

Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies Graduate Student Handbook

Updated for 2017-2018

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I. Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies Directory

As a graduate student in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, you will be assigned two advisors who will oversee different aspects of your degree progress: the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Academic Advisor. Dr. Cecile Accilien, the Director of Graduate Studies, will be the person you see each semester to plan your course of study. She handles all academic questions relating to your study in the M.A. program. The Graduate Academic Advisor handles all the paperwork and files that pertain to your study in this program, as well as the forms necessary to the completion of your requirements for the degree including, including thesis defense. The Advisor is also your resource for any questions regarding graduate policy as well as non-academic questions you have about the program. Other staff members in the Center Office who can assist you with general questions include our Administrative Assistant and our Communications Assistant. The Director of the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies is happy to talk to you at any time about the program.

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II. Key Offices at KU

College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA)

COGA oversees graduate affairs and administers university policy for programs within the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. The [COGA Website](#) contains comprehensive information on requirements and processes pertaining to graduate education at KU. Most common questions can be answered with the information provided there, including questions regarding [enrollment changes and forms](#), University policies regarding [exams and committee requirements](#), and University [graduation requirements](#).

COGA reviews all [student petitions](#) of University and College policy, issuing decisions on behalf of the College or referring as required to a faculty committee and/or the Office of Graduate Studies. The more common student petitions relate to [Enrollment](#), [Leave of Absence](#), and [Time Limit Extensions](#).

COGA is a resource if you have any questions about petitions or graduation requirements that your department is unable to answer. Refer to the [COGA Website](#) for current staff contact information.

Office of Graduate Studies

[Graduate Studies](#) is the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies at KU. The Executive Council of Graduate Studies sets policies and regulations governing graduate study, and offers various programs for graduate students throughout the year. While COGA should be your first stop for any questions your department cannot answer, you may be referred to Graduate Studies for certain matters, especially for questions about [GTA/GRA/GA appointments and policies](#).

Graduate Admissions (Within the Office of Graduate Studies)

Contact Graduate Admissions for questions regarding the [KU Online Application for Graduate Study](#), ADMIT System/Prospect, [English Proficiency Requirements](#), and [Official Transcripts](#).

Office of the Registrar (OUR)

Contact [OUR](#) for questions related to enrollment (if the question cannot be resolved via the enrollment changes link provided under COGA), [tuition and campus fees](#), the [academic calendar](#), and [fee petitions](#).

Financial Aid

Contact the [Financial Aid Office](#) for questions related to the disbursement of scholarships, fellowship awards, loans, and FAFSA.

International Student Services (ISS)

Contact [ISS](#) for questions related to international students, including enrollment requirements, international student insurance, obtaining a social security card, I-20 questions, and any issues related to student visas. While other offices on campus such as the Applied English Center,

Human Resources, or the Registrar may also handle related matters, because the student's legal status in the country may be affected, it is recommended that students contact ISS first.

III. General Policies & Procedures

Admission

To be considered for admission to the M.A. program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, students must meet all [University Requirements for Admission](#).

In addition to the university requirements for admission, the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies also has the following pre-requisites for graduate admission:

- B.A. degree, preferably in one of the social sciences or humanities
- Language proficiency in either Spanish or Portuguese as demonstrated by completion of a fourth-semester course

Applicants who do not meet these pre-requisites may be admitted provisionally or on a probationary basis, for a limited time, until they clear their provision or probationary status (see Provisional Admission).

Application Deadlines

For Domestic Students: To apply for admission into the M.A. program, please submit all materials no later than April 1st for fall admission and no later than November 15th for spring admission.

For International Students: To apply for admission into the M.A. program, please submit all materials no later than January 15th for fall admission and no later than October 1st for spring admission.

Application Materials & Procedures

Applicants to the Latin American and Caribbean Studies M.A. program should complete the [KU Application for Graduate Study](#). An application fee of \$65 for domestic, and \$85 for international students must accompany your application.

