

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT BOULDER

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2023 ed.

# Graduate School Rules

**University of Colorado at Boulder  
Graduate School Rules  
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Updated 2018, 2021, 2023**

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# **University of Colorado at Boulder**

## **Graduate School Rules**

### **2001, updated 2018, 2021, and 2023**

Graduate education is a preeminent role of the University of Colorado at Boulder. The responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating graduate programs and graduate education policies and procedures rests with the Graduate School. The mission of the Graduate School is to facilitate and enhance the educational experiences and opportunities for all graduate students and to encourage excellence in research, creative and scholarly work.

## **ARTICLE I: ORGANIZATION**

### **Section 1: Structure**

The primary responsibilities of the Graduate School are to promote graduate education at CU Boulder, maintain the high standards and quality of Graduate Faculty and programs, and coordinate the various graduate programs. The Graduate School along with the Graduate Faculty develops and administers programs according to the needs of the campus and in accord with the general standards of excellence and sound academic administration established by the Graduate School.

1. The Dean of the Graduate School, who reports to the Provost, is responsible for the administration of Graduate School policies and programs.
2. The Executive Advisory Council of the Graduate School, which consists of members of the Graduate Faculty, advises the Dean on issues concerning Graduate School policies and programs.
3. The constituent academic and research units of CU Boulder's Graduate School include the graduate programs in all CU Boulder units (e.g. departments, programs, centers, and institutes), except the School of Law and the MBA program.

### **Section 2: Dean of the Graduate School**

The Dean of the Graduate School is the chief academic and administrative officer of the Graduate School under authority delegated by the President and the Board of Regents. The Dean is appointed by the Board of Regents upon recommendation by the Provost and the Chancellor.

The Dean of the Graduate School is responsible for the overall coordination and effectiveness of Graduate School programs, chairs the Executive Advisory Council, and serves as the presiding officer for meetings of the Graduate Faculty. The Dean of the Graduate School reports to the Provost and is responsible for administering the programs of the Graduate School in a manner consistent with the “Graduate School Rules” and other CU policies and procedures.

### **Responsibilities**

Acting in conjunction with the Executive Advisory Council, and in participation with the faculties of the constituent schools and colleges, the Dean of the Graduate School is responsible for the following:

- compliance of all Graduate School programs with standards for faculty appointment, student admission, and graduation requirements
- approval of all graduate credentials, including new degree programs, graduate certificate programs, dual degrees (including international agreements etc.)
- approval of any program elements which deviate from established Graduate School rules or procedures prior to program implementation
- approval of degree program discontinuance
- approval of significant modifications of curricula or program requirements, including transfer of program responsibility
- approval of proposals for Bachelor’s-Accelerated Master’s (BAM) programs in conjunction with appropriate undergraduate deans and the Provost
- establishment of cooperative and beneficial relationships among colleges, schools, departments, and programs with regard to graduate education
- review of budgetary planning and resource allocation for graduate programming
- approval of Graduate Faculty appointments
- provision of appropriate academic advising for graduate students in conjunction with program staff and faculty
- approval of graduate curricular development and modification
- review and administration of graduate teaching assistant, graduate assistant, graduate part-time instructor and research assistant employment policies, procedures, and rates
- administration of Graduate School graduate student fellowship and grant programs

### **Section 3: Executive Advisory Council**

The Executive Advisory Council advises the Dean of the Graduate School on matters relating to coordination and excellence of Graduate School programs throughout CU Boulder.

#### **Composition**

The Executive Advisory Council consists of the Dean of the Graduate School, at least 12 members of the Graduate Faculty representing constituent schools and colleges, and 1 student member. The student member will be excluded from discussions regarding personnel matters and any information that might identify individual students. The council members are appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School from nominations submitted by the Boulder Faculty Assembly (BFA), the deans of constituent schools and colleges, the United Government of Graduate Students (UGGS), and the Institute and Center Directors. Advisory Council members are appointed for terms of three years. The Dean of the Graduate School is the Chair of the Executive Advisory Council.

#### **Procedure**

Working in conjunction with the Dean of the Graduate School, the Executive Advisory Council develops its own rules of procedure consistent with the Laws of the Regents and the “Graduate School Rules.”

#### **Duties**

The duties of the members of the Executive Advisory Council are to assist the Graduate School in achieving the goals set forth in its role and mission statements as follows:

- review and recommend proposals for new graduate degree programs, graduate certificate programs, BAM degree programs and discontinuance of existing degree or certificate programs
- review changes in the “Graduate School Rules” and make recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School
- make recommendations on students’ appeals
- carry out duties as delegated by the Dean of the Graduate School and make recommendations to the Dean pertaining to graduate education at CU Boulder

### **Section 4: The Graduate Faculty**

#### **Graduate Program**

A graduate program includes all Graduate Faculty members who are appointed specifically to the faculty of that program by the Dean of the Graduate School. Any faculty member whose duties include teaching, thesis/dissertation supervision, or

research supervision of CU Boulder graduate students must be appointed to the Graduate Faculty to ensure minimum standards of excellence in relation to graduate education.

