for the courses in question.

No transfer of credits is allowed for the Ph.D. In circumstances where students enter the Ph.D. program with an M.A. from another institution or other relevant graduate coursework, it may be possible for students to request a reduction in the number of hours required for the Ph.D. Students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Reduced Credit Hour Degree

KU policy defines 30 hours as the minimum for master's degrees. Departments may petition for a reduced hour degree master's degree for individual students in cases where they may provide evidence that the student entered the program especially well-prepared to complete a graduate-level degree and the student is able to maintain a superior grade point average. Reduced credit hour degrees must be based on coursework or experiences that can be objectively measured, such as coursework or qualifying internship or study abroad programs. Professional or life experience does not qualify. A reduction in hours is distinct from a transfer of credit and is reserved for students whose prior coursework doesn't qualify for transfer credit (e.g. was already used to fulfill requirements towards a completed degree) and there are no modifications on the transcript.

Restrictions apply to the number of credit hours that can be reduced for a master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below.

In all cases, a reduction in hours must first be approved at the department or program level, so to begin the process for approval, students should consult with their DGS. Students must also provide documentation of the coursework or experience being used to justify the reduced hours (e.g. transcripts, program descriptions).

Because there is no minimum number of required hours for the Ph.D., reduction of required hours based on prior degrees or experience is determined solely at the program level. Doctoral students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Related Policies:

- [Graduate Credit](#)
- [Co-enrollment](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements \(on Reduced Hour Master's Degree\)](#)

[Credit/No Credit](#)

The University supports and encourages interdisciplinary study, which may include graduate students enrolling in coursework at the graduate level that is outside of their primary discipline. The Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) is an option for graduate students who are taking a course that is not required for their degree or certificate and who do not wish to have the course grade reflected in their cumulative graduate GPA. Rather than a grade appearing on the transcript, the student receives a designation of CR or NC, which does not factor in the GPA.

No course graded CR/NC will count toward the satisfaction of any graduate degree or certificate requirement. This includes, but is not limited to, courses taken to fulfill the Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirement for doctoral students.

Students make the CR/NC election via the Registrar's CR/NC online request form. Elections and changes to elections can only be made during the specific CR/NC period. For regular semester courses, this period begins after the last day to add a class and extends for approximately two weeks. Exact dates may be found on the current KU Academic Calendar. Please keep in mind, short courses may have alternate dates.

The student should consult with their own program advisor about the appropriateness of the course prior to enrolling; however, in cases where CR/NC is elected, the course instructor is not informed of the election unless the student chooses to share this information.

Additional restrictions apply. Students should carefully review the information in the link above.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [University Senate Rules and Regulations \(USRR\), Section 2.3.8](#)

Probation & Dismissal

Probation is an academic status that can be assigned to a graduate student that is not making satisfactory progress toward completing their degree. The department initiates the probation process and will inform the student of why they are not making satisfactory progress, what they must do to return to good standing, and the deadline for doing so.

Students are most commonly placed on probation due to their graduate cumulative GPA dropping below a B average (3.0 on a 4.0 scale). In these cases, probation occurs automatically and is reflected on the student's record for the semester following the semester in which the student's GPA drops below 3.0. If the student's cumulative GPA is raised to 3.0 by the end of the probationary semester, the student will be automatically returned to good academic standing.

Individual Schools/the College may set more stringent GPA requirements.

Students may also be placed on probation by their departments for other reasons that constituting a failure to make satisfactory progress towards degree. These may include, but are not limited to;

- Lack of progress on the thesis, dissertation, or capstone project
- Unacceptable academic performance on program milestones outside of coursework (e.g. exams)
- Unsatisfactory grades or GPA within foundational required courses (despite the overall cumulative GPA)
- An unsatisfactory result in their department's annual progress evaluation
Nearing or going beyond their maximum time to degree. See the Time Limits section below for more information.

Students should carefully review the Good Academic Standing policy for graduate students at KU for more information on what constitutes making satisfactory academic progress.

Individual programs may also have additional measures of progress. Students should also consult the Annual Review section of their department graduate handbook or the degree requirements section and with their program advisor for more information.

If a student is unable to raise their cumulative GPA or otherwise meet the communicated terms of the academic probation, the department will reconsider their continuation in the program, and in most cases will recommend the student for dismissal. Once dismissed, a student is no longer able to be enrolled in coursework and cannot complete their degree. Students dismissed from any graduate program may not be admitted to any other graduate program at the University of Kansas.

A student on probation or facing dismissal should discuss their status with their advisor.

Related Policies:

- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)
- [Good Academic Standing policy](#)

Grading

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' (GPA) Grading policy governs requirements for the grading of graduate students above those described in Article II of the University Senate Rules and Regulations. Additionally, individual schools, departments, or programs may have grading policies that are more stringent than those of GPA.