Please be aware that the following items will need to be prepared in advance and uploaded to the online application:

- A statement of interest, explaining your background and interest in pursuing the M.A. degree in Latin American and Caribbean Studies
- Three letters of recommendation, preferably from professors who are familiar with your academic work, each accompanied by the Graduate Letter of Recommendation Form (These forms are included as part of the online Graduate Application form)
- Copy of current Resume

- Writing Sample (in English) of 10-20 pages
- Official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores (KU's GRE code: 6871)
- For international students: submission of official TOEFL or IELTS scores. International Students are **not** required to take the GRE.
- One official transcript for all post-secondary education. Although there is an option for uploading unofficial transcripts to the online application, an official transcript should also be sent directly from those previously attended institutions to KU via email: GPAC@ku.edu or mail: Graduate Admissions, 1450 Jayhawk Blvd., Strong Hall 313, Lawrence, KS 66045

International Students should contact [ISS](#) for questions related to the process and timeline for visa applications

Students admitted through the Master's Accelerator Program (MAP) have a modified set of admissions materials.

Questions regarding the application procedure should be directed to the Graduate Academic Advisor.

Non-Native Speakers of English

The office of Graduate Studies requires applicants, international or domestic, whose native language is not English to demonstrate English proficiency. Please review the Graduate Studies' [Policy on English Proficiency Requirements for Admission](#) for more information regarding university requirements for providing proof of English proficiency.

Provisional Admission

On rare occasions, the Center may recommend an applicant who does not meet the [University's minimum requirements](#) for provisional admission. This may occur, for example, if a student's overall undergraduate GPA is deficient but the major GPA, GRE scores, and writing sample suggest strong potential for success in graduate study. All recommendations for provisional admission are contingent on approval by the College and University.

To continue in the program, students admitted provisionally must meet any additional requirements placed on them upon admission by the Director of Graduate Study. The full policy on Provisional Admission can be found within the policy on [Admission to Graduate Study](#).

IV. Graduate Student Funding

The Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies supports graduate students in pursuing opportunities to fund their graduate education and their research through a variety of different sources.

Tuition and Stipends

The Center typically offers a limited number of Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) to support students through a stipend and tuition. In addition, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese is sometimes able to offer a limited number of GTAs to CLACS students.

CLACS Fellowships and Awards

The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies offers various competitive awards to support graduate student research and travel:

- Stansifer Fellowship
- Robert Oppenheimer Memorial Scholarship
- Pierre A. Stouse Jr. Memorial Award

Information on CLACS funding options are available on the [CLACS Graduate Funding](#) webpage.

KU Sources of Support

The University of Kansas offers multiple competitive scholarships and fellowships for which CLACS students are eligible. In addition, the University of Kansas also funds students through a wide variety of employment opportunities across campus.

- [Graduate Studies Scholarships and Awards](#)

External Funding Sources

CLACS and the University of Kansas support students in seeking and applying for external funding.

- [External Funding Sources](#) (Graduate Studies Page)
- [External Funding Sources](#) (CLACS Page)

V. Master's Degree Requirements

Coursework Requirements

A minimum of 30 graduate credit hours is required in social sciences or humanities courses with Latin American content. At least 18 hours must have 50 to 100 percent of their content dedicated to Latin America. Literature courses with Latin American content at the 500-level or above (except PORT 611 and HAIT 500) may be counted as part of the 30 hours of coursework.

Required courses include the Introduction to Latin American Library Resources (LAA 700), the Interdisciplinary Seminar on Latin American Culture and Problems (LAA 701), and two other seminars with at least 50 percent of their content dedicated to Latin America, each in a separate discipline, at the 700 level or above (excluding thesis and research hours). Incoming students should enroll in LAA 700 during their first fall semester.

Language Requirement

M.A. Candidates must demonstrate comprehensive proficiency in either Spanish or Portuguese. Comprehensive proficiency includes aural, speaking, reading, and writing ability. Completion of SPAN 424 and 428 or a graduate literature course constitutes comprehensive proficiency in Spanish. Comprehensive proficiency in Portuguese requires completion of a literature course at or above the 500-level.

