



Graduate Student Handbook

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Key Offices at KU

Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs

Graduate Studies is the office of the Vice Provost of Graduate Studies at KU. The Executive Council of Graduate Faculty sets policies and regulations governing graduate study and offers various programs for graduate students throughout the year. While the Graduate Academic Advisor should be your first stop for any questions your department cannot answer, you may be referred to Graduate Studies for certain matters. The University's [Doctoral Hooding Ceremony](#) is coordinated by Graduate Studies. See more on the [Office of Graduate Studies website](#).

Office of Graduate Studies Contact Information:

graduate@ku.edu

7785-864-8040

[Grad & Postdoc Affairs Website](#)

Graduate Admissions (Within the Office of Graduate Studies)

Contact Graduate Admissions for questions regarding the online application to graduate study and official transcripts. See more about graduate admissions on the website. Graduate Admissions Contact Information:

graduateadm@ku.edu

Phone: 785-864-3140

[Grad Admissions Website](#)

Office of the University Registrar (OUR)

Contact OUR for questions related to enrollment (if the question cannot be resolved via the enrollment changes link provided above under COGA), tuition, campus fees, the Academic Calendar, and fee petitions.

Registrar Contact Information:

registrar@ku.edu

785-864-4423

[Registrar Website](#)

Financial Aid

Contact Financial Aid for questions related to the disbursement of scholarships, fellowship award, loans, and FAFSA. See more on [financial aid](#).

Financial Aid Contact Information:

financialaid@ku.edu

785-864-4700

[Financial Aid Website](#)

International Student Services (ISS)

Contact ISS for questions related to international students, including enrollment requirements, international student insurance, obtaining a social security card, I-20 questions, and any issue related to student visas. While other offices on campus such as the AEC, Human Resources, or the Registrar may also handle related matters, because the students' legal status in the country may be affected, it is recommended that students contact ISS first.

ISS Contact Information:

iss@ku.edu

785-864-3617

[ISS Website](#)

Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE)

The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) is a University office dedicated to assisting instructors, including GTAs, to develop effective instructional techniques. The expert staff of CTE can introduce instructors to the pedagogical technology available at the University and help instructors develop new approaches to teaching. CTE specialists work with instructors individually and offer a diverse array of workshops and discussions. They also can guide instructors to useful scholarly literature about college teaching and learning.

CTE Contact Information:

cte@ku.edu

785-864-4199

Website: [CTE Website](#)

University Policies and Degree Requirements

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

This section contains information on requirements and policies of the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs, hereafter referred to as "the University". It is not a complete list of all policies pertaining to graduate students. Only those policies that *most commonly* affect graduate students are included.

Policies are described in general terms and are intended to help students understand what is expected. They do not reflect the exact language of the official policy and should not be confused with official policy. Specific information and restrictions as well as links to relevant forms may be accessed by clicking on the policy headings. Links to the official policies in the KU policy library are found at the bottom of each policy description. Students are accountable to and should familiarize themselves with the University's official policies.

GENERAL POLICIES

The following University policies apply to **ALL** graduate students regardless of degree, program, or department. These are minimum general requirements. Your department or program may have more restrictive policies in any of these areas.

Admission

Degree or non-degree seeking applicants must have a bachelor's degree (as evidenced by an official transcript from the institution the degree was obtained).

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Admission to Graduate Study](#)

English Proficiency Requirements

The University requires all applicants, international or domestic, to demonstrate English proficiency for admission to any graduate program at KU. There are multiple ways to prove English proficiency:

- Declaration of native or native-like speaker status on the online application for graduate study.
- Official scores from an English proficiency standardized test (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS-Academic, or PTE), sent by the testing agency to the University of Kansas. Official scores must be less than two years old. Scores must be reported to KU directly by the testing service. Self-reported scores or unofficial scores are not accepted. TOEFL scores should be sent by ETS to KU institution code 6871. IELTS should be sent to KU Graduate Admissions via the e-delivery service. PTE score sheets containing the Score Report Code and Registration ID should be emailed to graduateadm@ku.edu for verification.
- Graduation with a baccalaureate degree (or higher) earned in residence from an accredited English-medium college or university or an accredited college or university in the United States. Degrees earned online may not be used to verify English proficiency. Note: this option is not sufficient for employment as a Graduate Teaching Assistant.
- AEC Curriculum: Students who haven't taken one of the listed tests may complete coursework through the KU [Applied English Center](#) (AEC) to demonstrate English proficiency.
- US Military Employment: If you are employed as an officer in the U.S. military with documentation of selection or promotion to the rank of Major or higher (or the equivalent U.S. Navy or Coast Guard rank), then you will be considered fully proficient and will not be required to complete AEC testing.

Additional English Competency Requirements for GTAs:

English proficiency requirements for GTAs are governed by the Kansas Board of Regents and must be met separately from the English proficiency requirement for admission to a KU graduate program. Detailed information on English proficiency requirements for GTAs may be found on Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' [Spoken English Competency page](#).

Related Policies and Forms:

- [English Proficiency Requirements for Admission to Graduate Study](#)
- [Spoken English Language Competency of Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants, Kansas Board of Regents Policy](#)

Enrollment

For graduate students, advising on enrollment and course selection take place at the department level. While individual units may have additional enrollment requirements, for students who are required to enroll full-time (e.g. students holding a GTA/GRA/GA appointment, international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa, students receiving federal financial aid, etc.) the University defines full-time enrollment as follows:

Fall and Spring semesters:

- Enrollment in 9 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment.
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty.
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s). *See Doctoral post-comprehensive enrollment.