### Membership

Appointment to the Graduate Faculty of the Graduate School is based on uniform, minimum standards specified in the “Graduate School Rules.” There are two types of appointment: “regular” and “special.” As detailed below, regular appointment to the Graduate Faculty is limited to full-time faculty members of CU Boulder who hold the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, professor, or any research professor title; special appointments may be granted to CU Boulder instructors or lecturers, to retired CU Boulder faculty, to faculty of any rank at other institutions, or to individuals beyond academia whose professional expertise is commensurate with CU Boulder standards.

In the case of a coordinated program between one or more University of Colorado campuses, the issue of Graduate Faculty appointment shall be addressed in the program MOU and agreed to by the graduate deans of each campus involved.

### General Qualifications

In accordance with the “Assumed Practices” policy of the Higher Learning Commission, the Graduate School requires that members of the graduate faculty hold a doctoral degree or the terminal degree appropriate to the discipline and have a record of research, scholarship, or achievement appropriate for the graduate program.

“Tested experience” may substitute for the earned credential where the institution has determined that a faculty member is qualified based on experience determined to be equivalent to the terminal degree. Equivalent experience should be tested in that it “includes a breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline,” and is not typically based on years of teaching experience. A unit that intends to use tested experience as a basis for requesting a GFA must have well-defined policies, procedures, and documentation that demonstrate when such experience is equivalent to a terminal degree and sufficient to determine that the faculty member has the expertise necessary to work with graduate students in their discipline. <sup>1</sup> When making a request for exception based upon equivalent experience, the unit shall include all such information along with the request.

### Review Process

Recommendations for membership in the Graduate Faculty are initiated by a department chair/program director. Any faculty member at CU Boulder may request that his/her credentials as a candidate for membership on the Graduate Faculty be reviewed. The recommendation is reviewed by the chair of the department prior to submission to the Dean of the Graduate School for consideration. The Dean of the Graduate School approves or disapproves appointments to the Graduate Faculty. If the action contemplated varies from recommendations, the Dean of the Graduate School and graduate program members discuss the issue in an attempt to reconcile the differences. Appeals of decisions

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<sup>1</sup> Higher Learning Commission Policy CRRT.B.10.020, <https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/assumed-practices.html>

made by the Dean of the Graduate School are forwarded to the Executive Advisory Council for action.

### **Regular Graduate Faculty Appointment**

The term of appointment for regular members of the Graduate Faculty is for a maximum of seven years. For untenured faculty, the length of the Graduate Faculty appointment corresponds to the length of the faculty member's appointment in the department. Members of the Graduate Faculty may be reappointed any number of times.

### **Additional Qualifications**

Regular membership on the Graduate Faculty is generally limited to full-time faculty members of CU Boulder who hold the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor, as well as any research professor title. The quality of graduate teaching, thesis supervision, research and creative work is central to the decision.

### **Criteria**

The criteria applied in evaluating applications for regular membership include:

- evidence of continuing scholarship -- defined as a broad and inclusive concept that includes research and/or creative work and related inquiries and activities that lead to the development and application of knowledge
- evidence of continuing teaching competency, especially as demonstrated in graduate level courses and in thesis/dissertation supervision
- when evidence of continuing scholarship or teaching competency is not clear, the department chair/program director must document equivalent professional competence

### **Privileges**

The appointment of a faculty member as a regular member of the Graduate Faculty means the faculty member may:

- teach graduate courses\*
- serve on graduate examining committees as chair or member, including serving as a member of a committee in another CU Boulder unit\*
- serve as outside member for a student's committee in another CU Boulder unit\*
- participate in program activities for the specific program(s) for which the faculty member was appointed
- vote on issues before the Graduate Faculty
- participate in meetings and committees of the Graduate School in accordance with the CU Boulder "Graduate School Rules"

\*The responsibility for certifying faculty members on regular Graduate Faculty appointments to teach particular courses or to supervise theses or dissertations in a particular area rests with the department chair or dean (where appropriate) of the approved degree program in which the course is taught or the thesis/dissertation is to be completed.

### **Special Graduate Faculty Appointment**

The appointment of a special member to the Graduate Faculty is for a maximum of three years. Such appointments may be renewed upon recommendation by the department chair/program director and re-approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

### **Additional Qualifications**

The classification of special membership in the Graduate Faculty is intended for individuals who are not full-time members of the CU Boulder faculty, for retired faculty, or for faculty members who are full-time members of the CU Boulder faculty but do not meet the qualifications outlined for regular membership in the Graduate Faculty.

Graduate students are not eligible for Graduate Faculty appointments. They may be granted “special” Graduate Faculty appointments only in very exceptional circumstances.

