

GRADUATE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. About the College of Graduate Studies History

The College of Graduate Studies was instituted in the fall of 1960 with the offering of the Master of Arts Degree. In 1962, graduate degrees in the Master of Science, Master of Engineering, and Master of Education were offered. In 1965, the Master of Business Administration was initiated. Our first doctoral degree, Doctor of Engineering, was authorized in 1970 in the College of Engineering. A Doctor of Education in Deaf Education was approved in 1993. The Doctor of Audiology degree was approved in 2003, the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership in 2004, and the Doctor of Philosophy in Chemical Engineering in 2005. In 2007, the College of Education and Human Development initiated LU's first online Academic Partnership degree program. A complete list of graduate degrees offered at Lamar University appears below.

Mission

The College of Graduate Studies promotes high-quality graduate education at Lamar University by recruiting, admitting, and enrolling qualified students and ensuring requirements are met.

Vision

The College of Graduate Studies provides leadership, vision, and support to enhance graduate education at Lamar University. We encourage the establishment, growth, development, and continuous improvement of graduate educational programs in targeted disciplines that address the advanced workforce needs nationally and internationally.

We will achieve our mission and vision by

- increasing the awareness of graduate educational opportunities and benefits.
- recruiting qualified graduate students.
- enhancing the academic rigor of graduate programs through continuous improvements.

Objectives

The objectives of the College of Graduate Studies are as follows:

- a. Advance knowledge through quality education and research programs.
- b. Cultivate critical thinking skills and intellectual advancement of graduate students through research and educational activities.
- c. Engage graduate students in professional practice and training.

Degrees Offered

Please refer to the list of [Programs \(https://catalog.lamar.edu/programs/\)](https://catalog.lamar.edu/programs/).

2. Regulations and Policies Student Responsibility

It is the responsibility of each student to know the academic policies of the College of Graduate Studies and the academic department and colleges, to enroll in the appropriate courses for the degree plan, and to

maintain the standards of the university, the College of Graduate Studies, and the degree programs.

Health Insurance

Campus sponsored health insurance is required of all international students and offered to all domestic students. Eligibility requirements apply and can be found on the [Academic Health Plans \(https://lamar.myahpcare.com/\)](https://lamar.myahpcare.com/) (AHP) website along with enrollment forms and other detailed information. All services delivered at the SHC are paid at 100%. Premiums are due at the time of enrollment and are available per semester or on an annual basis.

3. Academic Policies of the College of Graduate Studies

All graduate students are expected to be familiar with the policies and regulations of the College of Graduate Studies.

- a. Academic Year. The university divides the academic year into two long semesters (fall and spring) and two summer terms of six weeks each. There are also specific terms designated for select degree programs. Please consult with the department and colleges regarding the dates of those terms.
- b. Time Limit for Degree Completion. All course work applied toward a given master's or doctoral degree at Lamar University must be completed within a period of six years or 10 years, respectively. The timeline commences with the first semester of graduate enrollment. These time limits apply to all work at the graduate level, including work transferred from other institutions. Program faculty may request that graduate courses taken outside these time windows be recertified and counted toward the degree requirements based upon a specific, objective, written plan filed in the department, college, and College of Graduate Studies offices and approved by the dean of the College of Graduate Studies. Time spent in active military service is not included in the six, eight, and 10-year limits. Due to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (US CIS) regulations, a shorter period of time may apply to international students.
- c. Maximum Semester Course Load. The maximum course load for graduate students during the spring and fall semesters is 15 hours per term. Nine hours is a minimum full-time load. The maximum course load for graduate students for any 6-week summer term is 6 hours, or 7 hours if a lab course is taken, not exceeding 12 hours for the entire summer semester. These maximums apply even when the graduate student is enrolled in a combination of graduate and undergraduate courses.
- d. Definitions of Full and Part-Time. A full-time graduate student is defined as a student taking at least 9 semester hours of graduate work during the fall or spring semesters. After completing the course work for a graduate degree, students who are enrolled in a thesis, dissertation, or field-study course may be considered full-time even though they are enrolled in as few as 3 semester hours. In the summer, full-time is 3 hours per term, or 6 hours for the entire summer semester. Students taking fewer than 9 hours in the fall and spring semesters and fewer than 6 hours for the entire summer semester are considered part-time. Full-time status may be required for certain fellowships and scholarships, including Competitive Graduate Scholarship and Institutional Doctoral Scholarship.
- e. Deferring Graduation. International students who wish to defer graduation by taking additional course work after their original degree plan has been completed must meet one of the following conditions: (1) admission to the new program must be granted by the new major

