

# ACADEMIC INFORMATION

The requirements which are listed below apply to all graduate students at Norfolk State University. It is the student's responsibility to be knowledgeable of and comply with all policies, procedures, and regulations. Specific departmental and program requirements are available in departmental offices, websites, and program handbooks.

## The Curriculum

The curriculum is the vehicle through which the University seeks to make its most significant impact upon the lives of students. Developing, implementing, and updating curricula is the responsibility of the faculty and academic administrators. Curricular offerings are described in this catalog for each academic program.

## Course Load

A full-time graduate student must be enrolled in nine (9) credit hours per semester during the academic year.

## Academic Standards and Minimum Grade Requirements

A cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 ("B"), from semester to semester, is required to

1. maintain good academic standing as a graduate student, and to
2. meet the requirements for a graduate degree.

Any student who fails to maintain the 3.00 GPA will be automatically placed in probationary status and must, within the following semester elevate his/her GPA to 3.00 in order to remain in the graduate program. Grades in all courses taken as a graduate student are used in determining whether a student has met the 3.00 ("B") cumulative grade point average requirement to remain in good academic standing.

Graduate degree programs vary on minimum grade requirements for successful completion of a graduate course and program. In some units, a grade of B- or below is interpreted as a failing grade and a student may be required to repeat the course. Students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic requirements of their specific program.

## Semester Credit Hour

Semester Credit Hour is the unit of instruction used for computing the amount of work required for assigning credit. Academic credit is awarded in the form of a semester credit hour, which reflects the amount of engaged learning time expected of a typical student enrolled not only in traditional classroom settings but also in laboratories, studios, internships and other experiential learning, and distance and correspondence education. One semester hour is equivalent to one 50–70 minute period of instruction or lecture per week for 15 weeks. Two or three 50-minute periods of laboratory sessions are equal to one period of instruction or lecture. Faculty assign and monitor semester credit hour assignments.

## Course Level/Number

Course level/Number is an indicator of the knowledge and skills that are expected to be taught and learned in a course. Course level indicates progression of learning, rigor, and content. Generally, the course level is

indicated by the course numbering system. Graduate level courses start at 500 and go up to a potential ceiling of 999.

Course Number	Course Level
500-599	First Year Graduate
600-999	Upper Level Graduate

In general, course prefix numbers ranging from 500-799 designate master's level coursework. Depending on the program, doctoral-level course prefixes may range from 500-999. In general, doctoral level courses are designated by course prefixes ranging from 700-999.

## The Grading System

The grade point system, based upon all graduate hours graded at Norfolk State University is used to calculate student scholarship. The table below depicts the grading symbols and points used to calculate grade point averages.

Grade	Quality Points	Description
A	4.000	
A-	3.700	
B+	3.300	
B	3.000	
B-	2.700	
C+	2.300	
C	2.000	
C-	1.700	
F	0.000	
I	None	Incomplete
W	None	Official Withdrawal

Transfer credits from institutions where the pass/fail grading system prevails will be interpreted as "B" unless the awarding institution submits with the transfer credits, a copy of its policies which would justify the interpretation of the transfer credits otherwise.

The established University policy will prevail regarding the awarding and use of the "W" grade.

## Auditing Courses

Students who desire to attend courses but do not wish to receive course credit may audit such courses, with permission from the instructor. Even though no grade will be received for the course, the student is required to pay the required fee. To audit a course the student must complete the Course Request Form and place an "AU" in the "Tuition Hours" column of the form. The instructor's signature should be placed in the "Comments" column on the same line as the audited course. The auditing student is expected to attend classes regularly but is not required to submit assignments or take examinations. Changing from audit to credit or from credit to audit is permitted only during the scheduled "Add" period. Audited courses may be dropped during the scheduled "Drop" period.

## Change of Curriculum Within a Program

Students wishing to make a curriculum change from one track/concentration to another within a graduate degree program must execute the Change of Curriculum form. This form must be signed by the program officer of the graduate program in which the student is enrolled. The Change of Curriculum form may not be used to make a change from one graduate degree program to another because admissions requirements

for graduate programs vary. The Change of Curriculum form is processed in the Graduate School.

## Continuous Registration

Continuous registration is required for all degree-seeking graduate students, including students completing terminal projects, theses, practicums; working to remove "I" grades; or preparing to take a comprehensive/qualifying examination.

Students must enroll in a continuous registration course and pay a continuous registration fee each semester until degree requirements are met. Students are expected to meet regularly with their advisors during the continuous enrollment period.

A student who is not continuously enrolled at Norfolk State University, excluding summer sessions, must submit an application for readmission. Readmission Applications are available at <http://www.nsu.edu/applyonline> (<http://www.nsu.edu/applyonline/>).

## Course Substitutions

Course substitutions involve Norfolk State University courses and should not be confused with the awarding of transfer credits. Students may request that a course taken at Norfolk State University be substituted for a prescribed course to meet a degree requirement in the student's academic program. Course substitutions must be submitted the following semester after successful completion of the course and approved by the Program Coordinator and the Dean of Graduate School.