### **Criteria**

The criteria to be applied in evaluating applications for special membership include:

- evidence of continuing scholarship -- defined as a broad and inclusive concept that includes research and/or creative work and related inquiries and activities that lead to the development and application of knowledge
- evidence of continuing teaching competency, especially as demonstrated in graduate level courses and in thesis/dissertation supervision
- when evidence of continuing scholarship or teaching competency is not clear, the department chair/program director must document equivalent professional competence

### **Privileges**

A special member of the Graduate Faculty may fulfill only designated roles and duties as specified by the department chair/program director and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. These roles and duties may include:

- teaching graduate courses (may be broad or limited to specific courses)
- serving on graduate examining committees as a member (may be broad or limited to specific students)
- participating in program activities for the specific program(s) for which the faculty member is appointed

- serve as outside member on committees

He or she may not vote on issues before the Graduate Faculty.

### **Revocation of Regular or Special Graduate Faculty Appointment**

The status of a regular or special member may be revoked for cause upon a majority vote of the Graduate Faculty of the member's graduate program. This recommendation must then be approved by the Executive Advisory Council and the Dean of the Graduate School. For the purposes of these Graduate School Rules, revocation for cause through this process does not include unprofessional conduct.

In accordance with the Academic Affairs policy and procedures regarding Professional Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty Members and Roles and Professional Responsibilities of Academic Leaders (PRR), any concerns about a Graduate Faculty member's unprofessional conduct must be reviewed and determined by the faculty member's Supervising Administrator, and any proposed sanction that includes modification to or revocation of a graduate faculty appointment can only be determined by the Dean of the Graduate School, in accordance with the processes and procedures defined by the PRR.

### **Meetings of the Graduate Faculty**

Graduate School business is normally conducted by the Dean of the Graduate School, the Graduate School staff, and the Executive Advisory Committee; however, special meetings may be called at any time on twenty-four hours notice by the Dean of the Graduate School, or upon filing with the Dean of the Graduate School a petition signed by fifteen members of the Graduate Faculty. The petition must set forth in full the reason for calling the meeting. The members present at such a meeting constitute a quorum. The meetings are conducted in accord with "Robert's Rules of Order."

## **ARTICLE II: GRADUATE EDUCATION**

### **Section 1: Degree Programs**

#### **Independent or Single Campus Degree Program**

An independent degree program is a program existing on only one campus, under the authority of the Graduate Faculty and the dean of the graduate school of the campus.

#### **Coordinated Degree Programs**

A coordinated degree program is a single program that the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) has approved for more than one campus to offer. A coordinated program is characterized by a single curriculum, a single set of admission criteria, a single set of graduation requirements, and shared resources. CDHE approval of a coordinated program gives authority to the specified institutions to confer the degree.

The CU System Vice President for Academic Affairs determines, in consultation with the Graduate School Rules

campus graduate deans, the responsibilities of the faculty of each campus for areas of emphasis within a coordinated degree program.

#### Correspondence Degree Programs

Degree programs designated as “correspondence education” by the Higher Learning Commission are subject to all Graduate School Rules unless the Graduate School has formally approved exceptions prior to program implementation.

#### Degree Designation

Degree designation is in accordance with the University Administrative Policy Statement on Campus Designation on Diplomas.

#### Program Development and Modification

Proposals for new degree programs and for major modifications of existing degree programs are initiated by the graduate department/program in accordance with the rules of the program. For new degree programs, in accordance with CDHE guidelines, proposals are routed through the department chair/program director, Dean of the Graduate School, Provost, Chancellor, System Administration, the Board of Regents, and the CDHE. Final approval for new degree programs or major modifications rests with the CDHE. Major modifications of degree programs follow the same routing.

## **Section 2: Admissions**

A student may be admitted to the Graduate School as either a regular degree student or a provisional degree student.

#### Regular Degree Students

Qualified students may be recommended for admission to regular degree status by approved programs of the Graduate School provided they meet the following criteria:

- hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university, or have done work equivalent to that required for such a degree
- show promise of ability to pursue advanced study and research, as judged by the student’s scholastic record
- have had adequate preparation to enter graduate study in the chosen field
- have at least a 2.75 (on 4.0 scale, 2.00=C) undergraduate grade point average (for engineering 3.0).
  - Applicants who cannot meet this undergraduate standard may still secure regular admission if they have completed 9 semester hours of relevant graduate course work with at least a 3.25 average
  - Units who wish to grant regular admission to applicants who do not meet the undergraduate GPA standard (and do not have the graduate course work described above) may request that the Graduate School approve such admission based upon a full review of the applicant’s record

- meet additional requirements for admission established by the major unit

#### Provisional Degree Students

Students who do not meet the requirements for admission as regular degree students may be recommended for provisional degree status by their major department. With the concurrence of the Dean of the Graduate School, these students are admitted for a probationary term of either one or two semesters of full-time study or the equivalent for part-time students. At the end of the specified probationary period, provisional degree students either transition to regular degree status or are dismissed from the graduate program to which they were provisionally admitted. Provisional students are subject to the same standards of performance required of regular degree students, plus any other requirements imposed by program faculty as conditions of admission.