The language requirement should be satisfied as early as possible in the M.A. program. Students must also complete two semesters in a second language: SPAN 104 and 108 for Spanish, PORT 104/106 and 108/110 or PORT 611 for Portuguese. Quichua or Haitian Creole may be substituted as the second language.

Advising

Students should contact the Director of Graduate Study with any questions concerning the graduate program. All students must consult the DGS before enrollment each semester.

Final M.A. Project

LAS graduate students can choose either a Master's Thesis or Comparative Research Paper (CRP) Masters Degree. All graduate students should consult with the Graduate Advisor **before** they form a committee.

Thesis

The M.A. thesis is most appropriate as preparation for a doctoral program and dissertation. Students should declare their intention to write a thesis before the end of their first year in the program and form a committee of three faculty members, each from a different discipline. The student will defend the completed thesis in an oral examination before this committee. In order to prepare the thesis, a student must enroll in at least 3 credit hours of Thesis Research and Writing (LAA 899). Students may count up to 6 credit hours of LAA 899 toward the 30 graduate credits required for the degree.

The procedures for the thesis involve a) a brief (~2pp) **written proposal** to distribute to a potential Chair and committee members, b) the formation of a committee with a Chair affiliated with Latin American & Caribbean Studies and at least 2 other committee members from different disciplines, 1 of whom must be an affiliated Latin American faculty, c) input from the committee in refining the student's **research topic** and **bibliography**, d) the writing of the thesis, and e) passing an **oral defense oral exam** given by the committee.

Students must take at least **3 credits of Thesis/CRP (LAA 899)**, 6 of which can be applied to the MA, in which the committee Chair oversees their work. If the Chair does not have a line number for LAA 899, it can be acquired from Chad O'Bryhim, (chadobryhim@ku.edu) in the Latin American & Caribbean Studies office. The research topic must consist of an *analysis of a specific issue that goes beyond the student's coursework*. The thesis should be an *original work of publication quality*, not merely a long research report. *The thesis must be of an appropriate*

quality to represent graduate work at KU and the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies.

The text should be at least 80-100 pages in length, and formatting regulations are available in the College Graduate Division (300 Strong). Students must have their final **draft** passed by their Chair and distributed to their committee, at least 3 weeks before the oral defense. The Director of Graduate Studies must also be notified of the date, the committee members, and the project title 3 weeks before the exam in order to schedule it.

The **oral defense** entails questions posed by the committee members that enable evaluation of the student's expertise on the research topic and ability to formulate judgments independently. The student defends the research problem, methodology, presentation of evidence, and argument. Usually the defense lasts 1-2 hrs. The committee assigns either an Honors, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory for the thesis, and it can suggest revisions. Once the qualification has been given and the **final formatted copy** is signed by the committee, the student has passed. The deadlines for submission of the final formatted copy usually fall around December 15, May 1, and August 1. One copy of the revised thesis must be left with Latin American & Caribbean Studies and will become part of the permanent archive of the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies and the KU Libraries.

Comparative Research Paper

The comparative research paper M.A. is a terminal degree particularly suitable for a career in the public or private sector. Students take 3 credits of thesis/comparative research paper credit (LAA 899) with their chair. Only 3 credits of LAA 899 can count towards the comparative research paper M.A. degree. The culmination of the comparative research paper M.A. is an oral examination during the last semester of the program. The student will form a committee of three faculty members for the oral examination.

The procedures for the CRP involve a) a brief (~2pp) **written proposal** to distribute to a potential Chair and committee members, b) the formation of a committee with a faculty member (with regular graduate faculty status or ad hoc appointment) affiliated with Latin American & Caribbean Studies and at least 2 other committee members from different departments, 1 of whom must be an affiliated Latin American faculty, c) input from the committee in refining the student's **research topic** and **bibliography**, d) the writing of a CRP, and e) passing an **oral exam** given by the committee.

Students should take **3 credits of Thesis/CRP (LAA 899)** with their Chair. Only 3 credits of LAA 899 can count towards the CRP MA degree.

