Advisor Handbook

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General Degree Requirements

Degree Plan

- A degree plan should be submitted to the Graduate School by the conclusion of the first semester of graduate study for all students pursuing a graduate degree or a graduate certificate.
- Doctoral students should submit the degree plan to the Graduate School by the conclusion of the first year of study.
- The degree plan consists of courses approved by the graduate advisor and the graduate studies committee to satisfy degree requirements as stated in the Graduate Catalog and as reflected in CAPP.
  - A Preliminary Degree Plan is filed at the beginning of a student’s academic career. It is understood that changes will occur during the course of time.
  - A Revised Degree Plan is filed to note changes to the Preliminary Degree Plan.
  - A Final Degree Plan is filed at the time the student applies for graduation. The Final Degree Plan should only include courses that apply towards degree completion.
- Revisions to the degree plan or CAPP such as course substitutions or changes from thesis to non-thesis option must be handled at the department level.
- The advisor must notify the Graduate School of any course substitutions so that corresponding changes are noted in the CAPP evaluation.
- We strongly recommend that both the student and advisor periodically check the on-line CAPP evaluation in Goldmine to assess degree progression.
  - A maximum of nine hours of upper division approved-for-graduate-credit undergraduate courses are allowed on a graduate degree plan.
  - In keeping with SACs accreditation policies, undergraduate courses used to meet graduate degree requirements must be approved for graduate credit.
- After formal admission of a non-degree student to a graduate program, a graduate advisor may recommend that up to nine hours of graduate level coursework completed prior to formal admission to the program be applied toward completion of graduate degree requirements.
- All coursework completed at the graduate level is part of the graduate academic record/transcript, and all grades earned are part of the cumulative GPA. This applies to all courses completed at the graduate level even if the courses are not part of degree requirements.
- Courses appear on a transcript with their respective cumulative grade point average according to the level of the course not the level of the student.
- At the graduate level, courses cannot be repeated for GPA recalculation. For degree completion purposes, the most recent enrollment will be used to satisfy graduate degree requirements.
Courses Counted for another Degree

- Courses used to fulfill requirements for one graduate level degree cannot be used to fulfill requirements for another same level degree.
- Required courses completed for a previous graduate degree, which are duplicated on a second degree, do not have to be repeated. The graduate program advisor may assign appropriate substitutions so that the total number of hours required of the second degree is not reduced.

Courses Taken on a Pass/Fail Basis

- A student may elect to take a course on a Pass/Fail basis (S or U grade mode).
- The Pass/Fail option is not available for all courses. Check with the appropriate academic department or the Records Office for a listing of available courses.
- A Pass/Fail course cannot count as leveling work or as part of minimum degree requirements except for internships or practicum when designated by the department.
- The Pass/Fail option must be requested through the Records Office by or before the date listed in the Class Schedule.

Leveling Courses

- As proposed by the graduate studies committee, a student may be required to successfully complete leveling courses to qualify for admission to a graduate program. These hours are in addition to those required of the degree.
- Leveling courses cannot be used to satisfy graduate degree requirements.
- Undergraduate courses taken for leveling purposes appear on a separate level transcript and do not affect graduate level Cumulative Grade Point Average.

Transfer Credit Courses

Upon recommendation by the graduate advisor, students pursuing a master’s degree may transfer up to fourteen hours from an accredited institution. Doctoral students may transfer up to twenty four hours.

- Any request for transfer credit must be initiated by the graduate advisor and forwarded to the Graduate School for processing.
- The request should list the transferring institution and courses and specify what UTEP courses are being substituted by the transfer course(s).
- Courses approved for transfer credit must be graduate level or higher and must fall within established time limits for Master’s and doctoral programs. (see Time Limits below)
- Only courses with a grade of “C” or higher can be transferred.
- Only credit hours transfer as grade points earned at other institutions do not transfer.
- Courses cannot be double counted so courses used to fulfill requirements for a graduate level degree at another institution may not be transferred to fulfill requirements for another same level degree.
- Correspondence courses are not transferable nor accepted for graduate credit.
Time Limits

- **Master’s** degree requirements must be completed within one six-year time period. This includes any transfer work completed prior to admission to the program.
  - Master’s degree students who have not completed degree requirements within established time limits may request a one-time extension from the Graduate School through the graduate advisor.
- **Doctoral** degree requirements must be completed within one eight-year time period. This includes any transfer work completed prior to admission to the program.
  - Doctoral students exceeding the eight-year time limit must submit a Progress Report to the Graduate School detailing reasons for the delay.
  - Doctoral students who have not completed degree requirements and have accumulated ninety-nine earned credit hours are ineligible for state-funded assistantships.
- Work over six/eight years old may be revalidated only with special permission from the Dean of the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the respective committee on graduate studies and College Dean.