HSES Graduate Handbook

- Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a Competency-Based Education (CBE) program

Summer sessions:

- Enrollment in 6 credit hours
- Enrollment in 3 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment
- Enrollment in 3 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s)
- Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a CBE program

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

While these are KU's definitions of full-time enrollment, other institutions may have different definitions. Be sure to consult with your financial aid and/or health insurance providers before making enrollment decisions.

Students who are not enrolled by 11:59pm the day before the first day of classes will be assessed a late enrollment fee. The University Registrar then deactivates the KU ID of any not enrolled by the last Friday in October (for Fall) or last Friday in March (for Spring). Students who wish to enroll after that must submit a [Permit to Re-Enroll](#) to be reactivated.

Students who wish to leave their graduate program should inform the department of such plans in writing so that a Voluntary Withdrawal form may be submitted on their behalf. Please note that voluntarily withdrawing from your program does **not** automatically withdraw you from coursework. You must also withdraw from all classes in Enroll & Pay via the "Withdraw from the University" option.

Deadlines for adding, changing, dropping, or withdrawing from all courses, as well as any fines associated with the change, are set by the University. **Deadlines vary from year to year. Students should carefully review the current [Academic Calendar](#).**

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

Your graduate program coordinator (or similar title) is available to guide you through any enrollment scenarios or questions that come up. In order to avoid problems on your record, please consult with them prior to dropping or changing enrollment.

Related Policies:

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

Graduate Credit (Including Transfer Credit)

The University's Graduate Credit [policy](#) defines KU's conditions for the following:

- Definition of graduate credit for the purposes of a course "counting" towards a graduate degree or graduate certificate at KU
- Transfer of graduate credit to KU from an outside institution
- Reduction in the required number of graduate hours for Master's students
- Counting credit hours taken as non-degree seeking student towards a later graduate degree at KU
- Counting credit hours taken as a certificate seeking student toward another graduate degree

Transfer Credit

The transfer credit option allows master's students to add graduate-level coursework completed at another institution to their KU transcript to count toward their KU degree. Upper-level coursework taken as an undergraduate, even courses numbered at the graduate level, is not eligible for transfer in any case. Additional restrictions apply to what non-KU graduate courses and the number of credit hours that can be counted toward a KU master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below, as well as consulting with their DGS. In all cases, transfer credit must first be approved at the department or program level. To begin the transfer process, students should consult with their DGS to submit the required transfer materials. These include a transcript reflecting the courses to be transferred and descriptions and/or syllabi for the courses in question.

No transfer of credits is allowed for the Ph.D. In circumstances where students enter the Ph.D. program with an M.A. from another institution or other relevant graduate coursework, it may be possible for students to request a reduction in the number of hours required for the Ph.D. Students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Reduced Credit Hour Degree

KU policy defines 30 hours as the minimum for master's degrees. Departments may petition for a reduced hour degree master's degree for individual students in cases where they may provide evidence that the student entered the program especially well-prepared to complete a graduate-level degree and the student is able to maintain a superior grade point average. Reduced credit hour degrees must be based on coursework or experiences that can be objectively measured, such as coursework or qualifying internship or study abroad programs. Professional or life experience does not qualify. A reduction in hours is distinct from a transfer of credit and is reserved for students whose prior coursework doesn't qualify for transfer credit (e.g. was already used to fulfill requirements towards a completed degree) and there are no modifications to the transcript.

HSES Graduate Handbook

Restrictions apply to the number of credit hours that can be reduced for a master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below.

In all cases, a reduction in hours must first be approved at the department or program level, so to begin the process for approval, students should consult with their DGS. Students must also provide documentation of the coursework or experience being used to justify the reduced hours (e.g. transcripts, program descriptions).

Because there is no minimum number of required hours for the Ph.D., reduction of required hours based on prior degrees or experience is determined solely at the program level. Doctoral students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Related Policies:

- [Graduate Credit](#)
- [Co-enrollment](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements \(on Reduced Hour Master's Degree\)](#)

Credit/No Credit

The University supports and encourages interdisciplinary study, which may include graduate students enrolling in coursework at the graduate level that is outside of their primary discipline. The Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) is an option for graduate students who are taking [a course that is not required for their degree or certificate](#) and who do not wish to have the course grade reflected in their cumulative graduate GPA. Rather than a grade appearing on the transcript, the student receives a designation of CR or NC, which does not factor in the GPA.

No course graded CR/NC will count toward the satisfaction of any graduate degree or certificate requirement. This includes, but is not limited to, courses taken to fulfill the Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirement for doctoral students. Students make the CR/NC election via the Registrar's CR/NC [online request](#) form. Elections and changes to elections can only be made during the specific CR/NC period. For regular semester courses, this period begins after the last day to add a class and extends for approximately two weeks. Exact dates may be found in the current KU [Academic Calendar](#). Please keep in mind short courses may have [alternate dates](#).

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

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

Related Policies and Forms:

- [University Senate Rules and Regulations \(USRR\), Section 2.3.8](#)

Probation & Dismissal

Probation is an academic status that can be assigned to a graduate student that is not making [satisfactory progress](#) toward completing their degree. The department initiates the probation process and will inform the students of why they are not making satisfactory progress, what they must do to return to good standing, and the deadline for doing so.

Students are most commonly placed on probation due to their graduate cumulative GPA dropping below a B average (3.0 on a 4.0 scale). In these cases, probation occurs automatically and is reflected on the student's record for the semester following the semester in which the student's GPA drops below 3.0. If the student's cumulative GPA is raised to 3.0 by the end of the probationary semester, the student will be automatically returned to good academic standing.