Credit earned by persons in provisional degree status may count toward a degree at CU Boulder. Standard terms of provisional admission shall be as follows: the student must complete 12 hours in two semesters (or equivalent for part-time students) with a 3.00 cumulative GPA. Program faculty may recommend additional, or alternative, conditions as appropriate.

#### Admission to Dual Master's Degree Programs

The Graduate School, in conjunction with the faculty of each department and deans of schools and colleges where appropriate, approves dual master's degree programs, which combine previously approved graduate degree programs in two areas or departments.

Qualified graduate students may be recommended for admission to an approved dual degree program upon meeting the qualifications of each graduate program and any special qualifications as outlined by each program's approved guidelines. Minimum standards and qualifications for admission and continuation may be found in each department's approved program guide. Students wishing to complete degrees in more than one department that do not have an approved dual degree program must complete all the requirements for both degrees with no shared or overlapping course work (see article II, section 3 regarding transfer credit).

#### Admission to the Bachelor's-Accelerated Master's (BAM) Degree Program

The Graduate School, in conjunction with the deans for the undergraduate units and the Provost, approves BAM degree programs, which combine previously approved undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

Highly qualified undergraduate students may be recommended for admission to a BAM degree program at the end of their sophomore or the beginning of their junior year. Such students are admitted at undergraduate status and later advance to graduate status. Standards for admission as well as eligibility to remain in the program are specified in the guidelines for each department's approved program.

#### Admission of Non-degree Students to Regular Degree Status

Students with non-degree status who wish to apply for regular student status must

complete their application for admission before completing 9 semester hours as a non-degree student at CU Boulder.

#### Readmission of Former and Suspended Students

Students who were previously admitted to a graduate degree program but who did not complete that degree and who have not been continuously registered at CU Boulder must meet the following requirements before being readmitted:

- clarify their status with the department to determine their eligibility to return and pursue the same degree
- submit a readmission application to the department for departmental approval before enrollment levels are met or deadlines passed for the term in which they expect to return to CU Boulder

Former students who wish to change from one major to another must apply to the intended department.

A student admitted to the Graduate School for the master's program must have departmental approval to be admitted or advanced to the doctoral program.

A regular degree student who is suspended or dismissed for failure to maintain a 3.0 grade point average is eligible to apply for readmission after one year. The student must submit an academic plan for raising the grade point average to 3.0. Approval or rejection of this application rests jointly with the student's major department and the Dean of the Graduate School.

#### Changing University of Colorado Campuses

Students transferring from one campus to another must apply and be accepted to the new campus.

#### Changing Major Departments

Students who want to change major departments must apply to and be accepted by the new department.

### **Section 3: Transfer Credits**

Transfer credits from accredited institutions are accepted by CU Boulder only after approval by the department chair/program director and under the special conditions outlined below. Transfer credit is defined as any credit earned at another accredited institution, credits earned on another campus of the CU system, or credits earned as a non-degree student within the CU system. Students seeking a degree from the University of Colorado Boulder must complete the majority of their course work while enrolled in a graduate program as a degree seeking student.

With the approval of the Graduate School and at the discretion of the unit, students may transfer up to and including 24 hours from a CU Boulder graduate certificate program, taken as a CU Boulder non-degree student, toward a graduate degree.

The following rules apply to transferring credit to CU Boulder graduate programs:

1. The maximum amount of work that may be transferred to CU Boulder depends upon the graduate degree sought. Individual departments may have more restrictive limits.

	<u>semester hours</u>
Master's (except M.F.A.)	9
M.F.A.	18
Doctoral	21

2. Work already applied toward a graduate degree received from CU Boulder or another institution cannot be accepted for transfer toward another graduate degree of the same level at CU Boulder. In addition, work completed for a doctoral degree may not be applied toward a subsequent master's degree. Courses applied toward an undergraduate degree may not be transferred to the CU Boulder Graduate School.
3. All courses accepted for transfer must be graduate level courses. The course grade must be B or higher. Transfer course work which is to be applied to a graduate degree at CU Boulder and was completed more than 5 years prior to being accepted to the program shall be evaluated by the major department as to current relevance and applicability to the degree requirements. At the discretion of the department a student may be asked to validate transfer credits prior to approval.
4. Credit may not be transferred until the student has completed 6 credits of graduate level course work as a degree-seeking student on the CU Boulder campus with a 3.0 GPA. Transferred credits do not reduce the minimum registration requirement but may reduce the amount of work to be done in formal courses.
5. With the exception of students enrolled in a Bachelor's-Accelerated Master's degree program, seniors at CU Boulder may transfer a limited amount of graduate level work (up to 9 semester hours) provided such work:
  - is completed with a grade of B or above at CU Boulder
  - comes within the five year course time limit
  - has not been applied toward another degree
  - is recommended for transfer by the department concerned, and such transfer is approved by the Dean of the Graduate School

## **Section 4: Course requirements**

### Master's Degree

The minimum requirement for the master's degree is 30 credit hours. A student may complete a Plan I - thesis option, or a Plan II - course work option. At least 24 hours must be completed at the 5000 level or above; this must include a minimum of 4, but not more than 6, thesis hours for those students completing a Plan I degree. Students in the MFA in Creative Writing must complete 9 thesis hours. A maximum of 6 credit hours taken at CU Boulder may be completed at the 3000 or 4000 level at the

discretion of the academic department.

