

Chapter 7

GRADUATE ACADEMIC POLICIES

I. GRADUATE STUDIES MISSION STATEMENT

The programs of graduate study at Northwest Nazarene University are designed to provide the most appropriate opportunities for intellectual growth in areas of professional expertise. The University strives to provide access to the latest technology, information, research and practices delivered by skilled and experienced professionals, who can translate theory into practice. The aim is to provide a Christian setting and perspective for promoting the development of knowledgeable and competent professionals in a framework of genuine scholarship.

II. GOVERNANCE

The governing council is the Graduate and Continuing Studies Council, with membership and duties described earlier in this *Handbook*.

The Graduate and Continuing Studies Council is the policy making body for all graduate programs offered by Northwest Nazarene University.

III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Northwest Nazarene University graduate programs, courses and activities shall be developed under the supervision of the Dean of the School of Applied Studies/Director of Graduate Studies in conjunction with the chair of the appropriate academic department.

IV. DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Each department offering a graduate program shall establish a graduate committee called the [department] Committee on Graduate Studies (i.e., Education Committee on Graduate Studies). This committee shall function as a sub-committee of the Graduate and Continuing Studies Council and shall oversee procedural activities such as admission to that department's graduate program, teaching and curriculum issues, and other duties as appropriate.

On matters of policy, the departmental committee shall recommend action to the Graduate and Continuing Studies Council.

V. PROGRAM GOALS/OBJECTIVES

Each degree program shall have a written goal statement and related objectives.

VI. PROGRAM EVALUATION

Each department shall be responsible for developing ongoing evaluation procedures for assessing the effectiveness of the program in meeting degree goals and objectives. The April meeting agenda of the Graduate and Continuing Studies Council shall include program evaluation, including reports from each department that has a graduate program.

VII. QUALITY CONTROL GUIDELINES

- A.** All graduate programs/courses will comply with the standards of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.
- B.** Graduate studies shall be administered in compliance with all policies and procedures of Northwest Nazarene University.
- C.** Graduate studies will plan within the strategic planning structure of the University.
- D.** Graduate studies program planning will involve the NNU community.
- E.** Quality considerations when planning new programs/courses:
 - 1. Congruence with NNU Mission
 - 2. Quality consistent with academic excellence, Christian standards, and NNU image
 - 3. University strength
 - 4. Availability of learning resources
- F.** Quantitative Measures
 - 1. Number of learners served
 - 2. Number of credits generated
 - 3. Number of student-instructional hours
 - 4. Financial support
- G.** Sunday Classes - Programs or classes sponsored or co-sponsored by graduate studies are to be scheduled Monday-Saturday, except courses offered as a part of a church program.

VIII. OFF CAMPUS GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Northwest Nazarene University will consider proposals for courses and programs to be delivered at off-campus locations, provided approval is given by the appropriate authorizing groups, which may include: the Graduate and Continuing Studies Council, the NNU administration, the Board of Trustees or Directors, the Northwest Association of Schools and Universities, and state agencies.

Normally, graduate programs will be restricted to NNU's Educational Service Area.

IX. CREDIT COURSE STANDARDS

Courses that are administered through graduate studies must conform to the following standards:

- A.** A minimum of 15 faculty-student instructional hours are required for each semester credit, with additional reading/research required beyond the class period totaling 30 hours/per semester credit.
- B.** A minimum of 30 instructional hours per semester credit is required in laboratory courses. Exceptions to these requirements must have written approval in advance of the Director of Graduate Studies.
- C.** A one-semester credit course must extend over a minimum of two days with a required application product extending beyond the two-day period. A two-semester credit course must extend over a minimum four-day period with a required application product. A three-semester credit course must extend over a minimum five days with an additional required application product.
- D.** Courses for credit will normally be evaluated by letter grades. Courses may be approved under a pass/fail option. The grading plan must be approved in advance by the Department Chair.
- E.** Credit courses that include video, audio or computer components are expected to meet the same quality standards as traditional courses.

X. CATALOG, PROGRAM/COURSE CHANGES

Substantive changes in existing majors, and any proposed majors must follow established institutional and accreditation guidelines.

In departments currently offering graduate programs, course changes, new courses, and changes in course descriptions other than editorial must be approved by the appropriate department committee on graduate studies and the school curriculum committee.

Any new graduate programs or major change in existing graduate programs must receive departmental approval using a comprehensive program description. This program description will be presented to the Graduate and Continuing Studies Council for approval. The plan must include:

- program description, goals, and objectives
- course description
- faculty resources needed
- anticipated income and expenses
- a marketing plan
- environmental impact statement

XI. CANCELLATION POLICY

A course pre-registration deadline shall be set at a minimum of two weeks prior to beginning of the course. At that date the instructor shall decide whether to teach the course for the number of pre-registered students or request that the course be canceled. Additional registrations will be allowed up to the first day of class for courses not canceled.