department, and a new I-20 Form must be issued indicating the new major program of study and the length of time for completion of the second degree; or (2) the student must be enrolled full time (9 hours in long semesters, 3 hours in each summer term, or 6 hours in the entire summer semester), and permission must be given in writing by the major department stating that the additional course work is required for the degree sought. All additional course work must be taken for credit, and a grade must be earned.

- f. Permission for an Undergraduate Student to Enroll in Graduate Courses. Reservation of Work by Undergraduates for Graduate Credit. An undergraduate student who is within 12 semester hours of graduation may take a maximum of 6 semester hours of graduate courses that may be applied toward a master's degree of an approved accelerated program. Both the chair of the intended graduate program and the graduate dean must approve, and the total academic load in that semester may not exceed 15 hours. The G-11 form, available on the Graduate Studies website, can be used for obtaining permission.
- g. Transfer of Graduate Credits to Lamar University. With the approval of the chair of the major department and the graduate dean, a student may transfer up to 6 hours of graduate work completed at another institution, and these transferred credits may be applied toward a graduate degree at LU. Only courses with grades of "A", "B" or "S" (satisfactory) that were accepted as graduate credit at the institution where the work was taken may be considered for graduate credit transfer. Transfer courses must not be more than 6 years old when applied to a master's degree and 10 years old when applied to a doctoral degree. Transferred credits are not considered in the computation of the graduate grade-point average at Lamar University.
- h. Application of Credits from One Master's Degree toward a Second Degree. A maximum of 6 semester hours taken for one master's degree at Lamar University may be counted toward a second master's degree, provided that the course credits to be applied are closely related to the second master degree. Coursework must not be more than 6 years old.
- i. Use of Advanced Undergraduate Courses toward a Graduate degree. Undergraduate courses, even if senior-level, may not be applied toward a graduate degree.
- j. Grade Replacement Policy. Students may replace a graduate course grade by repeating the course. This is allowed for up to three graduate-level courses (nine semester hours). If a student repeats a course, the last grade recorded will be considered the official grade and used in calculating the cumulative grade point average (CGPA), although all grades remain on the student's transcript. Special topics courses that have the same course number are not considered to be the same course if the topics differ. The repetition of a course taken at another institution will not replace a grade in the CGPA calculation of the corresponding Lamar University course. If a student earns a D or F in a course required for his/her graduate degree, the course must be repeated, and a passing grade of A, B, or C must be earned. Once a degree has been conferred, a student may not use the Grade Replacement Policy for any courses used to award the degree or to recalculate the CGPA. The grade replacement request can be made using a G-18 form (Request for Grade Replacement, available at <https://www.lamar.edu/graduate-studies/forms.html>).
