

Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies  
Graduate Student Handbook

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Updated for 2018-2019

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## **I. Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies Directory**

Welcome to the MA program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies at the University of Kansas! This handbook is meant to help you navigate the regulations and procedures that govern the program. Keep it bookmarked, save a copy, and refer to it frequently.

As a graduate student in LA&CS, you will be assigned two advisors who will oversee different aspects of your degree progress: the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Academic Advisor. Dr. Cecile Accilien, the DGS, will be the person you see each semester to plan your course of study. She handles all academic questions relating to your course research and progress in the M.A. program.

The Graduate Academic Advisor handles the logistics that pertain to your academic success in this program, including advising questions regarding university requirements, policy, resources, petitions, program milestones, exam scheduling, graduation, and any other questions related to student success. Other staff members in the Center office who can assist with general questions include our Administrative Assistant and our Communications Assistant.

### [Dr. Marta Caminero-Santangelo](#)

Director of the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies  
Bailey Hall, Room 320  
(785) 864-4904  
[camsan@ku.edu](mailto:camsan@ku.edu)

### [Dr. Cecile Accilien](#)

Director of Graduate Studies  
Bailey Hall, Room 9  
(785) 864-1853  
[cecileaccilien@ku.edu](mailto:cecileaccilien@ku.edu)

Clare Thoman, M.S.

Graduate Academic Advisor, College Office of Graduate Affairs  
Bailey Hall, Room 310  
(785) 864-9814  
[clarethoman@ku.edu](mailto:clarethoman@ku.edu)

Amanda Hill, M.A.

Administrative Assistant, Office Manager  
Bailey Hall, Room 320H  
(785) 864-1721  
[amandahporter@ku.edu](mailto:amandahporter@ku.edu)

## II. Key Offices at KU

### **College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA)**

COGA oversees graduate affairs and administers university policy for programs within the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. The [COGA Website](#) contains comprehensive information on requirements and processes pertaining to graduate education at KU. Most common questions can be answered with the information provided there, including questions regarding [enrollment changes and forms](#), University policies regarding [exams and committee requirements](#), and University [graduation requirements](#).

COGA reviews all [student petitions](#) of University and College policy, issuing decisions on behalf of the College or referring as required to a faculty committee and/or the Office of Graduate Studies. The more common student petitions relate to [Enrollment](#), [Leave of Absence](#), and [Time Limit Extensions](#).

COGA is a resource if you have any questions about petitions or graduation requirements that your department is unable to answer. Refer to the [COGA Website](#) for current staff contact information.

### **Office of Graduate Studies**

[Graduate Studies](#) is the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies at KU. The Executive Council of Graduate Studies sets policies and regulations governing graduate study, and offers various programs for graduate students throughout the year. While COGA should be your first stop for any questions your department cannot answer, you may be referred to Graduate Studies for certain matters, especially for questions about [GTA/GRA/GA appointments and policies](#).

### **Graduate Admissions (Within the Office of Graduate Studies)**

Contact Graduate Admissions for questions regarding the [KU Online Application for Graduate Study](#), ADMIT System/Prospect, [English Proficiency Requirements](#), and [Official Transcripts](#).

### **Office of the Registrar (OUR)**

Contact the [Registrar](#) for questions related to enrollment (if the question cannot be resolved via the enrollment changes link provided under COGA), [tuition and campus fees](#), the [academic calendar](#), and [fee petitions](#).

### **Financial Aid**

Contact the [Financial Aid Office](#) for questions related to the disbursement of scholarships, fellowship awards, loans, and FAFSA.

### **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 issues related to student visas. While other offices on campus such as the Applied English Center,

Human Resources, or the Registrar may also handle related matters, because the student's legal status in the country may be affected, it is recommended that students contact ISS first.

### **III. General Policies & Procedures**

#### **Admission**

To be considered for admission to the M.A. program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, students must meet all [University Requirements for Admission](#).