Registration

The Graduate School will assist students experiencing problems with registration upon the recommendation of the graduate advisor.

Restrictions

- The following Restrictions must be cleared by the graduate advisor or approved departmental representative by entering the appropriate waiver in the student’s SFASRPO Banner record:
  - Departmental Holds
  - Major Holds
  - Advising Holds
  - Prerequisite/Test Score Holds
  - Capacity/Closed Course Holds
- The following Restriction should only be cleared by the Graduate School:
  - Level Holds

Enrollment Verification

Minimum hour requirement as listed below must be in Master’s or doctoral level courses or undergraduate courses approved for graduate credit that apply towards graduate degree requirements. Undergraduate courses approved for graduate credit are listed in the Graduate School website.
Fall and Spring
- Full-time  9 hours or more
- ¾ time  6 – 8 hours
- Part-time  4 – 5 hours or less
- Maximum Load 15 hours

Summer & 10 Weeks
- Full-time  3 hours or more
- Part-time  2 hours or less
- Maximum Load 6 hours

Maymester & Wintermester
- Full-time  3 hours or more
- Part-time  2 hours or less
- Maximum Load 6 hours

Course Load
- Registration in excess of the maximum load as listed above requires Graduate School approval.

Enrollment Verification for Financial Aid Eligibility
- Students receiving financial aid must enroll for a minimum of five (5) hours every fall and spring semester to maintain financial aid eligibility and three (3) hours during the summer, wintermester or maymester terms.

International Student Reduced Course Load and Employment Verification
- The same enrollment criteria listed above apply to international students for employment verification. International students may request a reduced course load during the final term of enrollment.

Career & Professional Development Services Cooperative Education Program
- Full-time enrollment status is granted to students enrolled in co-op only.
- Full-time enrollment in co-op only is limited to two semesters.

Thesis Students
- Master's degree students are classified by the Graduate School as full time equivalent for financial aid and employment eligibility for up to four semesters of enrollment in thesis only (5398 & 5399).
- Students enrolled in only three hours of thesis are financial aid eligible and may receive loans and loan deferments.
- Thesis students must be enrolled in thesis during the semester the thesis is defended, the semester the thesis is completed and during the semester of graduation.
**Dissertation Students**

- Doctoral degree students are classified by the Graduate School as full time equivalent for financial aid and employment eligibility for up to five semesters of enrollment in dissertation only (6320/6321 or 6398/6399).
- Students enrolled in only three hours of dissertation are financial aid eligible and may receive loans and loan deferments.
- Dissertation students must be enrolled in dissertation during the semester the dissertation is defended, the semester the dissertation is completed and during the semester of graduation.

**Non-thesis/Non-dissertation Students**

- Doctoral and Master’s degree students who have completed all requirements for the degree except the final hours of coursework are classified by the Graduate School as full time equivalent for financial aid and employment eligibility purposes for one final semester of enrollment in less than nine hours as determined by the final degree plan and the Graduate Catalog.
- Non-thesis/Non-dissertation students enrolled in less than nine hours during the final semester are financial aid eligible and may receive loans and loan deferments.
- Non-thesis/non-dissertation students seeking full time equivalent for financial aid and employment eligibility classification must submit a final degree plan and apply for graduation.
- All non-thesis/non-dissertation students must be enrolled during the semester of graduation.

**Academic Standing**

- Academic standing is based on the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) not the term, major or program of study grade point average.
- Recorded academic standing is based on the level of the student according to the graduate record of admission.
- The cumulative grade point average which determines academic standing is an aggregate total of courses that mirror the level of the student. As an example, only doctoral level courses impact the academic standing of a doctoral student even though the student may have completed GR level courses that are applicable to DR degree requirements. The same applies for master’s level students. Only GR level courses impact the academic standing of a master’s level student even though DR level courses were completed to fulfill GR degree requirements.
- A transcript, which is a historical record of enrollment by level reflects level GPA not the program or institutional GPA. Courses are listed on a transcript by level with their respective GPAs. A doctoral student who has enrolled in undergraduate, graduate and doctoral level courses has three separate transcripts, each with their respective coursework and corresponding GPAs.
• All coursework completed at the student’s respective level is part of the academic record or transcript, and all respective grades earned are part of the level cumulative GPA. This applies to all courses even if the courses are not part of degree requirements.
• At the graduate level, courses cannot be repeated for GPA recalculation.
• Students requesting authorization from the Graduate School for approval of CO-OP, TA/RA or other types of employment or assistantships must have a 3.0 cumulative grade point average.