- k. Change of Major. Graduate students may file a request to change their graduate major after taking at least one long semester of coursework in the degree program of admission. The request must be made using the G16 form (Request to Change Graduate Major, available at <https://www.lamar.edu/graduate-studies/forms.html>) and is subject to qualification review by the Academic departments and Colleges, and the College of Graduate Studies. Approval will be granted only to students who meet the admission requirements of the new program. No students are allowed to take multiple graduate majors except in the dual degree programs that have been approved by Lamar University, including the M.B.A./M.S.-MIS, M.S.A./M.S.-MIS, M.B.A./M.S.A. and M.B.A./M.S.N. programs. Students who change their major and transfer from one department to another may lose financial assistance. Students who are admitted to a graduate program and who have not yet taken courses in the program to which they have been admitted must contact the Office of Graduate Admissions (gradmissions@lamar.edu) to have their application placed in review for the new major and their previous admission vacated. The request to the Office of Graduate Admissions must be made in a timely manner for a full review by the department of the new major.
- l. Enforced Withdrawal or Course Drop. A graduate student may be required to drop a course or courses or withdraw from the university temporarily or permanently if the student's academic work is below the standards of the College of Graduate Studies (see discussion of probation/suspension below), or if the student is found to have engaged in academic dishonesty or misconduct. In those programs that provide clinical training or student teaching (e.g., audiology, speech-language pathology, nursing, education, and human development), a student can be removed from practicum and/or the program if the student is found (through due process) to be a threat to the well-being of patients, students, clients, etc.
- m. Academic Dishonesty, Misconduct, Discipline Code. Student conduct regulations, as found in the Lamar University *Student Handbook*, apply to all graduate students. These regulations include policies relating to academic dishonesty, plagiarism, university disciplinary code, and student rights and responsibilities. It is the responsibility of all graduate students to read the *Student Handbook* and to abide by all university regulations.
- n. Grading System. The grading system for graduate students is "A" (superior), "B" (good), "C" (marginal), "D" (poor), "F" (fail), "I" (incomplete), "S" (satisfactory), "U" (unsatisfactory), "Q" (drop), and "W" (withdrawal). Credits applicable to graduate degrees are given only for the grades A, B, C, and S. Although C grades earned at Lamar University may be counted toward the requirements for a graduate degree, C grades are not considered acceptable graduate-level performance. Courses in which a student earns only a D or F may not be counted toward a graduate degree, although such grades are calculated in determining the grade-point average. The student is to have the 3.0 grade-point average required before the degree will be awarded. In computing grade-point averages, an "A" is valued at four grade points, a "B" three, a "C" two, a "D" one, and an "F" zero. An overall CGPA of "B" (3.0) on all graduate work attempted is required for graduation. Thesis students must receive an S or U for thesis courses until the thesis is approved. At that time, 6 semester hours credit is awarded. If a letter grade (A, B, C, D, F) is issued to the final thesis course by the supervising professor in the semester of thesis completion, the grade for the credited 6 semester hours is included in the computation of grade point averages. Incomplete course work that is not finished during the next long semester (spring or fall) will be credited with an "F" With compelling justification, the graduate dean may grant an extension of the time limit for the completion of incomplete coursework. International students must receive an "NG" for courses (such as Graduate Projects) that have not been completed and should not receive an "I" in any course work.