Individual Schools/College may set more stringent GPA requirements.

Students may also be placed on probation by their departments for other reasons that constituting a failure to make satisfactory progress towards degree. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of progress on the thesis, dissertation, or capstone project
- Unacceptable academic performance on program milestones outside of coursework (e.g. exams)
- Unsatisfactory grades or GPA within foundational required courses (despite the overall cumulative GPA)
- An unsatisfactory result in their department's annual progress evaluation

Nearing or going beyond their maximum time to degree. See the Time Limits section below for more information.

Students should carefully review the [Good Academic Standing policy](#) for graduate students at KU for more information on what constitutes making satisfactory academic progress.

Individual programs may also have additional measures of progress. Students should also consult the Annual Review section of their department graduate handbook or the degree requirements section and with their program advisor for more information.

If a student is unable to raise their cumulative GPA or otherwise meet the communicated terms of the academic probation, the department will reconsider their continuation in the program, and in most cases will recommend the student for dismissal. Once dismissed, a student is no longer able to be enrolled in coursework and cannot complete their degree. Students dismissed from any graduate program may not be admitted to any other graduate program at the University of Kansas.

A student on probation or facing dismissal should discuss their status with their advisor.

Related Policies:

- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)
- [Good Academic Standing policy](#)

Grading

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' (GPA) [Grading policy](#) governs requirements for the grading of graduate students above those described in [Article II](#) of the University Senate Rules and Regulations. Additionally, individual schools, departments, or programs may have grading policies that are more stringent than those of GPA.

Students should also consult their advisor and the departmental grading section of this handbook for additional information that may affect them.

At minimum, for all graduate students at KU, at least a B average is required on course work counted toward any of the master's degrees at KU, and only courses graded A, B, or C (excluding C-) may be counted. Course work counted toward a doctorate, including that for a master's degree if obtained at KU, should average better than a B.

Related Policies:

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

Time Limits

The University expects that master's degree should typically be completed in two (2) years of full-time study, the doctorate degree in five (5) years of study, and both the master's and doctorate together in six-seven (6-7) years of study.

Students who anticipate exceeding these targets should review the information in the policies below, as well as consult with their program advisor to create a timeline for degree completion. In order to support this process, students are encouraged to use a Mentoring Agreement Template and/or adapt to their own needs to support effective mentoring and a positive mentoring relationship.

Note that individual schools/the College/degree programs may require Mentoring Agreements for students who are nearing their maximum time to degree.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Degree Program Time Constraints](#)
- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Oral Exams \(on exam expiration and recertification\)](#)
- [Doctoral Program Profiles with Time to Degree Information](#)
- [KU CLAS Mentorship Agreement Template](#)
- [Univ. Michigan Rackham Graduate School Mentoring Plan Templates](#)
- [KU Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs IDP template](#)

Leave of Absence

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. cases of illness, emergency, financial hardship, military leave, to pursue family responsibilities, or to pursue full-time activities related to long-range professional goals) it may be necessary for graduate students to take a break from their program temporarily, without having to withdraw entirely from the program. An approved leave of absence allows a student to take a temporary break from enrolling in graduate coursework while remaining in good standing with the University and the department and while "stopping the clock" on their time to degree. When a student is on Leave of Absence status it is understood that they have temporarily suspended their graduate work and therefore will not make use of University resources, including faculty time.

Requesting a Leave of Absence is done through a University petition. University petitions must first be approved and supported at the program level, so students wishing to initiate the petition process should first consult with their Director of Graduate Studies and review their department's internal petition procedures. Units or the Director of Graduate Study may request documentation to support the student's need for a leave of absence.

In order for a Leave of Absence to be approved, the student must be withdrawn from all active and/or future enrollment. Withdrawal for the purposes of Leave of Absence is still subject to all Registrar deadlines, required forms, and applicable tuition and fees.

Students on Leave of Absence are automatically reactivated after their leave is over and are eligible to enroll for their intended semester back during the normal enrollment periods. See the KU [Academic Calendar](#) for exact dates that enrollment begins.

If at any time plans change and a student wishes to return and enroll before leave is supposed to end, they may contact their department to be reactivated early.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Leaves of Absence \(policy\)](#)
- [Leave of Absence \(GPA website, form linked at bottom of page\)](#)

Required University Milestones

All graduate students must complete one or more exams as part of their degree requirements. In addition to department or program guidelines, the following milestones are required for all students and specific regulations apply:

- Master's Final Culminating Exam (written or oral)/Thesis Defense for Master's Degree

- [Doctoral Comprehensive Oral Exam](#)
- [Doctoral Final Exam/Dissertation Defense](#)

*A final culminating effort is not required for departments with an approved coursework-only master's degree option in the Academic Catalog (note that programs with a capstone are considered coursework only).

Before a student is allowed to complete any of these three exams, pre-approval from the school/College is required in advance of the exam date. This pre-approval request will be submitted on the student's behalf by their department after the exam date has been scheduled. The school/College reviews the student record and verifies all University requirements have been fulfilled. The full list of these requirements may be found via the link in the heading above. Students should work with their departments well in advance of their planned exam date, to schedule their exams in a timely fashion and to ensure that all University policies relating to oral exams are being followed.

There are additional policies requirements for oral exams. The following are University policies pertaining to oral exams:

[Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)

All voting committee members must be appointed members of the Graduate Faculty of KU. Additionally, a majority of committee members serving on a graduate student oral examination committee must be tenured/tenure-track faculty in the candidate's department or program of study.

Many additional restrictions apply, especially for doctoral exam committees. Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the University policies pertaining to exams, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies when forming an exam committee. Your graduate program coordinator can assist with confirming the qualifying status of any faculty member at KU, or outside of KU.

