



POLICY TITLE	Graduate Program Continuation, Credit, and Graduation Requirements	Policy Number	524
Section	Student Affairs	Approval Date	June 21, 2024
Subsection	Academic Standards, Credits, and Grades	Effective Date	June 21, 2024
Responsible Office	Office of the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs		

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 This policy establishes the University’s continuation, credit, and graduation requirements for graduate programs.

2.0 REFERENCES

- 2.1 Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) Standards for Accreditation § 1.C
- 2.2 Utah Board of Higher Education Policy R401 *Approval of New Programs, Program Changes, Discontinued Programs, and Program Reports*
- 2.3 Utah Board of Higher Education Policy R475, *Common Course Numbering*
- 2.4 UVU Policy 525 *Credit for Prior Learning*
- 2.5 UVU Policy 541 *Student Code of Conduct*
- 2.6 UVU Policy 548 *Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Healthcare and Counseling Clinical Program Students*
- 2.7 UVU Policy 605 *Curriculum Process*
- 2.8 UVU Policy 658 *Establishment and Administration of Graduate Programs*

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 **Accredited institution:** An institution of higher learning that has been granted accreditation status by a regional or national accrediting agency within a scope of authority approved by the U.S. Department of Education.



3.2 Combined master's degree program: Bachelor's and master's degree programs that can be completed simultaneously by a graduate student who is admitted into the combined master's degree program.

3.3 Endorsement courses: A group of courses that prepares K–12 teachers or teacher candidates for specific area certification/endorsement by the Utah State Board of Education.

3.4 Full-time graduate student: Graduate students registered for nine credits or more per semester or summer. A nine-credit hour minimum load is generally accepted by sponsoring agencies for certifying full-time status. Graduate students are considered half-time graduate students when registered for four or more credits and less than nine credits per semester or summer.

3.5 Graduate student: For the purposes of this policy, a student who is admitted to a graduate program and is taking graduate courses, or a student who holds a bachelor's degree or above and who has been admitted as a non-matriculated graduate student and is taking graduate courses.

3.6 Joint master's degree program: Two master's degree programs that can be completed simultaneously by a graduate student admitted into the joint master's degree program.

3.7 Non-matriculated graduate student: A graduate student enrolled for credit but not admitted into a UVU graduate program.

4.0 POLICY

4.1 Requirements for Enrollment in Graduate-Level Courses

4.1.1 Only UVU graduate students are permitted to enroll in graduate-level courses.

4.1.2 Graduate students are not permitted to register for more than 17 credit hours per semester unless the graduate program director approves an exception.

4.2 Requirements for Graduation in Graduate Programs

4.2.1 To earn a master's degree, students must complete a minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate coursework beyond the bachelor's degree.

4.2.2 To earn a graduate certificate, students must complete a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 29 credit hours of graduate coursework beyond the bachelor's degree.

4.2.3 Second Graduate Degree Requirements

4.2.3.1 Students may earn a second master's degree at UVU but must meet all degree requirements for both graduate degrees. When a course is required for both graduate degrees,



taking the required course satisfies both requirements. However, the total number of credits for the second master's degree must be at least 15 credit hours beyond the credit hours required for the first master's degree.

4.2.4 Joint Master's Degree Programs

4.2.4.1 Joint master's degree programs shall be approved through the University curriculum process and through the process stated in Section 4.2.4.2 and published in the university catalog.

4.2.4.2 The graduate program committees of the master's programs participating in the joint master's degree program shall develop multi-year coordinated course offering schedules that allow students to complete the joint master's degree program in a reasonable time frame communicated by the joint master's degree program. This schedule shall be reviewed and approved by both graduate program directors, the dean(s) associated with the master's degree programs, and the Graduate Council. This approval must occur during the curriculum approval process. Any changes to the course offering schedule must be approved by both graduate program directors and the dean(s) associated with the master's degree programs.

4.2.4.3 Joint master's degree programs must consist of a minimum of 45 total graduate credit hours combined. Each master's degree in the joint program must be at least 15 credit hours.

4.2.4.4 A student must be admitted into the joint master's degree program to earn the master's degrees concurrently. Students must receive admission approval from both master's degree programs to be admitted into the joint master's degree program.