XII. LOW ENROLLMENT

The minimum enrollment necessary to initiate or continue a course is dependent on the cost factors related to the course. Exceptions may be made considering potential for subsequent program growth, mission of the institution, and position of the course in the program sequence.

Students enrolling in off campus or field based programs shall be informed prior to initiation of the program of course enrollment minimums necessary to maintain the off campus or field based program.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students whose academic progress is affected by course cancellation. When such accommodations involve directed or independent study arrangements, the department committee on graduate studies must give prior approval.

XIII. STUDENT ADMISSIONS

1. There shall be two categories of admission for graduate study at the University, regular and provisional.
2. Applicants for admission shall present to the department committee on graduate studies one set of official transcripts of all university work, a completed application form, two letters of recommendation, and such other specifics as required by the department to which they are applying. Upon recommendation for admission or provisional admission by the department committee on graduate studies, one set of official transcripts, the application form, and the approved transfer credit form from a department advisor shall be forwarded to the registrar. Provisional admission to graduate study may be granted to those applicants who do not meet regular admission requirements but are considered potentially capable of successfully performing graduate work. Change of admission status from provisional to regular will be determined by each program.
3. Each department, in consultation with the director of graduate studies, may establish any additional specific admission requirements for those pursuing a degree in that department. The department committee on graduate studies shall review candidates and approve applicants qualified for regular or provisional admission.
4. Candidates admitted to a graduate program will be notified of their admission and status by the department. The registrar's office will receive a copy of this notification.
5. Admission to graduate study requires a baccalaureate degree from an institution that holds regional accreditation. Students applying who hold a baccalaureate degree from an institution that is not regionally accredited will be evaluated on an individual basis. The applicant shall also meet any additional requirements for graduate admission prescribed by the department offering the degree.

XIV. TRANSFER CREDIT

Individual programs may allow up to a maximum of 25% of the credits required for a degree to be transferred from other accredited institutions. All transfer credits must be approved by the department graduate program head.

XV. ACADEMIC LOAD

A full time student load is six semester credits per semester. Enrolling in more than 12 semester credits per semester requires recommendation of the adviser and approval of the department program head.

XVI. ENROLLMENT

Final semester undergraduate seniors who do not need to carry a full load to complete undergraduate degree requirements may be allowed to register for graduate level courses. All such registrations shall be approved by the graduate program head. Credits earned may apply only toward one degree.

Graduate courses cannot be re-taken without approval of the appropriate department committee on graduate studies.

XVII. ACTIVE STATUS

A student who has been admitted to the graduate program and enrolled in at least one course is considered on active status. Students who do not register for a course applicable to the degree for three calendar years will be dropped from the program.

XVIII. PROGRAM PLANS

Each student shall complete a program plan in consultation with an adviser. A copy of the approved plan shall be retained in the student's departmental file, and a copy shall be provided to the student. Any modifications in the plan must have the approval of the program head and the department chair. A copy of the program plan and any modifications will be forwarded to the registrar's office for the student's permanent academic file.

XIX. RECORDS

The registrar's office maintains the permanent academic files for each graduate student. Items contained in the file include the official NNU academic transcript, application form, department committee on graduate studies minutes, one set of official transcripts of all university level work, program plan and modifications/substitutions and application for graduation.

Each departmental maintains such records as are needed to provide efficient advising and guidance for graduate students throughout their graduate program.

XX. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Completion of a graduate degree requires an average GPA of 3.0 in all credits applicable to the degree.

Only credits receiving a "C" or higher grade may be applied toward the degree. A minimum of 75 per cent of credits applicable to the degree must be earned at NNU. All credits applicable to the degree must have been earned within four years preceding the date of admission. Extensions may be approved by the department committee on graduate studies. Factors to be considered include course content, student's professional experience and date of course completion.

The degree must be completed within six years following admission.

A second Master's degree may be pursued provided it is a different major. Up to 12 credits from the first degree may be applied to the second Master's degree provided they meet the requirements of the second degree.

XXI. APPEALS

All appeals by graduate students or applicants for graduate study shall pursue the following route unless the complaint is being brought against someone in the appeal process. In that event, the appellant shall contact the director of graduate studies to initiate the appeal process:

1. When appropriate, the appellant shall informally discuss the appeal with the faculty member involved.
2. If the first step does not satisfy the appellant, the appellant shall present a written appeal to the department program head and may request a hearing with the department graduate committee. The department program head's response shall be presented in writing to the appellant and any others directly involved.
3. If the second step does not satisfy the appellant, the appellant shall present a written appeal and all documentation required in step two, to the director of graduate studies. The director shall present a response to the appellant in writing.
4. If the third step does not satisfy the appellant, the appellant shall present a written appeal to the Graduate and Continuing Studies Council. The Chair of the Graduate and Continuing Studies Council shall appoint a committee of not less than three members to hear the appeal. This committee shall respond in writing to the appellant. The decision of this committee shall be final.