In addition to the university requirements for admission, the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies also has the following pre-requisites for graduate admission:

- Bachelor's degree, preferably in one of the social sciences or humanities
- Language proficiency in either Spanish or Portuguese as demonstrated by completion of a fourth-semester course

Applicants who do not meet these pre-requisites may be admitted provisionally or on a probationary basis, for a limited time, until they clear their provision or probationary status (see Provisional Admission).

#### **Application Deadlines**

For Domestic Students: To apply for admission into the M.A. program, please submit all materials no later than **April 1<sup>st</sup>** for fall admission and no later than **November 15<sup>th</sup>** for spring admission.

For International Students: To apply for admission into the M.A. program, please submit all materials no later than **January 15<sup>th</sup>** for fall admission and no later than **October 1<sup>st</sup>** for spring admission.

#### **Application Materials & Procedures**

Applicants to the Latin American and Caribbean Studies M.A. program should complete the [KU Application for Graduate Study](#). An application fee of \$65 for domestic, and \$85 for international students must accompany your application.

Please be aware that the following items will need to be prepared in advance and uploaded to the online application:

- A statement of interest, explaining your background and interest in pursuing the M.A. degree in Latin American and Caribbean Studies
- Three letters of recommendation, preferably from professors who are familiar with your academic work, each accompanied by the Graduate Letter of Recommendation Form (These forms are included as part of the online Graduate Application form)
- Copy of current resume or curriculum vita

- Writing Sample (in English), 10-20 pages
- Official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores (KU's GRE code: 6871)
- All applicants must verify English proficiency. Please see Graduate Admissions' [English Proficiency Requirements](#). (*International applicants are not required to take the GRE*)
- One official transcript for all post-secondary education. Although there is an option for uploading unofficial transcripts to the online application, an official transcript should also be sent directly from those previously attended institutions to KU via email: [GPAC@ku.edu](mailto:GPAC@ku.edu) or mail: Graduate Admissions, 1450 Jayhawk Blvd., Strong Hall 313, Lawrence, KS 66045

International Students should contact [ISS](#) for questions related to the process and timeline for visa applications

Questions regarding the application procedure should be directed to the Graduate Academic Advisor.

### **Non-Native Speakers of English**

The office of Graduate Studies requires applicants, international or domestic, whose native language is not English to demonstrate English proficiency. Please review the Graduate Studies' [Policy on English Proficiency Requirements for Admission](#) for more information regarding university requirements for providing proof of English proficiency.

### **Provisional Admission**

On rare occasions, the Center may recommend an applicant who does not meet the [University's minimum requirements](#) for provisional admission. This may occur, for example, if a student's overall undergraduate GPA is under a 3.0 but the major GPA, GRE scores, and writing sample suggest strong potential for success in graduate study. All recommendations for provisional admission are contingent on approval by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and University of Kansas.

To continue in the program, students admitted provisionally must meet any additional requirements placed on them upon admission by the Director of Graduate Study. The full policy on Provisional Admission can be found within the policy on [Admission to Graduate Study](#).

## **IV. Graduate Student Funding**

The Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies supports graduate students in pursuing opportunities to fund their graduate education and their research through a variety of different sources.

### **Tuition and Stipends**

The Center typically offers a limited number of Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) to

support students through a stipend and tuition. In addition, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese is sometimes able to offer a limited number of GTAs to CLACS students.

### **CLACS Fellowships and Awards**

The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies offers various competitive awards to support graduate student research and travel:

- Stansifer Fellowship
- Robert Oppenheimer Memorial Scholarship
- Pierre A. Stouse Jr. Memorial Award

Information on CLACS funding options are available on the [CLACS Graduate Funding](#) webpage.

### **KU Sources of Support**

The University of Kansas offers multiple competitive scholarships and fellowships for which CLACS students are eligible. In addition, the University of Kansas also funds students through a wide variety of employment opportunities across campus.

- [Graduate Studies Scholarships and Awards](#)

### **External Funding Sources**

CLACS and the University of Kansas support students in seeking and applying for external funding.