4.2.4.5 Students must meet all degree requirements for both master's degrees. Each master's degree may list required courses in the other joint degree program as elective courses in its degree program. When a course meets the required or elective course requirements of both master's degrees, another course is not substituted; taking the course satisfies the requirements of both master's degrees.

4.2.4.6 Students must complete the joint master's degree programs simultaneously. Students may withdraw from the joint master's program and remain in one of the master's degree programs without penalty.

4.2.4.7 A student shall be awarded two master's degrees after successfully and simultaneously completing the joint degree program.



4.2.5 Combined Master's Degree Programs

4.2.5.1 In accordance with UVU Policy 658 *Establishment and Administration of Graduate Programs*, combined master's degree programs shall be approved through the university curriculum process and published in the university catalog.

4.2.5.2 Combined master's degree programs allow students to complete a bachelor's and a master's degree concurrently.

4.2.5.3 A minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate coursework beyond the bachelor's degree is required for the master's degree.

4.2.5.4 Graduate coursework will not be applied to meet bachelor's degree requirements except for graduate programs that require more than 30 credit hours to complete. In these graduate programs, a minimum of 30 credit hours shall be designated as master's degree-only credit hours. The remaining credit hours beyond the minimum 30 master's degree-only credit hours may also be used to fulfill bachelor's degree requirements.

4.2.5.5 Students must meet all degree requirements for both the bachelor's and the master's degrees.

4.2.5.6 A student must be admitted into the combined master's degree program to earn the bachelor's and master's degrees concurrently.

4.2.5.7 A student must have completed 90 semester credit hours of undergraduate courses before beginning a combined master's degree program.

4.2.5.8 A student shall be considered a graduate student while enrolled in the combined master's degree program. This may impact the student's ability to receive financial aid that is normally available for undergraduate students.

4.2.5.9 A student shall be awarded the bachelor's degree and master's degree upon the successful completion of the combined degree program. A student who fails to complete the requirements for the master's portion of the combined degree will still be eligible to be awarded the bachelor's degree by successfully completing all requirements for the related standalone bachelor's degree. A master's degree cannot be awarded before the bachelor's degree is completed.

4.3 Graduate Coursework Completion Time Limits

4.3.1 Students shall complete graduate coursework within six years; individual programs may require graduate coursework to be completed in fewer than six years. Previously earned certificate and endorsement courses completed within a period of six years may count toward the



completion of graduate programs in the School of Education. When extenuating circumstances warrant, a student may request an extension to coursework completion time limits.

4.4 Graduate Graduation Requirements

4.4.1 Credit for courses in which a student earns a grade of “C-” or lower shall not be applied toward any graduate degree or certificate. Individual graduate programs may establish higher minimum grade requirements for individual courses.

4.4.2 A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher is required for students to graduate from a graduate program. Individual programs may establish higher GPA requirements.

4.4.3 All graduation requirements for graduate programs will be published in the university catalog.

4.5 Graduate Credit for Prior Learning

4.5.1 Graduate credit for prior learning may be awarded in accordance with Policy 525 *Credit for Prior Learning*, subject to the credit limitations in section 4.7.1 of this policy.

4.6 Transfer Credit for Graduate Programs

4.6.1 Graduate credits from another regionally accredited institution or equivalent are subject to grade and grade-point average minimums, as well as other requirements of the graduate program.

4.6.2 Approved transfer credits will not replace required residency hours.

4.6.3 Approved transfer credits will not be calculated into the student’s UVU GPA

4.6.4 Graduate programs may establish partner agreements with other institutions to accept their graduate course credits. These partner agreements must be approved through official curriculum processes and by the Office of General Counsel and the Provost. These credits will be counted toward a student’s required two-thirds residency hours so they can meet the requirements of section 4.7.1.

4.7 Limitations on Prior Learning Credit and Transfer Credit

4.7.1 To be eligible to graduate from a graduate program, the student must complete a minimum of two-thirds of their graduate program credit hours through the University or its recognized partner institutions. Therefore, a maximum of one-third of graduate program credits used for the master’s degree or graduate certificate may come from a combination of prior learning credit and transfer credit. Individual graduate programs may require students to complete more than two-thirds of graduate program credit hours in their programs. Individual graduate programs may establish stricter prior learning and transfer credit criteria.