Independent study course work cannot exceed 25 percent (rounded to the nearest whole number) of the course work required for the master's degree.

### Doctoral Degree

The minimum requirements for the Ph.D. or D.M.A. degree are 30 credit hours of course work at the 5000 level or above. Those students pursuing the Ph.D. shall complete a minimum of 30 credit hours of dissertation work beyond the minimum course work requirement.

Unless otherwise specified by departmental requirements, all courses at the 5000 level or above, taken for the master's degree at CU Boulder, may be applied toward the doctoral degree if they meet all applicable standards. Course work taken in completion of a doctoral degree cannot be applied toward subsequent master's degree work.

### Graduate Status Courses

All courses at the 5000 level or above must be taught by an approved member of the Graduate Faculty.

## **Section 5: Grades and Quality of Work**

Grade Point Average A student is required to maintain at least a B (3.0) average in all work attempted while enrolled in the Graduate School, and a student must have at least a 3.0 overall average to receive a graduate degree. Grades received in foreign language courses taken to fulfill the language requirement are not used by the Graduate School in calculating grade point average.

### Grades, GPA, Course Load

1. A degree-seeking graduate student who earned a grade of C+ or below may retake the course under the university-wide [grade replacement policy](#), subject to the policies and limitations of the program.
2. Courses in which grades below B- (2.7) are received are not accepted for doctoral programs.
3. Courses in which grades below C (2.0) are received are not accepted for master's degree programs or for the removal of academic deficiencies.
4. Courses taken toward the fulfillment of requirements for graduate degrees may not be taken pass/fail or satisfactory/unsatisfactory.
5. Grades received in courses transferred from another institution and/or grades earned while a student was classified as a non-degree student are not included in the calculation of grade point average.
6. Graduate students may not register for more than 15 credits during any one semester.

7. Students whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 at any time during their graduate career will be placed on academic warning and may be dismissed from their program.

#### Academic Standing and Dismissal

Students are subject to academic requirements and standards for adequate progress placed both by the Graduate School and by their graduate program.

When a student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below 3.00, he/she will be placed on academic warning. Except in cases where a program has stricter policies approved by the Graduate School, the student has two semesters in which to raise the cumulative GPA to 3.00 or above.

1. If a student does not earn a 3.0 GPA in all courses taken in the first of two academic warning semesters, a dean's administrative stop is placed on the student's record, and he/she may be subject to dismissal at the conclusion of that first semester. The final decision on dismissal is made by the Dean of the Graduate School based on departmental recommendation.

2. If, after the two-semester academic warning period, the student's cumulative GPA is still below 3.0, a dean's administrative stop is placed on the student's record and he/she may be subject to dismissal. However, if there are extenuating circumstances, the department chair/program director may petition the Dean of the Graduate School for an extension of the academic warning time period. The petition should include an academic plan to raise the grade point average to 3.0 and the conditions under which the student will be dismissed.

If the student's cumulative GPA is at or below 2.5 a dean's administrative stop is placed on the student's record and the student may be withdrawn from course work for upcoming semesters. However, if there are extenuating circumstances, the department chair/program director may petition the Dean of the Graduate School showing compelling reasons for the student to be granted a chance to continue. Such petitions must include an academic plan to raise the GPA to 3.00 and the conditions under which the student will be dismissed from the program.

A provisionally admitted student whose GPA falls below 3.0 has a dean's administrative stop placed on his/her record pending a review by the major department and the Graduate School. If there are extenuating circumstances, the department chair/program director may petition the Dean of the Graduate School showing compelling reasons for the student to be granted a chance to continue. Such petitions must include an academic plan to raise the GPA to 3.00 and the conditions under which the student will be dismissed from the program.

Students are also subject to academic requirements and standards for adequate academic progress placed by their graduate program. Based upon Regent Law and Regent Policy, an academic dismissal decision is made by the Dean of the Graduate School upon the program's recommendation.<sup>2</sup> Should the student be dismissed from the program, a

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<sup>2</sup> University of Colorado Regent Law Article 4.A; University of Colorado Regent Policy 4.A.1.  
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dean's administrative stop is placed on the student's record and the student is withdrawn from classes for any future semesters.

#### English Proficiency

A student who is noticeably deficient in the written and/or oral use of the English language cannot obtain an advanced degree from CU Boulder. Each program judges the qualifications of its students in the use of English. The department chair/program director is responsible for deciding whether a student is proficient in the use of English.

#### Student Ethics

Students are expected to adhere to the highest codes of personal and professional ethics. Students who do not adhere to written guidelines regarding academic honesty or academic or research ethics may be dealt with according to the policies for academic dishonesty, academic ethics, or research misconduct as published in the appropriate Graduate School and University policy documents. Students found guilty of misconduct in any of these areas may have sanctions imposed, or may be dismissed from CU Boulder.