Students should also consult their advisor and the departmental grading section of this handbook for additional information that may affect them.

At minimum, for all graduate students at KU, at least a B average is required on course work counted toward any of the master's degrees at KU, and only courses graded A, B, or C (excluding C-) may be counted. Course work counted toward a doctorate, including that for a master's degree if obtained at KU, should average better than a B.

Related Policies:

- [University Senate Rules & Regulations](#)
- [Grading](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)

Time Limits

The University expects that master's degree should typically be completed in two (2) years of full-time study, the doctorate degree in five (5) years of study, and both the master's and doctorate together in six-seven (6-7) years of study.

Students who anticipate exceeding these targets should review the information in the policies below, as well as consult with their program advisor to create a timeline for degree completion. In order to support this process, students are encouraged to use a Mentoring Agreement Template and/or adapt to their own needs to support effective mentoring and a positive mentoring relationship.

Note that individual schools/the College/degree programs may require Mentoring Agreements for students who are nearing their maximum time to degree.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Degree Program Time Constraints](#)
- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Oral Exams \(on exam expiration and recertification\)](#)
- [Doctoral Program Profiles with Time to Degree Information](#)
- [KU CLAS Mentorship Agreement Template](#)
- [Univ. Michigan Rackham Graduate School Mentoring Plan Templates](#)

- [KU Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs IDP template](#)

Leave of Absence

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. cases of illness, emergency, financial hardship, military leave, to pursue family responsibilities, or to pursue full-time activities related to long-range professional goals) it may be necessary for graduate students to take a break from their program temporarily, without having to withdraw entirely from the program. An approved leave of absence allows a student to take a temporary break from enrolling in graduate coursework while remaining in good standing with the University and the department and while “stopping the clock” on their time to degree. When a student is on Leave of Absence status it is understood that they have temporarily suspended their graduate work and therefore will not make use of University resources, including faculty time.

Requesting a Leave of Absence is done through a University petition. University petitions must first be approved and supported at the program level, so students wishing to initiate the petition process should first consult with their Director of Graduate Studies and review their department’s internal petition procedures. Units or the Director of Graduate Study may request documentation to support the student’s need for a leave of absence.

In order for a Leave of Absence to be approved, the student must be withdrawn from all active and/or future enrollment. Withdrawal for the purposes of Leave of Absence is still subject to all Registrar deadlines, required forms, and applicable tuition and fees.

Students on Leave of Absence are automatically reactivated after their leave is over and are eligible to enroll for their intended semester back during the normal enrollment periods. See the KU Academic Calendar for exact dates that enrollment begins.

If at any time plans change and a student wishes to return and enroll before leave was supposed to end, they may contact their department to be reactivated early.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Leaves of Absence \(policy\)](#)
- [Leave of Absence \(GPA website, form linked at bottom of page\)](#)

Required University Milestones

All graduate students must complete one or more exams as part of their degree requirements. In addition to department or program guidelines, the following milestones are required for all students and specific regulations apply:

- Master's Final Culminating Exam (written or oral)/Thesis Defense for Master's degree
- Doctoral Comprehensive Oral Exam
- Doctoral Final Exam/Dissertation Defense

*A final culminating effort is not required for departments with an approved coursework-only master's degree option in the Academic Catalog (note that programs with a capstone are considered coursework only).

Before a student is allowed to complete any of these three exams, pre-approval from the school/College is required in advance of the exam date. This pre-approval request will be submitted on the student's behalf by their department after the exam date has been scheduled. The school/College reviews the student record and verifies all University requirements have been fulfilled. The full list of these requirements may be found via the link in the heading above. Students should work with their departments well in advance of their planned exam date, to schedule their exams in a timely fashion and to ensure that all University policies relating to oral exams are being followed.

There are additional policies requirements for oral exams. The following are University policies pertaining to oral exams:

Oral Exam Committee Composition

All voting committee members must be appointed members of the Graduate Faculty of KU. Additionally, a majority of committee members serving on a graduate student oral examination committee must be tenured/tenure-track faculty in the candidate's department or program of study.

Many additional restrictions apply, especially for doctoral exam committees. Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the University policies pertaining to exams, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies when forming an exam committee. Your graduate program coordinator can assist with confirming the qualifying status of any faculty member at KU, or outside of KU.

Oral Exam Attendance

Oral Exams may be conducted in-person, remotely, or a hybrid of both. There are no University level requirements for physical presence; however, there are strict regulations on participation.