## Grade Appeal

The instructor has the responsibility for evaluating coursework and determining grades; however, the student has the right to appeal a grade believed to be in error. The appeal process may involve the following steps and may be resolved at any level:

1. The student confers with the instructor involved.
2. The student and instructor (preferably together) confer with the chairperson of the department offering the course.
3. The student and instructor (preferably together) confer with the dean of the school in which the department is housed.

When the above steps do not resolve the issue, the student may initiate a formal written appeal through the Faculty/Student Grievance Committee to the Provost for its review and recommendation. Appeals should not be taken lightly by either the student or the instructor.

The student is responsible for verifying the accuracy of his or her academic records. Grade appeals should be made immediately after the grade in question is received. No appeals will be considered after one year has elapsed or after graduation, whichever is earlier.

## Incomplete Grades

A grade of "I" is assigned when a student has maintained a passing average but for reasons beyond his/her control, the course requirements have not been met. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor to remove the "I" grade. The instructor will set a time limit, usually no later than mid-term of the next semester, for the removal of the 'I'. After a one (1) year time limit, the "I" grade will automatically change to the "F" grade. No student will be allowed to participate in commencement with an "I" on his/her record.

## Repeating Courses

A student who has received a final grade of B- or lower in a course may repeat the course. Students must consult with their academic advisors regarding minimum course grade requirements and policies for repeating courses. The course to be repeated must be taken at Norfolk State University and taken prior to completion of the degree at Norfolk State University. The normal registration procedure must be followed when registering for repeat courses, and the grade earned will be posted to the student's record. The credit and quality points for the highest grade earned (one grade only) will be used to calculate the student's GPA. All courses attempted (the original course attempted and the grade for that course) will remain on the student's permanent record and will appear on the transcript.

## Registration

Registration for graduate students takes place in the department. The graduate student must consult with an advisor in his/her respective department to plan her/his program of study.

All graduate students are classified as "Day" students and are required to secure an I.D. card appropriately marked "Graduate Student." I.D. cards are issued or updated during the registration period.

I.D. cards provide access to the following:

1. library and media center;
2. recreational facilities;
3. the Student Activities Center;
4. parking privileges on campus, and
5. financial offices at the University.

## Residence Requirements

The minimum residency requirement for the graduate degree is one academic year. This residency requirement reflects the graduate faculty's concern that students experience sustained academic concentration directly related to the degree sought. Therefore, it is required that graduate students pursue their studies as fully participating members of their respective programs for a minimum of one academic year. Students in fully online programs do not have to meet this residency requirement.

## Thesis / Dissertation

A student completing a thesis or dissertation will develop his/her plan in consultation with her/his major advisor. The thesis/dissertation must include a significant problem and demonstrate the student's competence in research methods and overall scholarship.

Students should obtain a Thesis Guide from the School of Graduate Studies and Research. It is the responsibility of the student to follow all guidelines and procedures for submitting the thesis or dissertation for processing. Final copies of theses and dissertations are submitted to the Department and the University Library.

## Transfer of Credit

Generally, a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours of graduate work completed at another regionally accredited institution may be accepted as transfer credit, provided that

1. the credits have not previously been used or applied to a degree at another institution;

2. the grade earned in the course is "B" or above;
3. the courses are comparable to those offered in the program to which the applicant is applying;
4. approval is granted by the graduate program area; and
5. the credits were earned within five (5) years prior to registration.

Graduate programs which require 60 semester credit hours may approve up to 24 credit hours of transfer credits, this policy also applies to courses taken at Norfolk State University.

Transfer credits are not included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average. For clarification regarding transfer of credit for specific courses, applicants seeking transfer credit should consult the Graduate Program Coordinator.

## Withdrawal from Courses

A graduate student may officially withdraw, voluntarily and without penalty, from a course in accordance with the dates stipulated in the University Calendar. To withdraw, a student must file a withdrawal petition that is available in the academic unit or the Registrar's office. The final grade for the course(s) dropped is a "W."

Students who withdraw from all courses after the second week of the semester are considered to have been enrolled for the semester. Degree-seeking students who withdraw from all courses for one semester, excluding summer sessions, may enroll in the subsequent semester provided they have not attended another college or university since last attending NSU, have not been suspended from NSU, and otherwise are eligible to return.

Fees for students who withdraw or reduce their course load will be adjusted in accordance with the University's Fee Adjustment Schedule which is printed in the Course Schedule Booklet. Financial aid eligibility may be affected by reducing the course load after financial aid has been awarded.

## Withdrawal from the University

University policy requires a student to complete an Application for Withdrawal when enrollment is terminated before the end of a semester or summer session. The Application for Withdrawal may be obtained from the department head/advisor or the Registrar's Office and must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar by the last day of class. The student should discuss the matter with their advisor or Program Coordinator/Director before processing the Application for Withdrawal. The last day to officially withdraw from all classes is on the last published date for all classes.

If the student is ill or otherwise incapacitated and cannot complete the withdrawal process, the student must contact, or have someone else contact, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs immediately.

A student who fails to adhere to the published deadlines for withdrawing from all classes or withdrawing from the University will be charged the appropriate tuition and will receive a failing grade (F).

**Note:** Under no circumstance does non-attendance constitute an official withdrawal from the university.