[Oral Exam Attendance](#)

Oral Exams may be conducted in-person, remotely, or a hybrid of both. There are no University level requirements for physical presence; however, there are strict regulations on participation.

In all cases, all committee members must be present, either physically or via phone/video conference, for an exam to commence. **If a committee member does not arrive or appear, the exam may not begin and if a committee member leaves or loses connection such that they cannot fully participate, the exam may not proceed. Oral examinations that do not meet these attendance requirements are not valid.**

Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the policies below, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies in the formation of an oral exam committee.

[Related Policies and Forms:](#)

- [Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Doctoral Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Oral Exam Attendance](#)
- [Graduate Faculty Appointments](#)

[DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS](#)

In addition to the student's individual Ph.D. program's degree requirements, the following are University requirements for graduation with a Ph.D. at KU.

[Enrollment Requirement](#)

Prior to the semester in which the comprehensive exam is held, all doctoral students must complete a minimum program engagement equivalent to two full-time semesters. This may be accomplished through either of the following:

- Two semesters (fall and/or spring) of full-time enrollment in KU coursework, as defined by University policy
- At least 18 hours of enrollment in KU coursework spread out over several part-time semesters

[Related Policies and Forms:](#)

- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](#)

[Continuous Enrollment for Post-Comprehensive Students](#)

During the semester in which the doctoral oral comprehensive exam is completed and each fall and spring semester follows, doctoral students must adhere to very specific enrollment requirements. These requirements may be different than enrollment requirements prior to the oral comp exam.

Failure to properly comply with the enrollment requirements may cause delays to graduation or additional enrollment requirements to make up what was missed, increasing tuition expenses near the end of your degree program.

To avoid delays or additional costs, you are also strongly advised to meet with your graduate program coordinator the semester before your oral comprehensive exam. Your graduate coordinator will work with you to develop an enrollment plan that meets all policy requirements, while also preventing unnecessary or avoidable fees.

Post-comprehensive enrollment requirements also apply to students with GTA/GRA/GA appointments, but these students must be certified to drop their enrollment levels. Departments are responsible for tracking student enrollment and will submit the certification form on the student's behalf **at least two weeks prior** to the beginning of the semester in which the enrollment will drop below 6 hours. Students who are certified to reduce hours continue to meet the University's definition of full-time enrollment, as well as the enrollment requirements of their employment contract.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Doctoral Candidacy](#)

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

The University offers a variety of [Approved Graduate Certificate Programs](#) to encourage current graduate students to pursue interdisciplinary study, gain a credential for expertise in an outside area of study, or provide an option for a coherent course of advanced study for those not ready to commit to a full degree program. Note that students must be fully admitted to a graduate certificate by the end of the last course that will count to fulfill the certificate. Students wishing to complete the certificate should apply as early as possible. Students whose interests or career goals may be served by a Graduate Certificate should familiarize themselves with the University's policies relating to Certificate programs (found below) early in their graduate career, in addition to individual certificate program requirements.

Related Policies and Forms:

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

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (Master's & Ph.D.)

In addition to all program requirements, students [planning to graduate](#) must complete all University graduation requirements **prior to the published Graduation Deadline** in a given semester. Students should consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for the published Graduation Deadline, which varies by semester.

[Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs Graduation Checklists \(Master's | Doctoral\)](#)

These graduation checklists provide a comprehensive list of all University requirements for graduation and should be consulted by every graduating master's or doctoral student as soon as graduation is expected. Submission of the final draft of the thesis or dissertation is done electronically. Students must comply with all University requirements for [formatting](#) and [electronic submission](#) of the thesis or dissertation. There is no University requirement that students provide a bound or printed copy of the draft.

We strongly encourage students to submit an Application for Graduation as early as possible; ideally prior to the 20th day of classes of the semester they intend to graduate.

GRADUATE & POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs (GPA) offers funding opportunities in several different categories. Students interested in applying should direct inquiries to the department's Director of Graduate Studies or to GPA. Some of the available funding includes:

[Summer Research Scholarships](#): intended primarily for post-comp doctoral students.

[Graduate Student Travel Fund](#): intended for graduate students presenting a paper at a national or regional meeting of a learned or professional society. A student may receive an award (max \$750) only once per academic year, with priority given to students who have not received the fund previously. Funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

[Doctoral Student Research Fund](#): Designed to support KU doctoral students who need assistance to carry out research that advances progress toward the degree. Applications for this fund are accepted only for a limited time as funding is available. Students are eligible to receive one award from this fund during their doctoral career. Students should check the link above for additional information and restrictions.

Policies Regarding Freedom of Expression on Campus

Kansas State Law (HB2333) requires post-secondary educational institutions in Kansas to publish in their handbooks and orientation programs the institution's policies, regulations, or expectations of students regarding free expression on campus. Per KU General Counsel, this includes the following two policies:

- [KU Public Assembly Policy](#)
- [Kansas Board of Regents Statement on Free Expression](#)

Note that the two policies listed above apply to ALL members of the campus community; they are not specific to graduate students.