- o. **Grade Change.** After a degree has been conferred, no transcribed grade may be changed except for those assigned to graduate students in their final semester. Such changes require the approval of the Provost, Vice Provost, or Senior Associate Provost.
- p. **Additional departmental CGPA Requirements.** A department or graduate program may impose CGPA standards, approved by the dean of the academic college, for its majors that exceed the standards set by the College of Graduate Studies.
- q. **Admission of Faculty to Graduate Degree Programs.** Lamar University faculty will not be permitted to work toward a graduate degree within their own department. To pursue a graduate degree in another department, faculty must have the approval of the graduate dean.
- r. **English Proficiency Required of International Students for Graduation.** International students whose first language is not English are required to pass an English proficiency test before they may be admitted candidacy for a graduate degree.
- s. **Rule Changes.** The university reserves the right to change any of its rules, regulations, or course requirements without notice.
- t. **Waiver of Regulations.** Graduate students have the right to file a petition for exemption from any graduate academic policies. Petitions for exemption are considered by the Graduate Council, which makes recommendations to the graduate dean. Decisions of the graduate dean may be appealed through administrative channels (i.e., to the provost, the president, the system chancellor, and finally to the Board of Regents).
- u. **Open Records Policy.** Student records, which generally include information concerning the student and the student's individual relationship to the educational institution, are available on request to Lamar University personnel who have an educational interest in the records. Individual records are also accessible to the student in question. Without the written consent of the student, records are not released except as noted above.
- v. **Recertification of Out-of-Date Graduate Credit.** At the discretion of the program faculty, academic credit granted outside the time limits established for graduate degrees (6 years for master's degrees and 10 years for doctoral degrees) must be recertified by examination or other appropriate means before the work can be applied toward the requirements of a degree program. Course(s) to be recertified must have been completed at Lamar University or be accepted as transfer credit in lieu of Lamar University courses. In order to recertify out-of-date course(s), the student must receive the permission of the chair of the department, and the dean of the college. The form "Request to Recertify Out of Date Course(s)" (G-20) shall be used to record student and course(s) information, means of recertification, and approvals. This form along with a memorandum from the department chair describing the method of recertification must be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies for final approval by the graduate dean.
- w. **Quality of Work and Probation/ Suspension Regulations.** A graduate student must maintain a 3.0 a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) on all courses that receive graduate credit, whether or not they are to be applied toward a graduate degree, except thesis, dissertation and field study courses. Leveling and elective courses taken for graduate credit are included in the computation of the grade point average. Transferred credits will not be used in the computation of CGPA at LU. A student whose CGPA in graduate work falls below 3.0 must improve academic performance either by repeating courses in which the grades are low or by completing other graduate courses with grades high enough to bring the CGPA to at least 3.0. Graduate students who do not meet this academic standard will be placed on probation or suspended. Students on probation may enroll in graduate courses but may not apply for graduation. Suspended students may be temporarily or permanently denied permission to enroll in graduate courses.
 - i. **Minimum Academic Performance.** A graduate student with a CGPA of 3.0 or higher is in good standing. A student with a CGPA below 3.0 will be placed on probation, suspended, or expelled.
 - ii. **Probation.** Students with full graduate admission status who fail to achieve and maintain a CGPA of 3.0 at the completion of nine semester hours of graduate enrollment will be placed on academic probation (P1). A P1 student who fails to raise their CGPA to a 3.0 in the subsequent semester will be placed on (P2) probation.
 - iii. Students on probation may enroll in courses but may not apply for admission to candidacy or for graduation
 - iv. A graduate student who has been placed on (P2) probation and who fails to raise his/her graduate CGPA to at least 3.0 in the next enrolled semester will be suspended. Suspended students may enroll in graduate courses in the summer and undergraduate courses during spring, fall, or summer semesters. However, students must receive a recommendation from their department chair, college dean, and approval from the graduate dean through an appeal to enroll in graduate courses during spring and fall semesters, using the G-8 form (Academic Suspension Appeal, available at <https://www.lamar.edu/graduate-studies/forms.html>). Suspension for the fall semester may be removed if the student raises the graduate CGPA to at least 3.0 during the summer term. The first academic suspension (S1) shall be for one long semester (fall or spring). A graduate student who has been suspended (S1) and who fails to raise his/her CGPA to at least 3.0 in the next enrolled semester will be suspended again (S2), and the second suspension (S2) will be for two long semesters. An S2 student who fails to raise the CGPA to 3.0 or higher in the next enrolled semester will be dismissed from the graduate program.
 - v. **Transfers to New major Departments by Students on Probation/ Suspension.** Suspended students may be admitted to another department only after they have completed their suspension, provided that they meet the admission standards of the new graduate major. Students on probation may transfer to a different graduate program with the approval of the chair of the new program but will remain on probation and must raise their overall CGPA to at least 3.0 within the next nine semester hours of graduate course work. A student on probation may transfer to a new major department only once.
 - vi. **PB and PG Students and Probation/Suspension.** Post-baccalaureate and pre-graduate students taking graduate course work are not subject to probation or suspension until they have been admitted to the College of Graduate Studies and a graduate degree program.
 - vii. **Grades Earned in Deficiency, Leveling, or Background Courses.** A CGPA of 3.0 must be maintained for all undergraduate courses assigned as a deficiency, leveling, or background courses by the student's major department. If the CGPA earned on these courses is below 3.0, additional undergraduate courses will be required, or courses with grades of "C" or lower will be repeated until the CGPA earned on all deficiency, leveling, or background courses is 3.0 or higher. Such courses must be repeated if grades of "D" or less are received.
 - viii. **Additional departmental Regulations.** A department, with approval from the the academic college dean, may require its majors to