If the Chair does not have a line number for LAA 899, it can be acquired from the Administrative Associate at CLACS, Chad O'Bryhim, (chadobryhim@ku.edu) in the Latin American & Caribbean Studies office. After selecting a committee, the student must submit the members' names to the Director of Graduate Studies. The research topic must consist of an *interdisciplinary analysis of a broad issue that goes beyond the student's coursework and involves more than one country for purposes of comparison.*

The format for the CRP consists of **a)** a 6-8 page bibliography, **b)** an annotated bibliography of at least 10 books, and **c)** a 30-page interdisciplinary analysis of the issue. The Chair must approve of the defensibility of the **final draft**, and then it must be distributed to the committee at least 3 weeks before the **oral exam**. The Director of Graduate Studies must also be notified of the date and project title 3 weeks before the exam.

The oral exam entails questions posed by the committee members to evaluate the student's expertise on the research topic, overall knowledge, and ability to formulate judgments independently. Usually the exams last about 1½-2 hours. An oral exam should not be scheduled until at least three months have elapsed since the formation of the committee and at least three weeks after the student has requested a date, time, and place of the exam with Chad O'Bryhim. The deadlines for completion of the thesis/CRP for graduation usually fall around December 15, May 1, and August 1 each year. One final copy of the revised CRP must be left with Latin American & Caribbean Studies.

VI. Graduate Certificate Requirements

Coursework Requirements

The Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies also offers a 12-credit/ 4-course graduate certificate designed for KU graduate students from other disciplines, as well as students from outside the university. The certificate has three tracks: general Latin American & Caribbean Studies, Brazilian Studies, and Central American & Mexican Studies.

As a prerequisite for beginning the certificate, students applying to the Brazilian Studies track must have significant training or experience in Portuguese. Students applying to the Central American and Mexican Studies track must have significant training or experience in Spanish. No prior foreign language training or experience is required for admission to the general Latin American and Caribbean Studies track.

Latin American and Caribbean Studies Track

Graduate students interested in broad training on Latin American and the Caribbean or in a Latin American or Caribbean region, other than Central America, Mexico, and Brazil, may complete the general certificate in Latin American and Caribbean Studies.

The Latin American and Caribbean Studies certificate requires four courses (12 hours) that include the following:

- LAA 701: Interdisciplinary seminar on Latin American Cultures & Problems
- Three additional courses from the Center's current approved list of Latin American and Caribbean Studies courses. Courses must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Brazilian Studies Track

The Brazilian Studies Track of the certificate recognizes students with intensive training specific to Brazil. The Brazilian Studies track requires Portuguese language proficiency, which includes aural, speaking, reading, and writing ability and can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. The certificate also requires four courses (12 hours) that include the following:

- LAA 701: Interdisciplinary seminar on Latin American Cultures & Problems
- Three additional electives from the Center's current approved list of Latin American and Caribbean Studies courses with at least 50% content on Brazil. Courses must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Central American and Mexican Track

The Central American and Mexican track of the certificate recognizes students with intensive training specific to the geographical region running from the U.S. border to Panama.

The Central American and Mexican Studies track requires language proficiency in Spanish-which includes aural, speaking, reading, and writing ability. The certificate also requires four courses (12 hours) that include the following:

- LAA 701: Interdisciplinary seminar on Latin American Cultures & Problems
- Three additional electives from the Center's current approved list of Latin American and Caribbean Studies courses with at least 50% content on Central America, Mexico, or both. Courses must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Graduate Certificate Admission Requirements

An application is required in order to be admitted to and pursue a Graduate Certificate. Applicants must meet the university's [eligibility and admission criteria](#) in order to apply.

Applicants must submit a completed [Graduate Application Form](#). The application fee is \$30. Please be aware that the following items will need to be prepared in advance and uploaded to the online application:

Current KU graduate students must submit the following materials:

- KU Graduate Application and application fee
- A current copy of the student's KU advising report showing a GPA of 3.0 or higher

Non-KU students seeking only the CLACS certificate at KU must submit the following materials:

- KU Graduate Application and application fee

- An official transcript copy from the student's degree-granting undergraduate institution showing a GPA of 3.0 or higher
- A current resume (optional)

Questions regarding the application process can be directed to the Graduate Academic Advisor.