General Academic Procedures & Policies

Admission:

Application Requirements/Prerequisites:

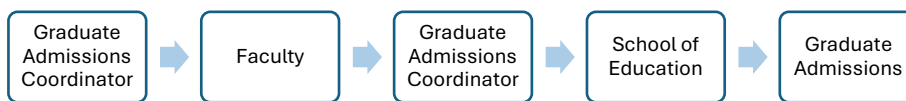
- All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the [Admission to Graduate Study](#) policy.
- Official transcripts of **all** degree-granting post-secondary institutions you have attended and an official transcript for each degree earned.
- English proficiency: [Proof of English proficiency](#) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.
- A completed [graduate application](#).
- Application fee.
- 3.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) Preferred
 - Students with a GPA below 3.0 can still apply but are highly encouraged to include a statement explaining any extraordinary circumstances that attributed to it and your plan moving forward.
- **Additional prerequisites for applicants to the Exercise Science (Master's) subplan only**
 - Applicants are required to have completed credits from the following KU courses, or transfer credit from equivalent non-KU courses:
 - [BIOL 240 \(Human Anatomy\)](#)
 - [BIOL 246 \(Principles of Human Physiology\)](#)
 - [HSES 369 \(Kinesiology\)](#) OR [HSES 470 \(Biomechanics\)](#)
 - [HSES 372 \(Exercise Physiology\)](#).
 - Questions regarding these courses can be directed to the Exercise Science Program Director.
- **Doctoral Applicants for Sport Management, Health Education, & Exercise Physiology**
 - Students must hold a master's degree from a degree-granting institution to be accepted into a doctoral program.
 - Students must have a faculty mentor willing to advise them before their application is accepted.
 - Applicants are highly encouraged to reach out to faculty members to set up interviews prior to applying.
 - Preferred 3.5 GPA
 - Contact your desired faculty mentor regarding GRE requirements
 - All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the [Admission to Graduate Study](#) policy.
 - Official transcripts of **all** degree-granting post-secondary institutions you have attended and an official transcript for each degree earned.
 - English proficiency: [Proof of English proficiency](#) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.
 - A completed [graduate application](#).

- Application fee.

Application Materials:

- Three letters of recommendation. (2 letters for those applying to the online Sport Management program).
- Personal statement declaring your interest in the program and its relationship to your graduate course or study and/or career objectives.
 - Students interested in applying for Sport Management can think about the following questions:
 - Why are you interested in Sport Management?
 - Students interested in applying for Health Education can answer the following questions:
 - How does the program relate to your career goals?
 - Students interested in applying for Exercise Science can answer the following questions:
 - Why are you interested in the program? Please include whether you intend to be on a thesis or non-thesis(exam) track.
 - If you are on the thesis track, have you spoken with a faculty member who is willing to advise you? If not, please use the link to reach out to a [faculty member](#).
- Current resume or CV.
- Writing sample
 - Required for master's students who are wanting to complete a thesis and all doctoral applicants.
 - Students may use a previously written sample unless specified below.

Application Review Process:



- Applications are reviewed initially by the graduate admissions coordinator to verify that all materials have been submitted.
- After verification that all materials have been submitted, the application is sent to faculty.
 - Faculty should review the application within a week of receiving it.
 - After the faculty review, the application comes back to the graduate admissions coordinator for final review.
 - The application then moves on to the School of Education and then on to Graduate Admissions for finalization.

- If admitted, you should receive a letter from graduate admissions that contains the information to get you started with setting up your school account and email.
 - You will need to respond to your letter of admission.
 - If you have trouble responding to your letter of admission, please reach out to [Kristina Gordon](#).

Deadlines:

- Sport Management (PhD only), Health Education (MSE & PhD) and Exercise Science/Physiology (MSE & PhD) Deadlines
 - Spring 2026: December 3, 2025
 - Summer 2026: April 1, 2026
 - Fall 2026: August 4, 2026
- Sport Management (Online only)
 - Spring 2026: 1/6/2026
 - Summer 2026: 5/14/2026
 - Fall 2026: 8/13/2026
- Important to note that international applicants for **Fall 2026** have a **June 1, 2026** deadline. Please refer to this [link](#) for more information regarding the international application process.

Admissions Contact Information:

- Graduate Admissions Coordinator
 - Kristina Gordon
 - Email: krigordon@ku.edu
 - Phone: 785-864-0897
 - Office: 104 F Robinson Hall

Enrollment:

General Enrollment Information:

- After admission, be on the lookout for an invitation to the KU Graduate Student Orientation Course. The invitation will be sent out in early summer for Fall semester.
 - It will go over how to enroll and other important information.
 - Please use this [link](#) for access to the New Student Guide and Resource hub.
- **Sport Management Online Master's Program Only**
 - An advisor will reach out to you directly to assist you with enrolling for your courses.

- If an advisor has not reached out to you after a week of receiving your acceptance letter, please contact [Dr. Calvin Williams](#) or [Kristina Gordon](#) for assistance.
- **Doctoral Students**
 - Students in any PhD program will need to work with their faculty mentor regarding their schedule and enrollment.
- For policies on full-time enrollment requirements, please see the definitions outlined in Graduate Studies' [Full-Time Enrollment for Graduate Studies policy](#).

Reminder: Enrollment may impact financial aid eligibility and enrollment in locations or courses outside the student's home school or college program may have a different tuition and fee cost.

Potential Issues that could inhibit or delay enrollment:

- University Enrollment Holds
 - [Link](#) to Policy
 - Immunization Compliance
 - Official Transcripts (Not a copy)
- Keep in mind, failure to take care of holds on your accounts is the student's responsibility and can delay enrollment. For any hold on your account, you are notified by KU email. Please check that regularly.
 - Delays in enrollment can result in late enrollment. Please see the information below regarding late enrollment.
- Late Enrollment
 - Failure to enroll in at least one course before 12:00 a.m. on the first instructional day of the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters for full-term courses are considered enrolling late will be charge [a late enrollment fee](#).