Probation
• A graduate student in a master’s or doctoral program who fails to maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (CGPA) will be placed on academic probation.
  ▪ A student must earn at least a 3.0 CGPA by the conclusion of the next nine semester hours of enrollment after being placed on academic probation or possibly face permanent dismissal from the Graduate School.
• A non-degree seeking student (post-baccalaureate and teacher certification) who fails to maintain a 2.5 cumulative grade point average (CGPA) will be placed on academic probation.
  ▪ A non-degree student must earn at least a 2.5 CGPA by the conclusion of the next nine semester hours of enrollment after being placed on academic probation or possibly face permanent dismissal from the Graduate School.

Dismissal
• Dismissed students may appeal for reinstatement a semester after dismissal.
• Appeals for reinstatement are submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School by the program committee and respective college dean.
• A student resuming studies after dismissal must reapply for admission. Check with the program to determine what other supporting documentation is required.
• If readmitted, the student remains on probation and must earn at least a 3.0 or 2.5 CGPA by the conclusion of the first semester of reinstatement.

Doctoral Milestones

All doctoral students are required to submit a Milestones agreement during the first term of enrollment. The Milestones agreement details academic expectations within a specified time limit. Doctoral programs are required to conduct annual reviews of their doctoral students. Each student must receive written evaluation indicating satisfactory degree progression. A student who is not making satisfactory progress will be granted one year to reach missed milestones. At the conclusion of the probationary period, the faculty may recommend dismissal of the student. Programs are required to implement an internal tracking system to ensure students are successfully meeting Milestones.
Doctoral Candidacy

Requirements for candidacy usually consist of completion of all pertinent coursework, passing of comprehensive or qualifying examinations, and successful defense of the dissertation proposal.

Policies leading to candidacy are program specific. Each doctoral program has specific policies and requirements that must be fulfilled prior to admission to candidacy.

Students are encouraged to consult with their respective program director on policies guiding proposal format and presentation, timelines and committee membership.

Application for Candidacy

- The application is submitted to the Graduate School by the candidate after successfully defending the dissertation proposal. Upon approval of the candidacy application, candidacy status is noted on the transcript.
- The student and advisor are encouraged to verify that the following form has been submitted and on file at the Graduate School when applying for candidacy:
  - Milestones Agreement (only applies to students admitted after summer 2013)
  - Form 1 –Degree Plan submitted by all doctoral students at the conclusion of the first year of study.
- If applicable, ensure that the UTEP IRB reference number is included in the Candidacy Application. If additional outside IRB approval is required, include those reference numbers as well as the source authorizing approval.

Once admitted to candidacy, the doctoral candidate is required to continuously register in dissertation:

- Initial enrollment is in 6320 or 6398 the first semester of dissertation only.
- Thereafter continuous enrollment in 6321 or 6399 until work on the dissertation is complete.
- The doctoral candidate cannot enroll in 6320 and 6321 or 6398 and 6399 simultaneously nor enroll in more than three hours of dissertation per semester.

Graduation

General Information

- The student initiates the graduation process with the submission of the graduate advisor & college dean approved Application for Graduate Degree.
- Graduate degree candidates must be enrolled the semester of graduation.
- Degrees are conferred at the end of each long semester and at the end of the summer semester.
- Formal commencement ceremonies are held in May for spring candidates and in December for summer and fall candidates.
• Only summer candidates who are lacking six hours for degree completion may walk early and participate in May commencement.
• Summer candidates participating in May commencement should apply for graduation by the published deadlines for spring commencement.
• Names of summer candidates appear in the fall commencement program even if summer candidates obtained permission to participate in spring commencement.

Doctoral Students
• Doctoral degree candidates who participate in commencement must defense the final dissertation two weeks before Dead Day of the intended term of graduation.
• Summer doctoral degree candidates must defend the dissertation two weeks before Dead Day of the spring semester to participate in spring commencement.