meet additional standards with regard to probation, suspension, and expulsion. These may be found in the appropriate departmental section of this catalog.

reading knowledge of a foreign language must take the non-thesis options.

4. General Degree Requirements

- Students must earn the number of semester hours of graduate credit specified in the respective degree requirements. Specific details may be found in the [program guide \(https://www.lamar.edu/graduate-studies/program-guide/\)](https://www.lamar.edu/graduate-studies/program-guide/) on the College of Graduate Studies website.
- Any student who writes a thesis or dissertation must defend it orally before his/her committee. Students who are in a degree program that does not require thesis and dissertation may be required to pass a comprehensive assessment, the form of which may be oral, written, or others as designated by the program.
- A student must meet the specific requirements as set forth in this catalog for a particular degree program.

Concentrations

Within the major field of study, a student may (or if required by their major program, must) choose a concentration area from those listed and described in this catalog. This can only be earned as a part of a degree program, and cannot be awarded independently of a degree. This concentration will be indicated on the student's official transcript. Only one concentration may be completed within a degree. Concentration hours are specialization areas within a discipline and are included in the minimum hours required to complete the degree. The specific requirements for each concentration will be established by the department or program offering the concentration. These requirements are published in the appropriate section of this catalog. Not all programs offer concentrations. Select programs have more than one concentration area to choose from while other programs require completion of a specific concentration area. Questions regarding concentrations should be referred to the academic department chair or program director.

Certificates

A student may choose to pursue a certificate from those listed and described in this catalog. A certificate offers students a focused study on a narrow subject, rather than the broader range of study offered by a degree. Often, credits earned toward a certificate can also be applied to complete a degree in the same field. Requirements are published in the appropriate section of this catalog. Following a review and recommendation from the University Curriculum Council, the Provost approves all certificates and decides all disputes concerning certificates. Questions regarding certificates should be referred to the appropriate academic department chair or program director.

Master of Arts

- Meet all general degree requirements.
- If writing a thesis, complete 30 semester hours of graduate work: 18 in the major field, six in thesis, six in an approved minor, or six additional hours in the major.
- If not writing a thesis, complete 36 semester hours of graduate work approved by the graduate committee.
- Except for the non-thesis option in history candidates for the M.A. degree must present evidence of a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language. (ASL may not be used for this requirement). This requirement may be satisfied by examination or by submitting college credit equivalent to that required for the degree of Bachelor of Arts at Lamar University. Candidates for the M.A. without evidence of a

Master of Business Administration

- Meet all general degree requirements.
- Complete 30 hours of second-year M.B.A. courses specified under College of Business degree requirements if a thesis is written, plus any first-year M.B.A. courses required.
- If a thesis is not written, complete 36 hours of second-year M.B.A. courses as specified under College of Business degree requirements, plus any first-year M.B.A. courses required.

Master of Education

- Meet all general degree requirements.
- Complete 30 semester hours of graduate work if a thesis is written or 36 semester hours if a non-thesis program is selected.
- Meet the specific requirements listed in the College of Education section of this catalog for each degree program.

Master of Engineering

- Meet all College of Graduate Studies general degree requirements.
- Complete a minimum of 30 hours (10 courses) of graduate work approved by the student's graduate advisor.
- Satisfactory completion of a final comprehensive examination.

Master of Engineering Management

- Meet all College of Graduate Studies general degree requirements.
- Complete a minimum of 30 hours (10 courses) of graduate work approved by the student's graduate advisor.
- Satisfactory completion of a final comprehensive examination.

Master of Engineering Science

- Meet all College of Graduate Studies general degree requirements.
- Complete a minimum of 24 semester hours (eight courses) approved by the student's graduate committee chair and graduate advisor.
- Satisfactorily complete and defend a master's thesis (a minimum of 6 semester hours).