In all cases, all committee members must be present, either physically or via phone/video conference, for an exam to commence. **If a committee member does not arrive or appear, the exam may not begin and if a committee member leaves or loses connection such that they cannot fully participate, the exam may not proceed. Oral examinations that do not meet these attendance requirements are not valid.**

Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the policies below, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies in the formation of an oral exam committee.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Doctoral Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Oral Exam Attendance](#)
- [Graduate Faculty Appointments](#)

DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the student's individual Ph.D. program's degree requirements, the following are University requirements for graduation with a Ph.D. at KU.

Enrollment Requirement

Prior to the semester in which the comprehensive exam is held, all doctoral students must complete a minimum program engagement equivalent to two full-time semesters. This may be accomplished through either of the following:

- Two semesters (fall and/or spring) of full-time enrollment in KU coursework, as defined by University policy
- At least 18 hours of enrollment in KU coursework spread out over several part-time semesters

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](#)

Continuous Enrollment for Post-Comprehensive Students

During the semester in which the doctoral oral comprehensive exam is completed and each fall and spring semester follows, doctoral students must adhere to very specific enrollment requirements. These requirements may be different than enrollment requirements prior to the oral comp exam.

Failure to properly comply with the enrollment requirements may cause delays to graduation or additional enrollment requirements to make up what was missed, increasing tuition expenses near the end of your degree program.

To avoid delays or additional costs, you are also strongly advised to meet with your graduate program coordinator the semester before your oral comprehensive exam. Your graduate coordinator will work with you to develop an enrollment plan that meets all policy requirements, while also preventing unnecessary or avoidable fees.

Post-comprehensive enrollment requirements also apply to students with GTA/GRA/GA appointments, but these students must be certified to drop their enrollment levels. Departments are responsible for tracking student enrollment and will submit the certification form on the student's behalf **at least two weeks prior** to the beginning of the semester in which the enrollment will drop below 6 hours. Students who are certified to reduce hours continue to meet the University's definition of full-time enrollment, as well as the enrollment requirements of their employment contract.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Doctoral Candidacy](#)

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

The University offers a variety of Approved Graduate Certificate Programs to encourage current graduate students to pursue interdisciplinary study, gain a credential for expertise in an outside area of study, or provide an option for a coherent course of advanced study for those not ready to commit to a full degree program. Note that students must be fully admitted to a graduate certificate by the end of the last course that will count to fulfill the certificate. Students wishing to complete the certificate should apply as early as possible. Students whose interests or career goals may be served by a Graduate Certificate should familiarize themselves with the University's policies relating to Certificate programs (found below) early in their graduate career, in addition to individual certificate program requirements.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Graduate Certificate Programs: Eligibility and Admission Criteria](#)
- [Policies & Procedures for Graduate Certificate Programs](#)

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (Master's & Ph.D.)

In addition to all program requirements, students planning to graduate must complete all University graduation requirements **prior to the published Graduation Deadline** in a given semester. Students should consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for the published Graduation Deadline, which varies by semester.

Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs Graduation Checklists ([Master's](#) | [Doctoral](#))

These graduation checklists provide a comprehensive list of all University requirements for graduation and should be consulted by every graduating master's or doctoral student as soon as graduation is expected. Submission of the final draft of the thesis or dissertation is done electronically. Students must comply with all University requirements for formatting and electronic submission of the thesis or dissertation. There is no University requirement that students provide a bound or printed copy of the draft.

We strongly encourage students to submit an Application for Graduation as early as possible; ideally prior to the 20th day of classes of the semester they intend to graduate.

GRADUATE & POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs (GPA) offers funding opportunities in several different categories. Students interested in applying should direct inquiries to the department's Director of Graduate Studies or to GPA. Some of the available funding includes:

[Summer Research Scholarships](#): intended primarily for post-comp doctoral students.

[Graduate Student Travel Fund](#): intended for graduate students presenting a paper at a national or regional meeting of a learned or professional society. A student may receive an award (max \$750) only once per academic year, with priority given to students who have not received the fund previously. Funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

[Doctoral Student Research Fund](#): Designed to support KU doctoral students who need assistance to carry out research that advances progress toward the degree. Applications for this fund are accepted only for a limited time as funding is available. Students are eligible to receive one award from this fund during their doctoral career. Students should check the link above for additional information and restrictions.

[Policies Regarding Freedom of Expression on Campus](#)

Kansas State Law (HB2333) requires postsecondary educational institutions in Kansas to publish in their handbooks and orientation programs the institution's policies, regulations, or expectations of students regarding free expression on campus.

Per KU General Counsel, this includes the following two policies:

- [KU Public Assembly Policy](#)
- [Kansas Board of Regents Statement on Free Expression](#)

Note that the two policies listed above apply to ALL members of the campus community; they are not specific to graduate students.