General Graduation Requirements
• All coursework listed on the approved final degree plan must be successfully completed with a 3.0 or higher cumulative grade point average (CGPA) by the conclusion of the intended term of graduation.
• Degree candidates must be enrolled during the indicated term of graduation.
• Thesis or Dissertation students must be enrolled in thesis or dissertation:
  o The semester the thesis or dissertation is defended.
  o The semester the thesis or dissertation is completed.
  o The semester the student applies for graduation.
• An oral and/or written examination or defense of a thesis or dissertation must be satisfactorily completed.
• The thesis or dissertation must be accepted by the Graduate School.
• Non-thesis students must submit a Completion/Defense Form to demonstrate successful completion of final non-thesis requirements such as coursework, capstone, portfolio, report, project, comprehensive exam, etc.

Applying for Graduation
The student must first consult with the graduate advisor for review and approval of the Final Degree Plan and the Application for Graduate Degree. The Final Degree Plan and the Application for Graduate Degree are submitted to the Graduate School as soon as the student is allowed to apply for graduation.

• The candidate applies for graduation by submitting the Final Degree Plan and the Application for Graduate Degree to the Graduate School by posted deadlines of the intended term of graduation.
• The diploma fee and if applicable, the thesis or dissertation on-line publishing fee is billed to the student’s Goldmine account by the Graduate School.
• Candidates applying for graduation after the posted deadline are assessed a late fee.
• The graduation application is valid for one semester only.
Graduation applications cannot be deferred although the student may request the withdrawal of the application. In such instances, graduation fees will be reversed.

A student who does not graduate must reapply for graduation.

Applying for graduation indicates that the student’s academic career is concluding so as part of the graduation application process, student records are inactivated. It is very important to notify the Graduate School as soon as possible if a student does not complete degree requirements. Upon notification, the Graduate School will reactivate records to allow re-enrollment.

Thesis/Dissertation Requirements

- Theses and dissertations are written using any publication style appropriate to the given discipline.
- Theses and dissertations are subject to the approval of the supervising committee and ultimately to the approval of the Graduate School.
- Students should continuously enroll in Thesis or Dissertation until work on the thesis or dissertation is completed.
  - Initial enrollment is in Thesis or Dissertation I – 5398 or 6320/6398.
  - Continual enrollment is in Thesis II, 5399 or Dissertation II, 6321/6399, until completion.
- Students may not enroll in 5398/99, 6320/21 or 6398/99 simultaneously.
- Students may only enroll in three hours of Thesis or Dissertation at any one time.
- Students must be enrolled in Thesis or Dissertation:
  - The semester the thesis or dissertation is defended.
  - The semester the thesis or dissertation is completed.
  - The semester the student applies for graduation.
- The thesis or dissertation should be submitted for format check prior to the scheduled defense date.
- The format check consists of checking the layout of the document not the writing or citation style.
- The writing and citation style such as MLA, APA, etc. is discipline specific, so the student must consult with his/her committee for guidance.
- The student must obtain approval from the Graduate School to finalize the submission of the PDF thesis or dissertation file.
- With final approval from the Graduate School, the thesis or dissertation is submitted as a PDF file on a rewriteable CD along with hard copies of the Completion/Defense form and the signature page.
- The thesis or dissertation PDF file must also be submitted for online publication at the University Microfilms website.
- Once approved and submitted to the Graduate School, theses and dissertations are regarded as publications and will be displayed and made available to the public.
- Credit in Theses or Dissertation courses will be granted after successful completion and approval of the thesis or dissertation.
Some programs may have supplemental graduation requirements in addition to those listed above. It is the responsibility of the program and the student to ensure successful completion of these requirements and to notify the Graduate School in a timely manner if these supplemental requirements are not met.

**Non-thesis Requirements**
- The Graduate School does not require the submission of non-theses.
- Non-thesis reports, projects or similar papers are submitted to the academic department rather than to the Graduate School.
- Submission of a Completion/Defense form to the Graduate School is required of students following the non-thesis option.

**Final Examination**
- All degree candidates are required to successfully complete an oral and/or written examination.
- The examining committee shall consist of at least three graduate faculty members.
- One member of the examining committee must be from outside the department or with College and Graduate School approval, from another university.
- All committee members must be current members of the Graduate Faculty.