4.8 Graduate Student Responsibilities

4.8.1 Graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA to remain in their graduate programs.

4.8.2 Graduate students are subject to the Student Rights and Responsibilities Code contained in Policy 541 *Student Code of Conduct*, and sections 4.8.1, 5.4.1, and 5.4.2 of this policy.

4.9 Graduate Program Requirements

4.9.1 Graduate programs shall be consistent with the University's mission, in keeping with the expectations of its respective disciplines and professions, and described in nomenclature that is appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered.

4.9.2 Graduate programs shall differ from undergraduate programs by requiring, among other things, greater depth of study; demands on student intellectual or creative capacities; knowledge of the literature of the field; and ongoing student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression, and/or relevant professional practice.

4.10 Graduate Tuition

4.10.1 For the purposes of tuition assessment and financial aid, all university students are classified as either graduate or undergraduate students and have their tuition assessed based on that classification regardless of the course level.

4.10.2 Matriculated graduate students are subject to the tuition rate for the graduate program to which they are admitted.

4.10.2.1 For joint master's degree programs, students shall be charged the higher tuition rate of the two programs.

4.10.2.2 For combined master's degree programs, students shall be charged different tuition for courses taken in the combined master's degree program compared to the related separate bachelor's and master's degrees' tuition.

4.10.2.3 Graduate Certificate in Secondary Teaching and Master of Arts in Teaching-Secondary Teaching courses shall be charged the graduate tuition rate. Additional undergraduate courses that are required for state licensure that are taken during this graduate certificate or master's program shall be charged the undergraduate tuition rate.

4.10.3 Non-matriculated graduate students are subject to the graduate tuition rate of the graduate program that offers the class(es) in which the students are enrolled.



5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 Course-Level Numbering and Acceptability

5.1.1 Graduate courses shall use the following numbering system:

- 1) 6000–6999: Graduate-level courses
- 2) 6800–6899: Graduate seminars (including methodology and research seminars)
- 3) 6900–6999: Directed readings, individual projects, theses, etc.
- 4) 679R: Special topics
- 5) 689R: Internship
- 6) 690R: Independent study
- 7) 696R: Master’s individual project
- 8) 697R: Master’s thesis research
- 9) 699R: Master’s thesis continuing registration

5.1.2 Advanced upper-division courses shall use the following numbering system:

- 1) 5000–5799: Advanced upper-division courses
- 2) 5800–5999: Advanced upper-division courses dedicated to seminars, directed reading, individual projects, etc., by permission of the program director

5.1.3 For purposes of efficiency, an advanced upper-division 5000-level course may be scheduled concurrently with a corresponding 6000-level course, with the two sections meeting together under the same instructor.

5.1.3.1 The 6000-level course and the related 5000-level course shall have the same credit ratios, instructional methods, and last three digits for course numbers. They must also have similar course titles and course descriptions. In addition to the identical learning objectives and assignments required in the 5000-level course, the corresponding 6000-level course shall have additional and substantive learning objectives and assignments approved for graduate-level work beyond those required of students enrolled at the 5000-level.



5.1.3.2 A maximum of twelve credits of 6000-level courses required for a master's degree and a maximum of six credits of 6000-level courses for a graduate certificate may be scheduled simultaneously with 5000-level courses. 5000- and 6000-level courses shall not be scheduled concurrently with courses numbered below the 5000-level.

5.1.4 Credit from 5000-level coursework shall not be used to fulfill master's degree or graduate certificate requirements, except for 5000-level endorsement courses accepted by the School of Education and specific and unusual 5000-level courses identified and approved for that purpose by the Graduate Council and Provost.

5.1.4.1 Except for the Graduate Certificate in Secondary Teaching and Master of Arts in Teaching-Secondary Education programs, credit from 5000-level endorsement coursework shall not exceed nine credits applied toward the completion of an eligible master's degree or three credits applied toward the completion of a graduate certificate program.

5.1.4.2 For the Graduate Certificate in Secondary Teaching or Master of Arts in Teaching-Secondary Education programs, 15 credits of 5000-level Alternative Pathway to Professional Educator Licenses courses may be applied toward completion of these graduate certificate or master's programs.