#### Grievances

The designation *academic grievance* covers those problems related to academic issues. Such issues are distinguished from academic ethics cases and disciplinary cases for which separate procedures exist. Included within academic grievance cases are faculty, departmental, college or Graduate School policies affecting individual student prerogatives, deviations from stated grading procedures (excluding individual grade challenges), unfair treatment and related issues. Policies and procedures governing the filing of an academic grievance are published in a separate policy document available in the Graduate School. Students who feel they have been treated unfairly or outside of normal departmental policies may file a grievance with the Graduate School in accordance with published grievance procedures and after all grievance opportunities at the department level have been exhausted.

## **Section 6: Examinations**

Registration (P/F or for credit) as a regular degree-seeking CU Boulder student is required for all graduate students during the doctoral comprehensive exam, master's comprehensive-final exam and thesis or dissertation defense.

#### Master's Degree Examinations

Each candidate for a master's degree is required to complete a comprehensive-final examination/thesis defense after the other requirements for the degree have been substantially completed. In some programs, non-thesis students are instead required to present an approved degree plan which meets the requirements of the field and represents an intellectually coherent graduate education as determined by the major department, and will not complete a final examination.

The examination/defense may be given near the end of the student's last semester while the candidate is still taking required courses for the degree, provided satisfactory progress is being made in those courses.

The following rules apply to the comprehensive-final examination/thesis defense:

1. A student must be registered on the Boulder campus as a regular degree-seeking student during the semester the examination is passed.
2. Notice of the examination/defense must be filed by the major department in the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the examination. The examination/defense must be scheduled not later than the posted deadline for the semester in which the degree is to be conferred.
3. The examination/defense is given by a committee composed of three Graduate Faculty members appointed by the department with approval of the Dean of the Graduate School. The chair of the committee must have a regular Graduate Faculty appointment. Other committee members must have either a regular or special Graduate Faculty appointment.
4. The examination/defense, which may be oral, written, or both, must cover the thesis (if applicable), which should be essentially complete, other work completed in courses and seminars in the major field, and all work presented for the degree.
5. A student must have an affirmative vote from the majority of the committee members to pass. A student who fails the comprehensive-final examination/thesis defense may attempt it once more after a period of time determined by the examining committee.

#### Doctoral Degree Examinations

Preliminary Examination: Each department determines for itself (by examination or other means) that students who wish to study for the doctoral degree are qualified. The means by which each department makes this evaluation are specified in departmental requirements. Students who are thus evaluated are notified immediately of the results.

Comprehensive Examination: Before admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree, students must pass a comprehensive examination in the field of concentration and related fields.

The following rules apply to the doctoral comprehensive examination:

1. Students must be registered (P/F or for credit) on the Boulder campus as regular degree-seeking students when they pass the comprehensive examination.
2. Notice of the examination must be filed by the major department with the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the examination.
3. The examination is conducted by an examining board appointed by the chair of the major department and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. The board shall consist of the major advisor and additional members as necessary to a minimum of five. The chair must have a regular Graduate Faculty appointment. Other committee members must have regular or special Graduate Faculty appointments. Successful candidates must receive affirmative votes from a majority of the members of their examination board. A

candidate who fails the examination may attempt it once more after a period of time determined by the examination board.

4. The examination, which may be oral, written, or both, tests mastery of a broad field of knowledge, not merely formal course work.

Dissertation Defense: After the Ph.D. dissertation has been accepted for defense by the student's committee, a final examination on the dissertation and related topics is conducted.

The following rules apply to the Ph.D. dissertation defense/non-Ph.D. doctoral final examination:

1. Ph.D. students must be registered as full time, regular degree-seeking students at CU Boulder, for a minimum of 5 dissertation hours during the semester in which they pass the final examination. D.M.A. students must be registered, full-time for DMA dissertation credits (course # 8200-8399) or TMUS 8029 during the semester in which they pass the final examination. Au.D. students must be registered full time with at least 5 hours of graduate level coursework.

2. Students must notify the Graduate School of their final oral examination at least two weeks before their scheduled examination date. The examination must be scheduled not later than the posted deadline for the semester in which the degree is to be conferred.

3. This examination is wholly or partly oral, the oral part being open to anyone.

4. The examination is conducted by a committee appointed by the chair of the major department and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School, which consists of at least five persons, one of whom must be from outside the student's major department. Three of the members must be CU Boulder Graduate Faculty. The chair and outside member of the committee must have regular Graduate Faculty appointments. The other committee members must have either regular or special Graduate Faculty appointments. The outside member must either have a regular Graduate Faculty appointment in a different department at CU Boulder or hold a special Graduate Faculty appointment with approval to serve as outside member. More than one dissenting vote disqualifies the candidate in the final examination. The chair and all committee members must participate in the examination, with the mode of participation (e.g. in person, remotely) defined by the committee and approved by the department.