**Awarding of the Degree**
- Awarded degrees are posted on transcripts approximately thirty days after graduation.
- Diplomas are mailed approximately ninety days after graduation.
- Students cannot be cleared for graduation with grades of I, N, or P on the final transcript even if the course with the I, N or P grade is not required for degree completion.
  - A degree candidate with an I - Incomplete grade on the final transcript is awarded the degree the semester the I - Incomplete grade is removed from the final transcript, which may be completely different from the intended semester of graduation as indicated on the graduation application. If the course with the Incomplete grade is not required for degree completion, the student should pursue a grade change.
  - Note that pending grade changes may affect the official awarding term of a degree candidate.
  - The University officially reports total degrees awarded to state and federal agencies at the end of the summer. In preparation for reporting, all outstanding Pending Degree records are removed during the summer semester. Outstanding pending degrees cannot be retroactively awarded after degrees are officially reported. The student with a formerly outstanding pending degree record must reapply for graduation; thus, it is imperative that issues with grades are resolved in a timely manner as this will have a negative impact on the student.
- Letters of Completion may be requested from the Graduate School if the following conditions are met:
  - Thesis or dissertation students must have successfully defended.
  - Non-thesis students must submit verification of successful completion of final courses from instructors.
• Requests for Completion Letters must be submitted through email.

**Graduate Certificates**

• Students must apply for admission using the Graduate School online admission application.
• Students may concurrently pursue a graduate certificate and a graduate degree.
• Upon completion of certificate requirements students submit an advisor and college dean approved Application for Graduate Certificate to the Graduate School.
• Certificates are awarded at the end of each term just like degrees.
• Once awarded, the certificate is noted on the transcript.
• A Graduate School certificate signed by the Dean of the Graduate School and College Dean will be issued and mailed to the student.
• Currently there are no fees assessed for certificates.

**Post-Master Certificates**

• Students pursuing a post-master certificate must apply for admission to the post-master certificate program.
• The student is required to have a master’s degree for any post-master’s certificate.
• Upon completion, the student must submit an advisor and college dean approved Application for Graduate Certificate to the Graduate School.
• Certification is noted on the transcript and a certificate mailed to the student.
• Post-master certificates are awarded at the end of each term, just like degrees.

**Fast-Track Combined Bachelor’s Master’s Program**

• For outstanding undergraduate UTEP students interested in transitioning from a bachelor’s degree to a graduate degree.
• Undergraduate students receive undergraduate and graduate credit for up to 15 hours of UTEP graduate course work.
• A student who has previously earned a bachelor’s degree may not apply to this program.
• Students must have successfully completed at least 90 hours of undergraduate coursework toward their degree with a minimum of 24 of those hours earned at UTEP.
• Students must have and maintain the same GPA requirement in the major as for the university honor’s certificate, which is an undergraduate GPA equal or greater than 3.30.
• Participating graduate programs may have additional requirements including specific GRE scores.

**Application**

• Students complete the Fast Track Combined Bachelor’s/Master’s Program Student Application form and obtain required signatures.
• Students apply for admission to the graduate program of their choice using the online admission application located on the Graduate School website and submit a scanned copy of the Fast Track Combined Bachelor’s/Master’s Program Student Application form.
• Upon completion of the bachelor’s degree, the student must submit all pending required documentation for full admission to the graduate program.
• Students must be advised each semester at the departmental level by both the undergraduate and graduate advisors and cleared for registration in graduate courses by the Graduate School.
• Students must earn a B or better in the graduate course to count as graduate credit.
• The course and earned grade will appear on both the undergraduate and graduate transcripts and calculated in both transcripts. If the grade is a C, it will not count toward the graduate degree but will still count toward the undergraduate degree.
• Tuition will be based on the level of the course, not the level of the student and financial aid may be adjusted accordingly.
• Exceptions to these guidelines will be handled through an appeal process established by the participating graduate program.

Grades

• Credit is given in the Graduate School for grades of A, B and C only although individual programs may have additional grade requirements.
• At the graduate level, courses cannot be repeated for grade point recalculation. A student may elect to repeat a course; both enrollments and grades will appear on the transcript and calculate in the cumulative grade point average, but only the most recent enrollment will be used to meet degree requirements.
• Students cannot be cleared for graduation with grades of I [Incomplete] or N [No grade assigned] on the final transcript or P [in progress] grade, if the course with the P [in progress] grade is required for degree completion.
• Graduation candidates with an I [Incomplete] grade on the final transcript will be awarded the degree the semester the I [Incomplete] grade is removed from the final transcript, which may be different from the original intended semester of graduation.