XXII. EXIT EVALUATION

Departments offering graduate degrees shall establish a comprehensive evaluation to provide a means of measuring the competency of graduates in analyzing and synthesizing major concepts pertinent to their degree program.

XXIII. GRADUATION

The actual date of graduation, for transcript and official purposes, shall be the end of the semester during which degree requirements are completed. The semester will be determined by each graduate program.

Students must apply for graduation during the semester preceding the one in which they expect to complete degree requirements.

XXIV. PARTICIPATION IN COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

Students are eligible to participate in commencement exercises if they have completed all degree requirements or if they are within six semester credits of completion.

XXV. GRADUATE FACULTY

A majority of all credits in a graduate program shall be taught by full-time faculty. |

A. Full Time Faculty

1. A Graduate Faculty member is committed to the graduate program of the University. This commitment is evidenced in: a) active involvement in appropriate departmental discussions and decisions affecting the graduate offerings and (b) leadership in scholarly activity.
2. Members of the graduate faculty normally hold terminal degrees in their field of expertise and have experience appropriate to their areas of instruction.

B. Adjunct Faculty

Adjunct faculty members may be appointed to the graduate faculty if they meet the qualifications of full time faculty and have been identified as those who regularly teach certain graduate courses.

The Program Head recommends to the department chair the adjunct faculty members that are to teach graduate courses. New adjuncts are approved by the president of the university.

While adjunct faculty necessarily have no continuing relationship with the University, they are carefully selected, and valued members of the NNU community. Their status begins at the start of the contracted involvement and ends upon completion of the contract service. Such status does not accrue in any way toward regular faculty status at the University. Adjunct faculty may not use their service toward sabbaticals or fringe benefits at the University. Credentials for adjunct faculty remain on file with the program head and the Director of Graduate Studies.

All adjunct faculty members are expected to maintain NNU's standards of moral, ethical and professional conduct while relating to NNU programs and students. Each person is expected to respect the university and to refrain from propagating doctrines, philosophies, or practices contrary to the Church of the Nazarene. Each adjunct faculty member is expected to uphold the standards as set by Northwest Nazarene University in the *Adjunct Faculty Handbook*.

Institutional selection of adjunct faculty will be made upon these considerations:

1. Have a terminal degree (exceptions may be made for individuals documenting exceptional expertise).
2. Fulfill the profession of faith requirements of regular faculty.
3. Provide a signed pledge to respect the University's Christian commitment and uphold the academic and behavioral standards while in contact with NNU students and programs.
3. Submit a current vita.

XXVI. NNU FACULTY UTILIZATION

A normal teaching load at Northwest Nazarene University is 12 credits per semester. Wherever possible, and as appropriate to graduate studies, full time NNU faculty members are invited to teach courses. (A full time faculty member may instruct no more than the equivalent of three semester credits per semester beyond a full teaching load.) Other qualified persons may be engaged if no regular faculty member is available, appropriate or qualified.

XXVII. INSTRUCTOR COMPENSATION

Faculty instructing graduate courses on an adjunct or overload basis shall be compensated by considering institutional base salary, and number of course credits taught. The graduate studies director shall provide procedures for specific compensation calculations. The *Faculty Handbook* gives further information about compensation policies.

The compensation for faculty members teaching an overload or an adjunct teaching a class is based on the institution's salary base and the number of credits taught. The compensation is 3.75% of the salary base times the number of semester credits given for the class (salary base x .0375 x number of credits for which the class is offered). For example, if the class is offered for 3 semester credits and the salary base is \$23,930 the salary for teaching the class would be \$2,692 ($\$23,930 \times .0375 \times 3 \text{ credits} = \$2,692$).

It is the intent of the institution to offer classes of a size that provides the income to support the program without allowing the classes to become so large that they restrict the level of learning that is expected in graduate work. At times it may be necessary to offer class with small enrollment to allow students to reach their academic goals in a reasonable time or to offer large classes because of the faculty limitations. When that is the case adjustments are made in the compensation provided to faculty.

If the class enrolls less than eight students the faculty member will be paid in proportion to the number of students in the class. For example, if the full salary for the three credit class is \$2,692 and there are only six students in the class, the faculty member would receive $\frac{6}{8}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$) of that amount or \$2,019 for teaching the class. ($\$2692 \times \frac{6}{8} = \2019)

If it is necessary for the institution to offer a large class, the instructor will be paid an additional factor as shown below. This is computed on the basis of a 3 semester credit class. Classes offered for more or less credit will be compensated proportionally.

Enrollment	Salary
8-19	(salary)
20-24	(salary) + \$375
25-29	(salary) + \$750
30 +	(salary) + \$1125

(Note: This salary adjustment applies only to overload and adjunct salary.)