5. A student who fails the examination may attempt it once more after a period of time determined by the examining committee.

## **Section 7: Foreign Language Requirement**

There is no campus-wide foreign language requirement. The decision regarding the foreign language requirement for each graduate degree is the responsibility of the Graduate Faculty of each graduate degree program.

## **Section 8: Full-Time Status and Minimum Registration Requirements**

For purposes of deciding full-time registration status, a student must meet one of the following criteria:

### Master's students

- one who is carrying a minimum of 5 credits of graduate level course work (pass/fail or for a grade)
- 8 credits of combined undergraduate and graduate course work or 12 hours of undergraduate level course work
- at least 1 master's thesis hour
- at least 1 hour of "Master's Candidate for Degree"

### Ph.D. students

- one who is carrying a minimum of 5 credits (pass/fail or for a grade) of graduate level course work prior to passing the comprehensive exam
- 8 credits of combined undergraduate and graduate course work, or 12 credits of undergraduate level course work, prior to passing the comprehensive exam
- at least one doctoral dissertation credit prior to passing the comprehensive exam
- a minimum of 5 dissertation hours after passing the comprehensive exam

### D.M.A. students

- one who is carrying a minimum of 5 credits (pass/fail or for a grade) of graduate level coursework prior to passing the comprehensive exam
- at least one hour of coursework numbered TMUS 8200-8399 or "precandidate for Doctor of Musical Arts" before the comprehensive examination
- at least one hour of coursework numbered TMUS 8200-8399 or "candidate for Doctor of Musical Arts" after the comprehensive examination

### Au.D. students

- one who is carrying a minimum of 5 credits (pass/fail or for a grade) of graduate level course work
- 8 credits of combined undergraduate and graduate course work, or 12 credits of undergraduate level course work

Additional full-time and part-time registration requirements may exist for international students or students receiving or deferring financial aid, though degree requirements remain the same. Affected students should consult with International Student and Scholar Services or the Office of Financial Aid for more information.

### Master's Degree Minimum Registration Requirements

Master's degree minimum registration requirements can be met only by registering full-time at CU Boulder for at least two semesters, part-time for at least four semesters, or full-time for at least one semester and part-time for at least two semesters.

### Doctoral Degree Minimum Registration Requirements

The minimum registration requirement for doctoral students is full-time registration for six semesters of graduate degree credit beyond the attainment of an acceptable bachelor's degree. Two semesters of minimum registration credit may be allowed for a master's degree from another accredited institution; however, at least four semesters of minimum registration credit,

two of which must be consecutive in one academic year, must be earned for work completed at CU Boulder.

## **Section 9: Admission to Candidacy**

### Master's Degree

A student who wishes to be granted a graduate degree must become a candidate for a master's degree. To become a candidate all students must file an "Application for Admission to Candidacy" with the Graduate School no later than the posted graduation deadlines during the semester in which they plan to have their degree conferred.

Application must be made on forms available in the Graduate School and appropriate departments, and must be signed by the major department, certifying that a student's work is satisfactory and that the program outlined in the application meets the requirements set for the student.

### Doctoral Degree

A student must formally apply for Admission to Candidacy for the doctoral degree on forms supplied by the Graduate School when completing the comprehensive examination. Before being admitted to candidacy a student must have at least three semesters of full-time registration and pass the comprehensive examination.

## **Section 10: Thesis/Dissertation Requirements**

### Master's Thesis

A thesis, which may be research or expository, critical, or creative work, is required of every master's degree candidate under Plan I. Every thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree must:

- represent the equivalent of 4 to 6 semester hours of work (9 hours for the CRWR M.F.A.)
- comply in mechanical features with the specifications for theses and dissertations available in the Graduate School

The final grade is withheld until the thesis is completed. In progress (IP) grades are assigned during each semester until the defense is successfully completed and the final copy of the thesis is accepted by the examination committee, at which time the final grade for all thesis hours is submitted to the Graduate School.

### Ph.D. Dissertation Requirements

Graduate School Rules

A Ph.D. student writes a dissertation based upon original investigation and showing mature scholarship and critical judgment as well as familiarity with tools and methods of research. The subject must be approved by the student's major department.

1. Every dissertation presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree must represent the equivalent of at least 30 semester hours of work.
2. The student is responsible for notifying the Graduate School of the exact title of the dissertation on or before the posted deadlines during the semester in which the doctoral degree is to be conferred.
3. The dissertation must comply in mechanical features with the specifications for theses and dissertations available in the Graduate School.

The final grade is withheld until the dissertation is completed. In progress (IP) grades are assigned during each semester until the defense is successfully completed and the final copy of the dissertation is accepted by the examination committee, at which time the final grade for all dissertation hours is submitted to the Graduate School.

#### Doctoral Dissertation Credit Hour Requirements

To complete the requirements for the Ph.D. a student must register for a minimum of 30 dissertation credit hours. A student may not register for more than 10 dissertation credit hours in any one semester, including summer.