VII. General Guidelines

Good Standing

To be considered in “good standing” in any graduate program, the University requires graduate students to maintain a GPA of 3.0 (or “B” average) and be making timely progress toward meeting their degree requirements. For additional information on good standing, as well as probation and dismissal procedures for those students that do not meet the requirements for good standing, see the University Policies and Degree Requirements section of this handbook

Grievance Procedures

The Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies advises that graduate students make an attempt to resolve any issues, especially matters concerning grades, directly with the instructor or party involved, or with the Center's director. If a grievance arises that cannot be resolved directly, or if the student does not feel comfortable attempting to resolve the issue with the Center director, the student should then follow the center's official grievance procedure, which has been approved by the University and may be found by following the link below:

[Grievance Procedure, Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies](#)

Petitions

If a graduate student has a compelling reason to seek substitution of a program requirement, the student may seek the written permission of the CLACS Director of Graduate Studies. Graduate students with a compelling reason to seek exemption from a program requirement or a University policy may submit a petition to the CLACS Director of Graduate Studies and the CLACS Graduate Committee.

Petitioners should write a letter, addressed to the Graduate Committee, explaining the reasons why the student is seeking exemption from specific rules, as well as how the educational goals the rules reflect will still be fulfilled. Where applicable, this petition should be accompanied by a letter of support from the student's advisor and/or the appropriate supporting materials. The letter should be sent to the Director of Graduate Studies, who then refers the petition to the Graduate Committee, which will convene and consider the petition.

In cases where the policy or requirement is a departmental requirement the graduate faculty will issue a final decision.

In cases where the policy or requirement being petitioned is a University policy, the graduate faculty will decide whether to support the student's petition. If the faculty is in support, the department will submit a petition form to the College Office of Graduate Affairs accompanied by supporting materials as required. The petition form specifies the supporting material needed for each kind of petition. These materials must accompany the petition sent to COGA. COGA's [petition web page](#) provides additional information regarding the more common University petitions, such as Leave of Absence, Enrollment requirements, and Time Limit Extensions may also be found in the University Policies and Degree Requirements section of this handbook.

In cases where the graduate faculty declines to support a University petition, no paperwork may be submitted to COGA. COGA only accepts student petitions in cases where there is documented departmental support and when the petition itself is submitted by a representative of the department. In the case of Latin American Studies, this representative is the Graduate Advisor.

Students should always consult with the DGS and/or Graduate Advisor prior to submitting a petition to the Graduate Committee to ensure that a petition is necessary and that all the appropriate supporting documentation is accounted for.

VIII. University Policies & Degree Requirements

This section contains information on requirements and policies of the Office of Graduate Studies and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, both 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.

For questions about the following University policies, students may contact the College's Graduate Academic Advisor.

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 evidence by an official transcript from the institution the degree was obtained) and a minimum GPA of 3.0 in the most recent degree that was obtained.

Students not meeting these requirements *may* be admitted provisionally upon recommendation by the department; however, restrictions on certain type funding, including GTA/GRA/GA funding, apply to students on provisional admission status. Students should consult the program admissions advisor or Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) on their eligibility for funding with admission.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Admission to Graduate Study](#)

English Proficiency Requirements

The University requires applicants, international or domestic, whose native language is not English to demonstrate English proficiency for admission to any graduate program at KU. There are two ways to prove English proficiency.

- Graduation with a baccalaureate degree or higher from an accredited U.S. institution of higher education, or from such an institution in an English-speaking country where the medium of instruction is English. The first option is not sufficient, however, to be appointed as a Graduate Teaching Assistant.
- Submitting results of the TOEFL iBT examination taken no more than two years prior to the semester of admission. A score of at least 20 in each part is required for regular admission. A score of 24 on the speak section is required to receive a Teaching Assistantship.

Applicants that do not meet the minimum scores should review the English Proficiency Chart, provided via the link below, for information about provisional admission.