- [External Funding Sources](#) (Graduate Studies Page)
- [External Funding Sources](#) (CLACS Page)

### **Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS)**

- Applicants to the LA&CS M.A. program as well as M.A. students currently enrolled in courses are strongly encouraged to apply for a Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships provided by the U.S. Department of Education through the Center for East Asian Studies. Students must be U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents to be eligible. LA&CS FLAS awards are available for [Brazilian, Haitian Creole, or Indeginious Latin American Languages](#) and availability is contingent on federal funding.
- Applications are solicited from all graduate students studying Latin American and Caribbean Studies languages and area studies, not just students in the LACS M.A. program. Academic Year FLAS awards provide up to \$18,000 for tuition and a \$15,000 stipend for living expenses. Summer FLAS awards provide up to \$5,000 for tuition and a stipend of \$2,500 for living expenses. Summer funds can be used to study an intensive summer language course abroad or domestically.
- The application deadline for the 2019-2020 will be in mid-February 2019. For application and deadline information, please visit [FLAS website](#).



## V. Master's Degree Requirements

### **Coursework Requirements**

A minimum of 30 graduate credit hours is required in social sciences or humanities courses with Latin American content. At least 18 hours must have 50 to 100 percent of their content dedicated to Latin America. Literature courses with Latin American content at the 500-level or above (except PORT 611 and HAIT 500) may be counted as part of the 30 hours of coursework.

Required courses include Research Design in International Area Studies (LAA 700), the Interdisciplinary Seminar on Latin American Culture and Problems (LAA 701), and two other seminars with at least 50 percent of their content dedicated to Latin America, each in a separate discipline, at the 700 level or above (excluding thesis and research hours). Incoming students should enroll in LAA 700 during their first fall semester.

### **Language Requirement**

M.A. Candidates must demonstrate comprehensive proficiency in either Spanish or Portuguese. Comprehensive proficiency includes aural, speaking, reading, and writing ability. Completion of SPAN 424 and 428 or a graduate literature course constitutes comprehensive proficiency in Spanish. Comprehensive proficiency in Portuguese requires completion of a literature course at or above the 500-level.

The language requirement should be satisfied as early as possible in the M.A. program. Students must also complete two semesters in a second language: SPAN 104 and 108 for Spanish, PORT 104/106 and 108/110 or PORT 611 for Portuguese. Quichua or Haitian Creole may be substituted as the second language.

### **Advising**

Current and prospective students should contact the [Director of Graduate Study](#) with any questions concerning the graduate program. All students must consult the DGS before enrollment each semester.

For advising questions regarding university requirements, resources, petitions, program milestones, exam scheduling, graduation, and any other questions related to student success, please contact the [Graduate Academic Advisor](#).

### **Advisor Changes**

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) serves as an advisor for all incoming graduate students in CLACS, and does so throughout their program. Prior to submitting a proposal for their Master's thesis or Comparative Research Paper, the graduate student should also designate a Thesis / Research Paper Chair ("Chair") who is their immediate "advisor" on their culminating academic work and professional job search. The name of the advisor and of the committee (two faculty plus the advisor) should be reported to the Director of Graduate Studies and to the Graduate Advisor (GA) from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The graduate student may initiate a change of thesis / paper chair at any time in their career, with or without the help of the DGS. Common reasons are a change in intellectual or disciplinary focus, interpersonal incompatibility with the Chair, or the Chair's leaving KU for another position; however, it is entirely up to the graduate student's discretion who their Chair is, and the Chair can be changed at any time as long as a new faculty member has agreed to serve as the student's Chair.

In order to initiate the change, the graduate student must:

- 1) confirm with a new faculty member that they serve as Chair
- 2) inform the previous Chair that a change in committee Chair has taken place, and whether or not the student requests that the previous Chair remains on the committee
- 3) report the change in Chair / Committee members to the DGS.

The graduate student is advised to consult with the DGS or the Director of CLACS prior to making these changes, so that they can be made in the most professional and respectful way possible. If needed / desired by the graduate student, the notification to the former Chair about a change can be made by the DGS or the Director. The graduate student should communicate with the DGS / Director directly about this possibility if it is desired. The previous Chair is absolutely prohibited from taking any form of retaliatory action, including adversely affecting the student grade in a class.