5.1.5 All 5000-level credits shall be recorded in the student records and on student transcripts as 5000-level courses.

5.1.6 To apply 5000-level endorsement course credit toward an eligible graduate program, a student must earn a grade of "B" or higher in the course and obtain approval from the graduate program director.

5.1.7 Credits from 5000-level endorsement courses shall not be applied toward both undergraduate and graduate degrees/certificates except for specific and unusual 5000-level courses identified and approved by the Graduate Council and Provost.

5.1.8 Credits from undergraduate courses below the 5000-level shall not be applied toward a graduate degree or certificate.

5.2 Extension of Course Completion Time Limits

5.2.1 To request an extension to coursework completion time limits, a student shall submit the request in writing to the graduate program director. The graduate program director may or may not grant the extension. The graduate program director's decision shall be final.

5.3 Graduate Credit Evaluation

5.3.1 Graduate program committees are responsible for evaluating graduate transfer credit and credit from previously completed graduate programs and determining whether these credits are appropriate to the graduate program the student is seeking.



5.3.2 Graduate program committee faculty shall evaluate a student's graduate coursework transcript. The decision of the graduate program committee shall be final.

5.3.3 Following the graduate program committee's evaluation of official transcripts, the graduate program director shall inform the Transfer Credit Office of any approved transfer and/or previously earned graduate credit. The Transfer Credit Office is responsible for posting transfer and/or previously earned graduate credit to the student's record in the university student information system.

5.4 Graduate Student Continuation and Suspension

5.4.1 Once admitted and enrolled, graduate students shall maintain continuous registration during fall and spring semesters, and during summer semester if required by the graduate program.

5.4.1.1 If graduate students cannot maintain continuous registration, they should file for a leave of absence. Before filing for a leave of absence, the student should discuss the reasons for the leave of absence with the graduate program director.

5.4.1.2 Service members and reservists shall be readmitted to a program if they are temporarily unable to attend class or have to suspend their studies due to service requirements.

5.4.1.3 Except for the service members and reservists stated in the previous section, the graduate program committee or its graduate program director or college/school graduate director designee may or may not grant the leave of absence. The graduate program committee or its designee's leave of absence decision shall be final.

5.4.1.4 Students who fail to maintain continuous registration and who have not been granted an official leave of absence shall be suspended from their graduate program. They shall be ineligible to register for future semesters unless they are readmitted through their graduate program's procedures.

5.4.2 Graduate students whose cumulative graduate GPA falls below 3.0 shall be placed on academic notice for the following semester. Students whose GPA remains below 3.0 after the notice semester shall be suspended from their graduate program and shall not be permitted to register or attend graduate courses.

5.4.2.1 Graduate students who are suspended from a graduate program for failing to maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA may appeal in writing to the graduate program director within 30 days of the suspension. Students should provide supporting materials and information justifying the request.

5.4.2.2 The graduate program director shall present the written appeal to the graduate program committee for consideration.



5.4.2.3 The decision of the graduate program committee shall be final.

5.4.3 Graduate students suspended from the University for violation of sections 4.8, 5.4.1, 5.4.2, Policy 541 *Student Code of Conduct* or Policy 548 *Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Healthcare and Counseling Clinical Program Students* who wish to complete their program of study must apply for readmission to the applicable graduate program. The graduate program committee may review the reason for suspension when considering readmitting suspended students.

5.5 Non-matriculated Graduate Students

5.5.1 Students admitted as non-matriculated graduate students shall meet course prerequisites unless exceptions are approved by the program director. Non-matriculated graduate students may take a maximum of 12 semester credit hours of graduate courses as non-matriculated students.

5.5.2 If approved by the graduate program committee, a maximum of 12 semester credit hours of non-matriculated credit, taken no more than three years prior to approval, shall be applied toward a graduate degree or graduate certificate.

POLICY HISTORY		
Date of Last Action	Action Taken	Authorizing Entity
February 11, 2016	Policy approved through regular policy process.	UVU Board of Trustees
June 21, 2024	Revised policy approved through regular policy process.	UVU Board of Trustees