Permission Numbers:

- Students in Health Education (Master's and PhD) and Exercise Science/Physiology (Master's and PhD)
 - Permission Codes are typically needed for courses outside the students area of study.
 - Our department requires the students to reach out to the instructor of the course they want to take for permission.
 - The instructor of the course or program coordinator of their department is responsible for sending the code to the student so that they can enroll.
- **Sport Management Online Master's Students Only**
 - Once students are on their final semester of study, they will need a permission code to enroll in the capstone course.
 - The code will be given out by Dr. Calvin Williams after it is verified, they are in their final semester of study.

Changes in Enrollment:

- Students who need to drop or withdraw from courses after the deadline may do so using the link and forms below. Any questions can be directed to [Kristina Gordon](#) or the instructor of the course.
 - Add, Drop, Withdrawal Forms can be found [here](#).
- A leave of absence can be given for extraordinary circumstances. Please reach out to [Kristina Gordon](#) for information. [Link](#) to Policy
- Link to the Registrar's [Considerations and Impacts of a Drop or Withdrawal](#).

Graduate students in the M.S. degree program (Health Education & Exercise Science only) or students in the Ph.D. program who have not yet completed the oral comprehensive examination (Master's Thesis & Ph.D.) or non-oral comprehensive exam (Master's students only) should be enrolled in at least 6 credit hours each semester and 3 credit hours in the summer whether they are supported by a teaching assistantship, a research assistantship, or personal funds. Please note that certain external fellowships/scholarships may have additional enrollment requirements. After completing the oral comprehensive examination and defense of dissertation proposal (Ph.D. only), students are required to adhere to the [University's Post-Comprehensive Enrollment Policy](#). See [Full-Time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#). Please direct enrollment questions to your advisor.

Academic Integrity & Misconduct

The Health, Sport, and Exercise Science (HSES) Department views academic misconduct as a very serious issue. Students who violate conduct policies will be subject to severe penalties, up through and including expulsion. Please see the [School of Education and Human Sciences Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#) for more information.

Examples of misconduct include (among others) falsification, unauthorized assistance with or plagiarism of reports, term papers, research papers or other written documents; giving or receiving unauthorized aid on examinations; disruption of classes; the offering of gratuities or favors in return for grades. Please see the [University Senate Rules and Regulations policy](#) for additional examples.

Good Academic Standing

- To be considered in good standing in the HSES department, students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 and make timely progress toward meeting their degree requirements and milestones. A C- is not an acceptable grade for graduate work and will need to be retaken to graduate. For additional information on good standing, please refer to the [Good Academic Standing Policy](#) used by the University. Students may be placed on probation based on the recommendation of the program director and faculty.
 - Students may be placed on probation for:
 - Failing to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0
 - Not meeting degree requirements and milestones.
 - Receiving multiple, or consecutive incompletes

- Students placed on probation will receive a written notice from the School of Education outlining their requirements that must be met in order to return to good standing.
- Failure to meet the terms of probation constitutes sufficient grounds for dismissal from the graduate program.
- Students who are experiencing hardship, please reach out to your instructor for assistance. We cannot assist you if we are unaware of your circumstances.
- Please use the links provided below for more information on:

[Probation](#)

[Dismissal](#)

Grading

Minimum Grade Requirements for Core Cores:

- Graduate Studies grading policy establishes a minimum grade of C or higher for a course to count for graduate credit. See [Graduate Credit Policy](#) for more information.
 - Courses will need to be retaken if the student receives a C- or below.

Incomplete Grades:

- Refer to [Graduate Studies Grading Policy](#) for more information
- See [University Senate Rules and Regulations, 2.33](#) for more specific clarification

Grading for Thesis & Dissertation Hours:

- Satisfactory Progress- SP
 - Student has met the goals of the semester as agreed upon with the faculty advisor. The progress made in the semester supports timely completion of the thesis or dissertation.
- Limited Progress- LP
 - Students completed less than what was agreed upon with the faculty advisor. The semester's progress may cause delays in the timely completion of the thesis or dissertation.
 - The graduate program director will track grades of LP in the program. If consecutive grades of LP, or a third LP are reported, for a student, the student may be placed on academic probation and/or a mentoring agreement. If additional LP's are reported after the mentoring agreement and/or probation, the student is no longer making satisfactory progress toward their degree and is

out of good academic standing. As a result, the graduate program director may recommend dismissal of the student from the program.

- No Progress-NP
 - Students have shown no evidence of completed work or did not make progress toward the thesis or dissertation.
 - Graduate Program Director will track any NP grades in the program. If a student receives an NP, the student is not making satisfactory progress toward their degree and is considered out of good academic standing. As a result, the director will review the grade and the student record and may place the student on academic probation, complete a mentoring agreement with the student, or recommend dismissal of the student from the program.

Annual Student Progress Review

--Coming Soon

Grievance Procedures

Grievances arising within the HSES Department must be heard under the [School of Education and Human Science Grievance Procedure](#). The School of Education and Human Science Grievance procedure applies to the faculty members, unclassified professional staff, and students.

Note: This procedure does not apply to graduate students in matters related to their employment as teaching assistants. A separate grievance procedure outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement between the University of Kansas and the Board of Regents and the Kansas Association of Public Employees is available for that purpose.

Petitions

Exceptions to the rules and requirements of the graduate programs within HSES may be granted for sufficient reason by the Office of Graduate Affairs and/or the Office of Graduate Studies.