## **Final M.A. Writing Project**

LAS graduate students can choose either a Master's Thesis or Comparative Research Paper (CRP) Masters Degree. All graduate students should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies and their faculty advisor **before** they form a committee.

### **1. Thesis**

The M.A. thesis is most appropriate as preparation for a doctoral program and dissertation. Students should declare their intention to write a thesis before the end of their first year in the program and form a committee of three faculty members, each from a different discipline. A thesis consists of original, primary research in an appropriate disciplinary methodology. The student will defend the completed thesis in an oral examination before this committee. In order to prepare the thesis, students should enroll in LAA 899 (Thesis/Non-Thesis). It is generally recommended that students enroll in 6 thesis hours (3 per semester), which count toward the 30 graduate credits required for the degree. In some cases, a student may prefer to enroll in 3 credit hours of LAA 899 and pair this with work in another graduate-level seminar (700-level or higher) in order to complete thesis work.

### **A. Procedures**

The procedures for the thesis involve a) a brief (~2 page) **written proposal** to distribute to a potential Chair and committee members, b) the formation of a committee with a Chair affiliated with Latin American & Caribbean Studies and at least 2 other committee members from different disciplines, 1 of whom must be an affiliated Latin American faculty, c) input from the committee

in refining the student's **research topic** and **bibliography**, d) the writing of the thesis, and e) passing an **oral defense oral exam** given by the committee.

The research topic must consist of an *analysis of a specific issue that goes beyond the student's coursework*. The thesis should be an *original work of publication quality*, not merely a long research report. *The thesis must be of an appropriate quality to represent graduate work at KU and the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies.*

## **B. Formatting**

The text should be of an appropriate length to represent substantial, original research in the relevant discipline; length requirements should be established with the thesis advisor, in writing, by the beginning of the semester in which the student is enrolled in thesis hours, and should be communicated to the Director of Graduate Studies as well as the thesis committee members.

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 to KU.

Students must have their final **draft** passed by their Chair and distributed to their committee, at least 3 weeks before the oral defense. The Director of Graduate Studies must also be notified of the date, the committee members, and the project title 3 weeks before the exam in order to schedule it.

## **C. Defense**

The **oral defense** entails questions posed by the committee members that enable evaluation of the student's expertise on the research topic and ability to formulate judgments independently. The student defends the research problem, methodology, presentation of evidence, and argument. Usually the defense lasts 1-2 hours. The committee assigns either an Honors, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory for the thesis, and members can suggest revisions.

Once the qualification has been given and the **final title and acceptance pages** are signed by the committee, the student has passed. The deadlines for submission of the final thesis usually fall around December 15, May 1, and August 1. Exact dates may be found on the current [KU Academic Calendar](#).

One copy of the revised thesis must be left with Latin American & Caribbean Studies and will become part of the permanent archive of the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies and the KU Libraries.

## **2. Comparative Research Paper**

The comparative research paper M.A. is a terminal degree particularly suitable for a career in the public or private sector. Students take 3 credits of LAA 899 (Thesis / Non-Thesis) with their chair. Only 3 credits of LAA 899 can count towards the comparative research paper M.A.

degree. The culmination of the comparative research paper M.A. is an oral examination during the last semester of the program. The student will form a committee of three faculty members for the oral examination.

### **A. Procedures**

The procedures for the CRP involve a) a brief (~2 pages) **written proposal** to distribute to a potential Chair and committee members, b) the formation of a committee with a faculty member (with regular graduate faculty status or ad hoc appointment) affiliated with Latin American & Caribbean Studies and at least 2 other committee members from different departments, 1 of whom must be an affiliated Latin American faculty, c) input from the committee in refining the student's **research topic** and **bibliography**, d) the writing of a CRP, and e) passing an **oral exam** given by the committee.