Master of Music

- Meet all general degree requirements.
- Performance Track. Complete 30 semester hours of graduate work: 12 hours in the applied major, six in music literature, six in music theory, and six in music education.
- Special requirements in addition to the above: a formal public recital and a research paper OR a lecture recital.
- Education Track. Complete 36 semester hours of graduate work: 18 in music education, six in music literature, six in music theory, and six in a thesis.
- Exceptions: six additional hours in music education may be substituted for the thesis, and six hours in applied music may be substituted for music education courses.

Master of Science in Nursing

- Meet all general degree requirements.
- Complete 37 semesters hours of graduate work: 15 hours of graduate nursing core courses, 13 hours in the track (Nursing Administration or Nursing Education), and 9 hours of support courses.

- c. Complete at least 4 hours of Advanced Role Practicum in the selected track.
- d. Meet the specific requirements listed in the College of Arts and Sciences, JoAnne Gay Dishman Department of Nursing section of this catalog.

- d. Obtain admission to candidacy by completing all coursework required for the degree, complete six hours of dissertation credit following admission to candidacy, and successfully defend the dissertation prior to graduation.

Master of Public Administration

- a. Meet all general degree requirements.
- b. Complete 36 semester hours of graduate work as specified for the degree in the Department of Political Science section of this catalog.
- c. Pass both oral and written comprehensive final examinations.

Master of Public Health

- a. Meet all degree requirements
- b. Complete 42 semester hours of graduate work as specified for the degree in the Department of Health and Kinesiology section of this catalog.
- c. Pass 6 hours of a capstone sequence as part of the 42- semester hour requirement.

Master of Science

- a. Meet all general degree requirements.
- b. Complete 30 semester hours of graduate work: 15 to 18 semester hours in the major field, six in thesis, and six to nine semester hours in the minor field. With the approval of the head of the major department, a student may elect to take all work in the major field.
- c. If a thesis is not required, complete 36 hours of approved coursework.
- d. The graduate degree in psychology requires 38 hours in approved coursework and 6 hours in a thesis.
- e. Students applying to the computer science program must satisfy the depth and breadth requirements as defined by the graduate faculty of the Department of Computer Science as stipulated in the department's section of this catalog.

Doctor of Audiology

- a. Satisfactorily complete 57 semester credits of didactic coursework required by graduate faculty.
- b. Satisfactorily complete 42 semester credits of clinical practicum. (24 clinical practicum; 18 externship).
- c. Satisfactorily complete an approved Candidacy Research Project or comprehensive examination.
- d. Satisfactorily complete an approved Candidacy Research Project
- e. Satisfactorily complete a one-year full-time externship beginning in the student's fourth year of the program.
- f. Satisfactorily complete a one-year full-time externship in the student's fourth year of the program.

Doctor of Education in Deaf Studies/Deaf Education

- a. Obtain credit for all courses required by the student's doctoral committee. The number of these courses will depend upon the student's pre-doctorate educational preparation, previous experience, and specialization emphasis during the program. Students must complete a minimum of 60 hours of coursework and six hours of dissertation.
- b. Satisfactorily pass preliminary written and oral examinations after the completion of 18 semester hours.
- c. Complete a four-semester (one calendar year) residency requirement.

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

- a. Complete 60 semester hours: 33 hours of core courses, 15 hours in research and 12 hours in dissertation. All coursework, including successful defense of the dissertation, must be completed within 10 years.
- b. Obtain credit for all courses required by the student's doctoral committee. The number of these courses will depend upon the student's pre-doctorate educational preparation, previous experience, and specialization emphasis during the program.
- c. For admission to candidacy, complete student proficiency assessment comprised of a portfolio, synthesis paper, and oral presentation.
- d. Following admission to candidacy, complete six hours of dissertation courses and defend the dissertation proposal. Complete six additional hours of dissertation and successfully defend the dissertation.

Doctor of Engineering

- a. Obtain credit for all courses required by the student's doctoral committee. The number and extent of these courses will depend upon the student's diagnostic examination, engineering experience, and educational objectives. In general, a minimum of 30 semester hours of 5000- and 6000-level course work beyond the equivalent of a master's degree will be required.
- b. Complete a residency of one year.
- c. Satisfactorily pass candidacy examinations as required by the student's doctoral committee.
- d. Complete a field study, normally 30 semester hours, involving some technological innovation.
- e. Submit and defend a formal engineering report on the field study.