Pass/Fail Grade Mode: S [Satisfactory]  U [Unsatisfactory]  (Appears in Goldmine/Banner Grade Mode Indicator as “P”)
• At the end of a pass/fail course, a final grade of S [Satisfactory] or U [Unsatisfactory] shall be awarded.

• At the end of a course with a standard grade mode, a final grade of A, B, C, D, F, I, N, P, W, CR shall be awarded.
Please note that a “P” grade does not stand for Pass. A P grade stands for in-Progress. A P in-Progress grade does not affect the cumulative grade point average or Earned Hours. P grades are “Attempted” hours and should be assigned in courses where continual enrollment until completion is required such as thesis or dissertation. Upon successful completion of the thesis or dissertation, the instructor of record shall award an appropriate standard letter grade or pass/fail grade.


- The research and writing of the thesis/dissertation involves six hours of credit: 5398/5399, 6320/6321 or 6398/6399.
- To obtain the six hours of thesis/dissertation credit, the student must enroll in 5398, 6320 or 6398 when work on the thesis/dissertation is begun. Thereafter the student must enroll in 5399, 6321 or 6399 during each semester or term in which work on the thesis/dissertation is being done.
- Students should be awarded a grade of P-In-Progress while working on completing the thesis or dissertation. (Pass/Fail grade mode may not allow assigning a P [in progress] grade in which case the instructor of record should assign an S [Satisfactory] or U [Unsatisfactory] grade.
- Upon successful completion, the supervising professor will award an appropriate Standard letter grade or Pass/Fail grade to the final enrollment of thesis or dissertation.
- That letter grade will be applied to previous enrollments of thesis or dissertation for a maximum of six (6) credit hours of thesis and twelve (12) credit hours of dissertation.
- Additional enrollments in thesis or dissertation in excess of the six or twelve hours as noted above will be graded on a Pass/Fail (S [Satisfactory] or U [Unsatisfactory]) basis.

P [in progress] Grade Update

- Upon approval of the graduation application, a code is entered in the student record which flags Banner to update P grades in thesis or dissertation courses at the conclusion of the semester during roll-to-history.
- The Banner P [in progress] Grade Update program automatically updates P grades only if the professor of record assigns the appropriate grade (standard or pass/fail) to the final enrollment of thesis or dissertation.
- If the professor of record fails to assign the correct grade, grade change forms must be submitted to the Records Office for each P grade before the student can be awarded the degree.
Other Information

Change of Major
- Students choosing to change their major program of study must reapply for admission to the new program.
  - Students must complete one full semester in their current program before applying for admission to a new program.
  - Admission fees are assessed for every application submitted to the Graduate School.
- Request to change program level from GR to DR or DR to GR, within the same program, does not require a new application. The graduate advisor and the student must submit a request for this type of change directly to the Graduate School.

Leave of Absence
- A request for a Leave of Absence must be submitted to the Graduate School by the graduate advisor at the request of student.
- Maximum leave granted is one year.
- Students returning from an approved Leave of Absence must check in with the Graduate School so that records can be reactivated.
- A student who is absent for more than one year must reapply for admission.

Reservation for Graduate Credit
- Undergraduate students may request to enroll in graduate level courses if they are within twelve hours of completing the baccalaureate degree.
- Undergraduate students requesting to reserve graduate courses must have a 3.0 grade point average in all upper level courses.
- Total enrollment including courses reserved for graduate credit must not exceed fifteen hours during a spring or fall session or nine hours during a summer session.
- Graduate research, individual studies, seminar or thesis courses cannot be reserved for graduate credit.
- Courses reserved for graduate credit cannot be used to satisfy undergraduate degree requirements.
- Courses reserved for graduate credit will appear on a separate graduate level transcript to be used towards the completion of a graduate or doctoral degree.
- Enrollment in courses reserved for graduate credit must be processed through the Graduate School.