Students should take **3 credits of Thesis/Non-Thesis (LAA 899)** with their Chair. Only 3 credits of LAA 899 can count towards the CRP MA degree. The student should select a committee and Chair by the beginning of the semester in which they are enrolled in LAA 899, and must submit the members' names to the Director of Graduate Studies. The research topic must consist of an *analysis of a broad, significant issue that goes beyond the student's coursework and is comparative in nature, e.g. comparing disciplinary methodologies, regions or ethnic groups, or countries.*

### **B. Formatting**

The format for the CRP consists of **a)** a 6-8 page bibliography, **b)** an annotated bibliography of at least 10 books, and **c)** a substantial interdisciplinary analysis of the issue. Minimum page length should be determined in consultation with the committee chair and will vary based on discipline, but a general rule of thumb for a substantial, significant work is 30 pages. The chair must approve of the **final draft**, and then it must be distributed to the committee at least 3 weeks before the **oral defense**. The Director of Graduate Studies must also be notified of the date and project title 3 weeks before the defense.

### **C. Defense**

The **oral defense** entails questions posed by the committee members to evaluate the student's expertise on the research topic, relevant contextual knowledge, disciplinary methodologies / perspectives used, and ability to formulate judgments independently. Usually the defense lasts about 1½-2 hours. The committee assigns either an Honors, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory for the thesis, and members can suggest revisions.

The deadlines for the defense of the CRP for graduation fall around December 15, May 1, and August 1 each year. Exact dates may be found on the current KU [Academic Calendar](#). One electronic copy of the revised CRP must be left with Latin American & Caribbean Studies (emailed to the Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Academic Advisor) and will become part of the permanent archive of the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies.

## **VI. Graduate Certificate Requirements**

### **Coursework Requirements**

The Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies also offers a 12-credit/ 4-course graduate certificate designed for KU graduate students from other disciplines, as well as students from outside the university. The certificate has three tracks: general Latin American & Caribbean Studies, Brazilian Studies, and Central American & Mexican Studies.

As a prerequisite for beginning the certificate, students applying to the Brazilian Studies track must have significant training or experience in Portuguese. Students applying to the Central American and Mexican Studies track must have significant training or experience in Spanish. No prior foreign language training or experience is required for admission to the general Latin American and Caribbean Studies track.

### **Latin American and Caribbean Studies Track**

Graduate students interested in broad training on Latin American and the Caribbean or in a Latin American or Caribbean region, other than Central America, Mexico, and Brazil, may complete the general certificate in Latin American and Caribbean Studies.

The Latin American and Caribbean Studies certificate requires four courses (12 hours) that include the following:

- LAA 701: Interdisciplinary seminar on Latin American Cultures & Problems
- Three additional courses from the Center's current approved list of Latin American and Caribbean Studies courses. Courses must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

### **Brazilian Studies Track**

The Brazilian Studies Track of the certificate recognizes students with intensive training specific to Brazil. The Brazilian Studies track requires Portuguese language proficiency, which includes aural, speaking, reading, and writing ability and can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. The certificate also requires four courses (12 hours) that include the following:

- LAA 701: Interdisciplinary seminar on Latin American Cultures & Problems
- Three additional electives from the Center's current approved list of Latin American and Caribbean Studies courses with at least 50% content on Brazil. Courses must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

### **Central American and Mexican Track**

The Central American and Mexican track of the certificate recognizes students with intensive training specific to the geographical region running from the U.S. border to Panama.

The Central American and Mexican Studies track requires language proficiency in Spanish—which includes aural, speaking, reading, and writing ability. The certificate also requires four courses (12 hours) that include the following:

- LAA 701: Interdisciplinary seminar on Latin American Cultures & Problems
- Three additional electives from the Center’s current approved list of Latin American and Caribbean Studies courses with at least 50% content on Central America, Mexico, or both. Courses must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

### **Graduate Certificate Admission Requirements**

An application is required in order to be admitted to and pursue a [Graduate Certificate](#). Applicants must meet the university’s [eligibility and admission criteria](#) in order to apply. Certificate applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Students may apply for the certificate up to and including to the last semester in which they are enrolled in active certificate coursework.