Doctor of Philosophy in Chemical Engineering

- a. Ph.D. candidates must complete a minimum of 70 credit hours of coursework beyond the bachelor's degree.
- b. Complete direct action items.
- c. Select the academic committee adhering to the requirements of the department.
- d. Pass a written qualifying exam.
- e. Select an advisor within one semester after passing the written qualifying exam and submit a degree plan within one year.
- f. Complete dissertation proposal, prepare dissertation and pass dissertation defense.

For special conditions, see the College of Engineering portion of this catalog, Section 11.

5. Candidacy Requirements for Degrees

New graduate students do not have an academic committee and are advised by the chair of the major department or a member of the graduate faculty designated as the initial advisor. Graduate students are not considered to be candidates for a degree until they have completed a specified set of graduate courses and have proven their academic capability. In select programs, students must pass a qualifying exam before being admitted to candidacy. Students who have been admitted

to candidacy are assigned an academic committee, and the committee establishes a graduation plan.

- a. Initial Advisement. For the first 12 hours of graduate work, students are advised by the chair of the major department or a member of the graduate faculty who has been designated by the chair as the initial advisor. In the College of Business, all graduate students are advised each semester by the associate dean.
- b. Timing of Admission to Candidacy. Admission to the College of Graduate Studies does not imply admission to candidacy for a graduate degree. Students seeking a graduate degree must be admitted to candidacy after completing a minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate study and before their last nine semester hours.
- c. Restrictions and Prohibitions to Admission to Candidacy. Graduate students may not be admitted to candidacy if they a) are on probation, b) are suspended, c) have not removed all undergraduate deficiencies, and/or d) have not completed at least 12 hours of recommended graduate courses. International students must show English proficiency before they can be admitted to candidacy.
- d. Procedure for Applying for Admission to Candidacy. The student is responsible for verifying that the process for admission to candidacy has been initiated by the major department through the degree Audit process.
- e. Recommendation of Academic Committee and Degree Plan. If these recommendations are approved, the student is admitted to candidacy. The graduate dean has the option of appointing additional members to an academic committee.
- f. Composition and Roles of the Academic Committee. The academic committee will include a member of the graduate faculty designated as the supervising professor, along with a minimum of two other members of the graduate faculty. For interdisciplinary or collaborative research, a co-supervising professor may be designated and must be approved by the graduate dean. Either the supervising professor or the co-supervising professor must be from the student's home department and must have full or initial graduate faculty membership. An additional non-graduate faculty member may be included in the committee, subject to the approval of the graduate dean. The committee will assist in monitoring/supervising the remainder of the student's program, including revision of the degree plan; supervision of research; writing and approval of the thesis, field study report, or dissertation; and administration and evaluation of the final comprehensive examination.
- g. Candidacy Examinations. In the process leading to admission to candidacy, an academic department may require a passing score on a standardized or locally produced examination.

6. Academic Committees - Appointment and Modification

Members of a student's academic committee are appointed by the chair of the student's major department at the time the student is admitted to candidacy. After admission to candidacy, but before the date of the final examination or the oral defense, the student may request a change in the committee composition with the approval of the student's current committee members, new committee members, the department chair, and the college dean. If the department chair or college dean does not approve a request for a committee change, the student may request the graduate dean to appoint a three-member Review Committee. In the event the Review Committee fails to effect an agreement between the student and the department chair (and/or the academic committee), a new committee may be selected for the student by the graduate

dean, the dean of the student's academic college, and two members of the graduate faculty of the student's academic college chosen by the graduate dean. The time period should not exceed 10 class days from the date of receipt by the graduate dean of a written request for review and arbitration by the student and the appointment of a new committee.