#### Continuous Registration Requirement

A Ph.D. student is required to register continuously as a full-time student for a minimum of five dissertation hours in the fall and spring semesters of each year, beginning with the semester following the passing of the comprehensive examination and extending through the semester in which the dissertation is successfully defended (final examination). A student not being required to maintain full-time status and not using campus facilities may claim off-campus status, which allows registration for three rather than the minimum of five dissertation credit hours. Off-campus status (3 credits of dissertation hours) is considered part-time. All University considerations for part-time status apply.

D.M.A students who have passed their comprehensive exams must maintain continuous registration by registering for a minimum of one credit hour of D.M.A. dissertation credits (TMUS 8100-8399) or TMUS 8029 in the fall and spring semesters of each year, beginning with the semester following the passing of the comprehensive examination and extending through the semester in which the final examination is passed.

Au.D. students who have passed their comprehensive exams must maintain continuous registration by registering for four or five hours of graduate level course work each semester as required by the Audiology program, with five hours being taken during the semester in which the final examination is passed.

Additional full-time and part-time registration requirements may exist for international students or students receiving or deferring financial aid, though degree requirements remain the same. Affected students should consult with International Student and Scholar Services or the Office of Financial Aid for more information.

A student who fails to register continuously for required hours after passing the comprehensive examination must retake and pass the examination, to regain status as a student in good standing in the Graduate School. The department may require that the student validate course work more than five years old. At its discretion, the department may petition the Dean of the Graduate School for a time limit for completion of all degree requirements of up to one year after the retaking of the comprehensive exam. The department must petition the Dean of the Graduate School to waive the requirement to retake the comprehensive exam.

Ph.D. students must be registered for a minimum of five dissertation hours the semester (including summer semester) in which the dissertation defense is held. D.M.A. students must be registered for a minimum of one credit hour of D.M.A. dissertation credits (TMUS 8100-8399) or TMUS 8029 during the semester in which the final examination is passed. AuD students must be registered full-time for a minimum of five credit hours of graduate level coursework during the semester in which the final examination is passed.

## **Section 11: Time Limits for Completion of Degrees**

### Master's Degree Time Limit

Master's degree students have 4 years (6 years for students pursuing an M.E.) from the semester in which they are admitted and begin course work to complete all degree requirements. Students who fail to complete the degree in this four-year period may be dismissed from their program with the concurrence of the major advisor and/or appropriate departmental personnel. To continue, the student must file a petition for an extension of the time limit with the Dean of the Graduate School. Such petitions must be endorsed by the student's major advisor and/or other appropriate departmental personnel and may be granted for up to one year.

1. All degree requirements include the filing of the thesis with the Graduate School if a Plan I student.
2. Students who need to leave CU Boulder for a period of time may apply for a leave of absence for up to one year. A leave of absence does not extend the student's time limit, but may be used as a reason to request an extension, should that become necessary.
3. Students whose residence at CU Boulder is interrupted by military service may apply to the Dean of the Graduate School for an extension of time.
4. Students who have not completed their degree within their time limit, and who have received approval for an extension, shall have any course work completed more than 5 years prior to the completion of the degree requirements evaluated by their department for relevance and applicability. At the discretion of the department, the student may be required to validate these courses as part of the completion of their degree requirements.

### Doctoral Degree Time Limits

Doctoral degree students are expected to complete all degree requirements within six

years from the semester in which they are admitted and begin course work in the doctoral program. Students who fail to complete the degree in this six-year period may be dismissed from their program with the concurrence of the major advisor and/or appropriate departmental personnel. To continue, the student must file a petition for an extension of the time limit with the Dean of the Graduate School. Such petitions must be endorsed by the student's major advisor and/or other appropriate departmental personnel and may be granted for up to one year. If the Dean of the Graduate School and the department chair/program director cannot agree on whether a student should continue, the Executive Advisory Council makes a final recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

1. All degree requirements include the filing of the dissertation and all accompanying forms with the Graduate School.
2. Students who need to leave the University for a period of time may apply for a leave of absence for up to one year. Doctoral students who are required to maintain continuous registration may take a leave of absence for parental leave, and may petition for an exception to take a leave of absence in the case of other extenuating circumstances. A leave of absence does not extend the student's time limit, but may be used as a reason when applying for an extension, should that become necessary.
3. Students whose residence at CU Boulder is interrupted by military service may apply to the Dean of the Graduate School for an extension of time.

### **ARTICLE III: AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these standing rules may be brought forward by petition from at least 15 members of the CU Boulder Graduate Faculty and may be adopted upon recommendation by an ad hoc committee composed of Graduate Faculty representing constituent schools and colleges and a United Government of Graduate Students (UGGS) representative, recommendation by the Executive Advisory Council, and approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Upon consultation with the Executive Advisory Council, the Dean of the Graduate School may approve revisions to the standing rules that update information, resolve ambiguities, promote clarity, or ensure compliance with state or CDHE mandates.