Applicants must submit a completed [Graduate Application Form](#). The application fee is \$30. Please be aware that the following items will need to be prepared in advance and uploaded to the online application.

Current KU graduate students must submit the following materials:

- KU Graduate Application and application fee
- A current copy of the student’s KU advising report showing a GPA of 3.0 or higher

Non-KU students seeking only the CLACS certificate at KU must submit the following materials:

- KU Graduate Application and application fee
- An official transcript copy from the student’s degree-granting undergraduate institution showing a GPA of 3.0 or higher
- A current resume (optional)

Questions regarding the certificate application and graduation processes can be directed to the Graduate Academic Advisor.

## **VII. General Program Guidelines**

### **Good Standing**

To be considered in “good standing” in any graduate program, the University requires graduate students to maintain a GPA of 3.0 (or “B” average) and be making timely progress toward meeting their degree requirements. For additional information on good standing, as well as

probation and dismissal procedures for those students that do not meet the requirements for good standing, see the University Policies and Degree Requirements section of this handbook

### **Grievance Procedures**

The Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies advises that graduate students make an attempt to resolve any issues, especially matters concerning grades, directly with the instructor or party involved, or with the Center's director. If a grievance arises that cannot be resolved directly, or if the student does not feel comfortable attempting to resolve the issue with the Center director, the student should then follow the center's official grievance procedure, which has been approved by the University and may be found by following the link below:

[Grievance Procedure, Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies](#)

### **Petitions**

If a graduate student has a compelling reason to seek substitution of a program requirement, the student may seek the written permission of the CLACS Director of Graduate Studies. Graduate students with a compelling reason to seek exemption from a program requirement or a University policy may submit a petition to the CLACS Director of Graduate Studies and the CLACS Graduate Committee.

Petitioners should write a letter, addressed to the Graduate Committee, explaining the reasons why the student is seeking exemption from specific rules, as well as how the educational goals the rules reflect will still be fulfilled. Where applicable, this petition should be accompanied by a letter of support from the student's advisor and/or the appropriate supporting materials. The letter should be sent to the Director of Graduate Studies, who then refers the petition to the Graduate Committee, which will convene and consider the petition.

In cases where the policy or requirement is a departmental requirement the graduate faculty will issue a final decision.

In cases where the policy or requirement being petitioned is a University policy, the graduate faculty will decide whether to support the student's petition. If the faculty is in support, the department will submit a petition form to the College Office of Graduate Affairs accompanied by supporting materials as required. The petition form specifies the supporting material needed for each kind of petition. These materials must accompany the petition sent to COGA. COGA's [petition web page](#) provides additional information regarding the more common University petitions, such as Leave of Absence, Enrollment requirements, and Time Limit Extensions may also be found in the University Policies and Degree Requirements section of this handbook.

In cases where the graduate faculty declines to support a University petition, no paperwork may be submitted to COGA. COGA only accepts student petitions in cases where there is documented departmental support and when the petition itself is submitted by a representative of the department. In the case of Latin American Studies, this representative is the Graduate Advisor.

Students should always consult with the DGS and/or Graduate Advisor prior to submitting a petition to the Graduate Committee to ensure that a petition is necessary and that all the appropriate supporting documentation is accounted for.

## **VIII. University Policies & Degree Requirements**

This section contains information on requirements and policies of the Office of Graduate Studies and the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, both 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 evidence by an official transcript from the institution the degree was obtained) and a minimum GPA of 3.0 in the most recent degree that was obtained.

Students\* not meeting these requirements *may* be admitted provisionally upon recommendation by the department; however, restrictions on certain type of funding, including GTA/GRA/GA funding, apply to students on provisional admission status. Students should consult the program admissions advisor or Director of Graduate Study (DGS) on their eligibility for funding with admission.

\*By Federal regulation, International students seeking F-1 status must meet the standards of Regular Admission. Provisional admission is not sufficient to issue the Form I-20.