Applicants should submit their scores directly to the Office of Graduate Studies:

Office of Graduate Studies
213 Strong Hall
1450 Jayhawk Blvd.
Lawrence, KS 66045

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](#)
- [Graduate Credit](#)

Enrollment

For graduate students in the College, advising on enrollment and course selection takes place at the department level. While units within the College may define full-time enrollment more stringently, the University defines it as follows:

Fall and Spring semesters:

- Enrollment in 9 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' enrollment in dissertation hour(s).

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

While these are KU's definitions of full-time enrollment, other institutions—including financial aid and/or health insurance providers—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 the first day of classes will be assessed a late fee. Students not enrolled by the 60th day of classes will be automatically discontinued in Enroll & Pay.

Students who wish to leave their graduate program should inform the department of such plans in writing so that a Voluntary Discontinue form may be submitted on his or her behalf.

Deadlines for adding, changing, dropping, or withdrawing from courses entirely, as well as 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](#).**

The College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA) website has a very useful [Enrollment Changes Guide](#), which provides comprehensive guidance on the forms and endorsements required for different enrollment situations, including late enrollment changes after the published deadlines.

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

Related Policies:

- [Discontinued Enrollment](#)
- [Enrollment](#)
- [Enrollment Regulations](#) (CLAS)
- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Graduate Coursework Expiration Dates](#)
- [Master's Enrollment Requirements](#)

Graduate Credit (Including Transfer Credit)

The Office of Graduate Studies policy on Graduate Credit 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 a 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 count graduate-level coursework completed at another institution toward their KU degree. 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 below, as well as consulting with their DGS and/or Graduate Advisor. 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 and/or Graduate Advisor 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.

Reduced Credit 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 credit hour degree 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 able to maintain a superior grade point average. Reduced credit hour degrees are also distinct from transfer credit in that they may be based on non-coursework (e.g. internships, work experience, study abroad, previously completed degrees) 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 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 and/or Graduate Advisor.

Count Toward Degree

The [Count Toward Degree form](#) is an Office of the Registrar Form that allows graduate credit taken at KU as a non-degree seeking student to count towards a later degree at KU.

As with transfer credit and reduced credit hour degrees, restrictions apply, so students should carefully review the information in the link below, and consult with their DGS and/or Graduate Advisor.

Related Policies:

- [Graduate Credit](#)
- [Count Toward Degree Form](#)
- [Co-enrollment](#)
- [MA and MS Degrees](#) (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 overall 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.

If a student elects to take the CR/NC option, they must make this election during the CR/NC time frame, which can be found in the Registrar's current [Academic Calendar](#).

The period typically begins after the last day to add a class and extends for approximately two weeks. This process must be initiated in the COGA office.

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

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

Related Policies:

- [University Senate Rules and Regulations \(USRR\), Section 2.2.7](#)

Probation & Dismissal

Probation is an academic status that can be assigned to a graduate student if he or she is not making satisfactory progress toward completing his or her degree. The department initiates the probation process and will inform the student what he or she must do to return to good standing. **Students are most commonly placed on probation if their graduate cumulative GPA drops 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 overall graduate average is raised to a 3.0 by the end of the probationary semester, the student will be automatically returned to good academic standing.

Students may also be placed on probation by their departments for other reasons that constitute a failure to make satisfactory progress towards degree. These may include, but are not limited to; failure to make adequate progress on a thesis, unacceptable academic performance on program components outside of coursework (e.g. exams), an unsatisfactory result in their department's annual evaluation, or as a result of going beyond their official time to degree. 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 measure of progress.

If a student is unable to raise his or her GPA or otherwise meet departmental expectations for adequate academic progress by the end of the probationary period, he or she may be dismissed from the graduate program. Once dismissed, a student will no longer be able to enroll in coursework and cannot complete his or her degree. Students dismissed from any College graduate program may not be admitted to any other graduate program in the College.

A student on probation or facing dismissal should discuss his or her status with their DGS and/or Graduate Advisor.