- Types of Petitions:
 - Course Substitution/Waiver
 - Exceptions/Changes to program requirements
 - Changing Advisors
 - Increasing Hours taken outside of KU
 - Time Limit Extension (Ph.D. only)

- *Requests for time limit extensions with expected defense or exam dates outside of Spring or Fall semester will not be considered unless a firm exam or defense date has been set and agreed to by all committee members during the prior Spring/Fall term.*
- FacEx Appeal Petition: Enroll, Drop, Withdraw after deadline
- *Any petition based on medical justifications is required to have supporting documentation from a health care professional. This statement can be as simple as a letter from the student's doctor's office stating that the student is 'being treated', or 'under doctor's care'. The statement MUST NOT include specifics of the condition for which the student is being treated.*

Please reach out to [Kristina Gordon](#) if you need a petition.

Advising & Mentoring

Advising within HSES is dependent on the program that the student is in. In general, master's students for our in-person programs will work closely with a faculty member to go over their plans of study during their first semester on campus. Students and their advisors are expected to meet every semester to check-in on progress and plan for exams or proposals. For our Sport Management Online Master's program, an advisor from Everspring will reach out to the students after they are admitted to go over coursework. Dr. Williams will complete a mid-point check-in with students to go over progress. For all Ph.D. students, the students must have a faculty member willing to advise them prior to applying. Students will then work with their advisor to develop a program plan and meet regularly to go over progress.

Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Policy

Change of Faculty Advisor:

- *Every graduate student is required to have a graduate advisor from the time of admission until completion of degree requirements. Students may change advisors at any time provided they can identify another regular member of the department's graduate faculty willing to accept the position. It is the student's responsibility to identify the new advisor, to notify [Kristina Gordon](#) at once and in writing of such changes so she can submit the proper paperwork, and to notify the previous advisor of the change.*
- *When a change of advisor is necessary for reasons beyond the student's control (e.g., a faculty member leaving KU, retiring, or when the advising relationship is no longer productive), the secondary advisor is expected to step into the role on a temporary basis, unless alternative arrangements are made with the department chair.*
- *HSES will give the student a defined period of time to identify the new advisor for up to **one academic semester (16 weeks)**. HSES will assist with and monitor the process, but it will be entirely the responsibility of the student to initiate contacts*

and identify a faculty member willing to be their primary advisor. Any faculty member has the right to refuse to continue as a student's advisor or to serve on any student's committee. If a student is unable to identify a program faculty member willing to serve as their advisor within 16 weeks (one academic semester), or sufficient faculty members to make up a committee, this may be grounds for dismissal.

Regularly & Timely Feedback from Thesis/Dissertation Advisors

See [Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Policy](#)

The Department of Health, Sport, and exercise Science is committed to providing regular and timely feedback to ensure graduate students are aware of the assessment of their academic work and their academic standing in the master's or PhD program.

- Coursework: Feedback on and grades for course assignments are provided according to the schedule included in the syllabus.
 - Final grades are entered by the University's grade submission deadline each semester.
- Academic progress: Students and faculty are encouraged to meet and discuss students' progress. Students failing to make progress will be notified by their faculty advisor.
- Dissertation work: Faculty advisors provide feedback on chapters within two to three weeks unless specified.

Information for Graduate Assistants (GTA, GRA, GA)

General Information for all 3G Positions

- Link to [GTA/GRA/GA Policies](#)
- See building manager, Teresa Aldrich, for access to building and keys to rooms.
- Reach out to the department chair with questions regarding placement.

GTAs

- Link to Policy: [Minimum Qualifications for GTA's](#)

Degree Requirements

Academic Catalog

- *The University Academic Catalog is the definitive source for requirements and regulations for every academic program. However, the Catalog is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contract. Degree requirements listed in the Catalog have been approved by established University Governance procedures. Degree and program requirements and course descriptions are subject to change. This handbook serves as a supplement to provide further details on the requirements, policies, and procedures described in the Catalog. Link to the master's program [department catalog page](#). Link to the doctoral program [department catalog page](#).*

Master's Degree Requirements

Exercise Science

- Coursework Requirements
 - Please see the department catalog page for a list of courses required for the [exercise science master's program](#).
 - Students who are on the thesis track are required to have 30 hours of coursework.
 - Students who are on the non-thesis track are required to have 36 hours of coursework.
 - Please see [Master's Degree Requirements Policy](#) for more information.
 - Other helpful information: [Master's Degree Time Restraints Policy](#), [Master's Final Exam Policy](#)
- Culminating Effort Options
 - **Thesis Track**
 - Students on the thesis track will be required to work with their advisor to decide on a thesis topic.
 - Students will need a committee of at least three members with graduate faculty status. Please see the [Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition Policy](#) for more information.
 - [Master's Thesis Submission and Publication Policy](#) and [Embargo Policy for Theses and Dissertations](#)
 - **Non-Thesis Track**

- Students will be required to take a comprehensive exam during their final semester of study.
- Students will need 3 committee members with graduate faculty status.
- Each member will provide the proctor with a question for the student to answer on the date of the exam.
- The proctor will reach out to get the questions from the committee members.
 - It is the students responsibility to work with their advisor to determine their committee members and to ask if they would be on their committee prior to getting approval to take comps.
 - Students are to notify Kristina Gordon with who is on their committee. She will complete the necessary forms needed for the school and set up the time and place for the comprehensive exam. Date will be decided prior to this and sent out to faculty ahead of time.
- Outcome
 - **Thesis Track**
 - After thesis defense, the committee will determine whether the student passes or fails the comprehensive exam.
 - In most cases, the student is allowed to make corrections unless there are too many corrections to make.
 - **Non-Thesis Track**
 - After the student takes the comprehensive exam, their responses are sent to their committee member to grade.
 - At that point, the committee member will decide on a pass or fail option.
 - Students that fail a portion of their exam typically are given a chance to correct it. However, that is up to the committee member to decide.