Returning Students
- A student who fails to enroll for twelve or more months without an approved leave of absence must reapply for admission. Admission fees are assessed for every application submitted to the Graduate School.
- At the discretion of each program, the program may elect to waive resubmission of other admission materials such as letters of recommendation, test scores, etc.
TOEFL Requirement

- Minimum score required is 550 on the paper-based exam or 79 on the internet-based exam) for admission into graduate programs.
- International students who score a minimum (550 on the paper-based exam or 79 on the internet-based exam) will be admitted unconditionally, assuming that all other admission criteria have been met.
- Graduate students admitted conditionally must meet the required 550/79 test score within the first year. Students who do not meet the requirement within the first year may be dismissed from the Graduate School.
- As with any graduate student admitted conditionally, these students are not eligible for appointment as a teaching assistant or a graduate research assistant until the condition has been met.
- International students with a TOEFL score below 500/173/61 will not be considered for admission.

IELTS Requirement

- Minimum score of 6.5 is required on the IELTS exam for admission into graduate programs.

Assistantships

- On-campus assistantships are available to students admitted unconditionally to a degree seeking program as Assistant Instructors (AI), Teaching Assistants (TA), Research Assistants (RA) or Graduate Assistants (GA).
- Student employment positions are subject to criminal background clearance, so all students must complete a criminal background check.
- Non-degree seeking students are not eligible for assistantships.
- Students appointed with an assistantship:
  - must be enrolled for a minimum of nine (9) semester hours in the fall and spring terms and at least three (3) hours in the summer in courses leading towards degree completion;
  - must maintain good academic standing with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher;
  - make satisfactory progress toward the degree. (It is the responsibility of the appointing department to check on student progress.)
- Graduate students who have 90 or more credit hours should not be appointed with state funds.
- Masters students are limited to two years of support as a TA, RA, or GA and may not work more than 50% time unless approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- Doctoral students are limited to four years of support under an assistantship and may not work more than 50% time unless approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- International Students may not be appointed if they do not meet official TOEFL score of 550.
• Non-resident students who are actively appointed are eligible for a waiver of non-resident tuition. The appointing department/program must submit a TA/RA/Al Waiver of Non-Resident Tuition Rate form to the Graduate School every semester.
• Rules" for insurance:
  o Students appointed to an assistantship are eligible for health insurance at no cost to the student.
  o Students must submit an enrollment form for insurance coverage every semester.
• Student appointments may be based on academic background, teaching/professional experience, and for international students, proficiency in English (TOEFL). Formal appointments and eligibility verification must be completed prior to beginning work with start and end date of employment.
• Students should understand that the purpose of the student appointment is to enhance their educational experience and that responsibilities may be uneven and varied.
• If the appointed student finds that the job responsibilities are not a right fit, the student may request to terminate the appointment.

Participant Awards
• Faculty members can offer competitive participant awards of a minimum of $1,000 to eligible graduate students.
• Graduate research fellowships are administered by the academic department and are open to all eligible graduate students. Domestic, International, and Texas residents are considered eligible for these awards.
• A departmental committee reviews the applications for these competitive participant awards and makes a recommendation to the Department Chair. The Department Chair documents the selection process and justifies the awarding.
• Non-degree seeking students are not eligible for participant awards.
• Graduate students must be enrolled for a minimum of nine (9) semester hours in the fall and spring terms and at least three (3) hours in the summer and must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA for each awarded semester.
• Graduate students who are on probation are not eligible for participant awards.
• Students receiving participant awards may be eligible for in-state tuition waivers. Please check with the Graduate School to determine eligibility.

Assistantships and Summer Employment
• Students are eligible for summer employment at the University as long as they are enrolled in at least three (3) semester hours during one of the summer terms. In certain circumstances when course selection leading to degree requirements is limited during the summer, a student may petition for an enrollment waiver. Waivers are forwarded from the department or program to the Dean of the Graduate School.
• Graduate students who meet minimum summer enrollment requirements may, in some instances, be employed at the University for up to forty (40) hour per week.
• Student employment positions are subject to criminal background clearance, so all students must complete a criminal background check.
• "Rules" for summer insurance: (Insurance coverage only applied to students enrolled with United Healthcare.)
  o Students appointed to an assistantship for fall and spring and had fall and spring insurance coverage are automatically covered for summer.
  o Students appointed to an assistantship in the spring that did not have coverage for fall but did have coverage for spring are also automatically covered for summer.
  o Students who had a fall and/or spring appointment but never submitted an enrollment form for insurance coverage for fall and/or spring are not automatically covered. These students receive summer coverage only if they have a summer appointment and are enrolled.
*note: Students will be taxed on FICA

Helpful Graduate School Forms
Forms are located on the Graduate School web site under Current Students, Forms http://graduate.utep.edu