7. Thesis and Other Requirements

A thesis is required for the Master of Science degrees in chemistry and psychology and for the Master of Engineering Science degree. It is not available in programs leading to the following degrees: Master of Public Administration, Master of Music, Master of Education in Counseling and Development, Master of Education in Educational Administration, Master of Engineering Management. A thesis is optional in all other degree programs. Students who write a thesis must follow the procedure below

- a. Register for the departmental thesis course with the approval of the student's graduate advisor. The first registration is for Thesis 5390; all subsequent registrations are for Thesis 5391. Only an S or U will be entered for Thesis 5390 or Thesis 5391 until Thesis 5391 has been completed. Thesis 5390 and 5391 should not be taken in the same semester. **Note:** No academic credit is given for thesis courses until the thesis has been approved and accepted by the major department and the College of Graduate Studies. At that time, the semester hours of credit as specified by the degree program will be awarded a grade determined by the supervising professor.
- b. Attend a thesis workshop given by the College of Graduate Studies in the first thesis course. Thesis workshops are held every semester and are designed to inform the student of the quality standards and accepted formats and styles. Students will have the opportunity to ask questions of the Graduate Office staff who oversee the thesis process.
- c. Write a thesis under the direction of the supervising professor. The form and style of the thesis must follow the thesis guidelines that are available on the College of Graduate Studies website (<https://www.lamar.edu/graduate-studies/>).
- d. After the thesis has been proofed for content, grammar, and format by the supervising professor and members of the thesis committee, the student will submit a preliminary electronic copy of the thesis in the final form via email to the College of Graduate Studies. Check the Graduate Studies website for important dates.
- e. Defend the thesis orally at least 15 days before the date of graduation at a time and place specified by the supervising professor. Once the defense is complete, the supervising professor will use Degree Audit to enter the G-7 form to report the results of the defense to the College of Graduate Studies within two working days.
- f. Submit the final copy of the thesis electronically on or before the deadline set by the College of Graduate Studies (see the website for deadline and instructions). A copy of the signature page with all original signatures except the graduate dean must also be submitted to the Graduate Office before the deadline.

8. Non-Thesis Requirements

- a. Each candidate for a graduate degree who does not write a thesis may be required to pass a comprehensive final assessment during the last semester of attendance and at least 10 days before the conferral of the degree. The requirement to take and the form of the comprehensive final assessment will be determined by each individual program as approved by the graduate dean.
- b. A student must register for the comprehensive assessment by completing and submitting the required form to the chair of the

major department at the same time when applying for graduation. Applications must be filed before the deadline established by the College of Graduate Studies. Specific dates will be found in the [Academic Calendar \(https://www.lamar.edu/academic-calendar/\)](https://www.lamar.edu/academic-calendar/).

- c. With the approval of the graduate dean and if all requirements for graduation except successful completion of the comprehensive assessment have been completed, the student may complete the assessment during a later semester without being enrolled in the College of Graduate Studies.
- d. Written comprehensive assessments will be administered in accordance with the schedule set by the academic department. For specific dates, please consult the [official calendar \(https://client-snap.dev8.leapfrog.com/lamar/external.html?link=https://www.lamar.edu/academic-calendar\)](https://client-snap.dev8.leapfrog.com/lamar/external.html?link=https://www.lamar.edu/academic-calendar) or contact the College of Graduate Studies for details.
- e. Failure to pass a comprehensive assessment in three attempts will result in permanent suspension from that degree program. The assessment may be taken only once each term. Students suspended under this provision may be admitted to another degree program if they meet the required standards and are accepted by the new degree program.
- f. A department may prescribe additional academic requirements for its majors with the approval of the dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

9. Special Topic Projects

A Special Topic Project may be required for some degrees. Those taking Special Topic Projects will be required to be continuously enrolled in the course until completion. If a student is unable to complete this course in one semester, a U will be given, and the student must re-enroll in this course until completion.

10. Graduation Procedure

Students who intend to graduate at the end of a particular semester must apply for graduation through Self-Service Banner on or before the official deadline for application as established by The [Academic Calendar \(https://www.lamar.edu/academic-calendar/\)](https://www.lamar.edu/academic-calendar/).

Participation in commencement exercises is not required for the receipt of a graduate degree, though participation is strongly recommended.