- Students MUST pass at least 2 of the 3 questions to pass their comprehensive exam.

Health Education

- Coursework Requirements
 - Please see the department catalog page for a list of courses required for the [Community Health master's program](#).
 - Students who are on the thesis track are required to have 30 hours of coursework.
 - Students who are on the non-thesis track are required to have 36 hours of coursework.
 - Please see [Master's Degree Requirements Policy](#) for more information.
 - Other helpful information: [Master's Degree Time Restraints Policy](#), [Master's Final Exam Policy](#)
- Culminating Effort Options
 - **Thesis Track**
 - Students on the thesis track will be required to work with their advisor to decide on a thesis topic.
 - Students will need a committee of at least three members with graduate faculty status. Please see the [Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition Policy](#) for more information.
 - [Master's Thesis Submission and Publication Policy](#) and [Embargo Policy for Theses and Dissertations](#)
 - **Non-Thesis Track**
 - Students will be required to take a comprehensive exam during their final semester of study.
 - Students will need 3 committee members with graduate faculty status.
 - Each member will provide the proctor with a question for the student to answer on the date of the exam.
 - The proctor will reach out to get the questions from the committee members.
 - It is the students responsibility to work with their advisor to determine their committee members and to ask if they

would be on their committee prior to getting approval to take comps.

- Students are to notify Kristina Gordon with who is on their committee. She will complete the necessary forms needed for the school and set up the time and place for the comprehensive exam. Date will be decided prior to this and sent out to faculty ahead of time.

- Outcome

- **Thesis Track**

- After thesis defense, the committee will determine whether the student passes or fails the comprehensive exam.
 - In most cases, the student is allowed to make corrections unless there are too many corrections to make.

- **Non-Thesis Track**

- After the student takes the comprehensive exam, their responses are sent to their committee member to grade.
 - At that point, the committee member will decide on a pass or fail option.
 - Students that fail a portion of their exam typically are given a chance to correct it. However, that is up to the committee member to decide.
 - Students **MUST** pass at least 2 of the 3 questions to pass their comprehensive exam.

Online Sport Management

- Coursework Requirements
 - Please see the department catalog page for a list of courses required for the [sport management online master's program](#).
 - Please see [Master's Degree Requirements Policy](#) for more information.
 - Other helpful information: [Master's Degree Time Restraints Policy](#)

- Culminating Effort Options
 - Coursework Only: Students in the online master's program will take a final capstone course (HSES 896) in their last semester of study.
 - Reminders: Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA and nothing lower than a C to graduate.

Doctoral Degree Requirements

Exercise Physiology, Sport Management, and Health Education

- Admission
 - Refer to page 7 for admission requirements for doctoral degree programs
- Coursework and Degree Requirements
 - Students completing their PhD will work closely with their advisor to set a schedule that fits their area.
 - Students in HSES are required to take HSES 990 Doctoral Seminar, otherwise classes can be determined along with their advisor.
 - Students will need to take 36 credit hours of major coursework (determined by student and advisor) and 12 hours of research skills. Please refer to the [catalog](#) for more specific options.
- Research Skills & Responsible Scholarship
 - Link to [Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship Policy](#)
 - PhD students must meet these requirements before they take their comprehensive exam.
- Establishing a Committee
 - PhD students work with their advisors to determine who is on their committee.
 - Students are responsible for reaching out to committee members to see if they will be on their committee.
 - Please reach out to Kristina Gordon to verify that committee members are able to serve on committees.
 - Committees need to be at least 4 tenure track members with Graduate Faculty Status. You may have up to 7 members if needed.
 - At least half need to be from the department of study. For example, 2 committee members need to be tenure track faculty

from HSES on a 4-person committee. For 5 committee members, 3 have to be from the department of study.

- Students will need one outside tenure track member to serve as a graduate representative.
- ALL members will need to have a Graduate Faculty Appointment to be on your committee.
 - If you do not know, reach out to Kristina Gordon for assistance.
 - If there is someone that resides outside of KU that you want to serve as an outside member, please send Kristina Gordon their most recent CV so that she can put through the paperwork to get them approved to serve on your committee.
- Oral Comprehensive Exam Procedures
 - Comprehensive exams are determined by their advisor and the program that the student is in.
 - Students will work with their advisor to set a date, time, and location for their comprehensive exam.
 - Students are responsible for reaching out to their committee to coordinate a time that works for all.
 - Students will need to submit their signed program plan and PhD residency agreement to Kristina Gordon at least 3 weeks in advance to their comp exam date.
 - Failure to do so will result in a delay of your comprehensive exam
 - [Link](#) to Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Oral Exam

Dissertation Proposal

- This is a separate process from the oral comprehensive exam.
- Students will work with their advisors to determine length of proposal and what they need to do.
- Students will need to submit a copy of their proposal and a signed title page with 3 signatures to Kristina Gordon after they complete their proposal.

Post-Comp Enrollment

- PhD students must have 18 dissertation hours for the HSES program
- [Link](#) to Doctoral Candidacy Policy

Dissertation

- Students will work closely with their advisor to go over the expectations for their dissertation.
- For assistance with formatting, please use this [link](#).
- Students will need to notify Kristina Gordon 3 weeks prior to defense date with the following:
 - Committee members
 - Time, Date, and Location of defense
 - Is the defense in-person, virtual, or hybrid?
 - Title of Dissertation (exactly how it needs to be spelled on transcript)
 - All dissertation defenses are posted on the University Calendar, so if the defense is virtual or hybrid, please provide a link for the defense to be added to the calendar.