Related Policies:

- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)
- [CLAS Regulations on Probation and Dismissal](#)
- [Good Academic Standing policy](#)

Grading

The Office of Graduate Studies' Grading Policy governs requirements for the grading of graduate students above those describe in Article II of the University Senate Rules and Regulations. Additionally, individual schools, departments, or programs may have grading policies that are more stringent that those of Graduate Studies. Students should review the

[College-specific grading information](#) and consult their DGS and the departmental 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 coursework counted toward any of the Master's degrees at KU, and only courses graded A, B, or C (excluding C-) may be counted.

Additional information pertaining to graduate grading can be found on COGA's pages for the [Credit/No Credit Option](#), [Incomplete Grades](#), and [Graduate GPA](#).

Related Policies:

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

Time Limits

The University expects that Master's degrees should typically be completed in two (2) years of full-time study, the doctorate 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 link below, as well as consult with their DGS and/or Graduate Advisor to create a timeline for degree completion. In order to support this process, COGA offers DGSs and advisors a [Mentoring Agreement Template](#) to use and/or adapt to their own needs. This template may be used with students in danger of going beyond the program's expected time limits, or simply as an advising tool for all their students. It is especially useful for doctoral students in the dissertation phase.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Degree Time Constraints](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Time Restraints](#)
- [Doctoral Program Profiles with Time To Degree Information](#)
- [Graduate Degree Completion Agreement](#) (PDF)
- [Mentoring Agreement Template](#) (Doc)

Leaves of Absences

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 department and while “stopping the clock” of their time to degree.

Requesting a Leave of Absence is done via 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 DGS and Graduate Advisor. Units or the DGS may request documentation to support the student’s need for a leave of absence; however, the only document that COGA requires for the petition is the Leave of Absence Petition form, linked below.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Leaves of Absence](#)
- [Leave of Absence Petition Form](#) (PDF)

Degree Requirements

Oral Exams

All graduate students must complete one or more exams as part of their degree requirements. In addition to department or program guidelines, the University has several policies pertaining to the following exams:

- Master’s Exam/Thesis Defense for Master’s Degree

Before a student is allowed to sit for this exam, pre-approval from COGA is required. This approval must be sought by the department at least two weeks prior to the exam date. COGA checks to ensure that the student has fulfilled certain University requirements. The full list of requirements that COGA checks for may be found via the link below. 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.

The following are University policies pertaining to these oral exams:

Oral Exam Committee Composition: For all oral exams, the committee members must be appointed members of the Graduate Faculty of KU. In addition, a majority of committee members serving on a graduate student oral examination committee must be tenured/tenure-track faculty holding regular or dissertation graduate faculty status in the candidate’s department/program of study.

Students should carefully review the university policies pertaining to [Master’s Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#), as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies when forming an exam committee.

Oral Exam Attendance: The [Oral Exam Attendance](#) policy describes rules for physical versus mediated attendance (e.g. Skype or phone) at oral exams.

In all cases, a majority of committee members must be physically present with the student for an exam to commence. The committee chair must be physically present. In cases where the student prefers that all committee members are physically present, the student's preference shall be honored.

Graduate Certificate Requirements

The University offers a variety of [Approved Graduate Certificate Programs](#) to encourage current graduate students to pursue interdisciplinary study. Certificate programs also provide an option for a coherent course of advanced study for those not ready to commit to a full degree program. There are certain restrictions on the timing of admissions to a Graduate Certificate program and the granting of credit for courses completed. 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 early in their graduate career, in addition to the individual certificate program requirements.

Related Policies and Forms:

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

Graduation Requirements

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.

COGA's graduation checklist contains a comprehensive list of all University requirements for graduation and should be used by every graduating Master's student in the College:

M.A. DEGREE GRADUATION CHECKLIST

Submission of the final draft of the thesis is done electronically. Students must comply with all University requirements for [formatting](#) and [electronic submission](#) of the thesis. There is no University requirement that students provide a bound or printed copy of the draft.

Students who have concerns or questions about the fulfillment of graduation requirements may arrange for a graduation appointment with the Graduate Advisor following the defense or final exam and in advance of the applicable Application for Graduation deadline. While this

appointment is not a requirement, it can be useful to review all degree requirements, verify that the Application for Graduation and Thesis submissions have been completed, and receive guidance on any pending items.