**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 three ways to prove English proficiency:

1. Declaration of native speaker status on the online application for graduate study.
2. Graduation with a baccalaureate degree (or higher) earned in residence from an accredited English-medium U.S. college or university or a college or university in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, English-speaking province of Canada, or an English-speaking Caribbean country, with instruction conducted in English. Degrees earned online may not be used to verify English proficiency. Note: this option is not sufficient for employment as a Graduate Teaching Assistant.
3. 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.

Applicants that do not meet the minimum scores should review the English Proficiency Chart, provided via the link above, for information about provisional admission and petition processes based on exceptional circumstances.

Applicants should submit their scores directly to the Office of Graduate Studies:

Office of Graduate Studies  
213 Strong Hall  
1450 Jayhawk Blvd.  
Lawrence KS 66045-7535

**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](#)
- [Graduate Credit](#)

**Enrollment**

For graduate students in the College, advising on enrollment and course selection take place at the department level. While units within the College may define full-time enrollment more stringently, the University defines it 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.

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).

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.

**Student 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 April (for Spring). Students who wish to enroll after that must pay a fee 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.

Deadlines for adding, changing, dropping, or withdrawing from courses entirely, as well 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](#).**

The College Office of Graduate Affairs' (COGA) website has a very useful [Enrollment Changes Guide](#), which provides comprehensive guidance on the forms and endorsements required for different enrollment situations, including late enrollment changes after the published deadlines.

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

**Related Policies:**

- [Discontinued Enrollment](#)

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

### **Graduate Credit (Including Transfer Credit)**

The Office of Graduate Studies [policy](#) on Graduate Credit 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 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. A reduction in hours is distinct from a transfer of credit and is reserved for those students in that they may in some cases be based on coursework that was already used to fulfill requirements towards a completed degree, some non-coursework (e.g. internships, study abroad), and there are no

modifications on the transcript.

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.

### **Count Toward Degree**

The [Count Toward Degree form](#) is an Office of the Registrar Form that allows graduate credit hours taken at KU as a non-degree seeking student to count towards a later degree at KU.

As with transfer credit and reduced hour degrees, restrictions apply, so students should carefully review the information in the link above and the related policies below, and consult with their DGS.

### **Related Policies:**

- [Graduate Credit](#)
- [Count Toward Degree Form](#)
- [Co-enrollment](#)
- [MA and MS Degrees](#) (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 overall 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 on 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 2.2.7](#)

**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 student 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.

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; failure to make adequate progress on a thesis or dissertation, unacceptable academic performance on program components outside of coursework (e.g. exams), an unsatisfactory result in their department's annual evaluation, or as a result of going beyond their official time to degree. 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 and with their program advisor for more information.

If a student is unable to raise their cumulative GPA or otherwise meet departmental expectations for adequate academic progress by the end of the probationary period, the department will reconsider their continuation in the program, in most cases will recommend the student for dismissal, or that the student voluntarily withdraw from the program.. 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](#)
- [Probation and Dismissal \(CLAS\)](#)
- [Good Academic Standing policy](#)

**Grading**

The Office of Graduate Studies' [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 Graduate Studies. Students should review the [College-specific grading information](#) and consult their adviser and the departmental 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.

Additional information pertaining to graduate grading can be found on COGA's pages for [Retroactive Withdrawal](#), [Incomplete Grades](#), and [Graduate GPA](#). The Registrar's Office's also offers information on the [Credit/No Credit](#) option.

**Related Policies:**

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

**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 link above and 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, COGA offers departments and students a [Mentoring Agreement Template](#) to use and/or adapt to their own needs. The template may be used with students in danger of going beyond the program's expected time limits, or simply as an advising tool for all their students. It is especially useful for students in the dissertation or thesis

phase.

**Related Policies and Forms:**

- [Master's Degree Program Time Constraints](#)
- [Doctoral Program Time Constraints](#)
- [Graduate Degree Completion Agreement](#) (PDF)
- [Mentoring Agreement Template](#) (Doc)

**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.

Requesting a Leave of Absence is done via 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; however, the only document that the College requires for the petition is the Leave of Absence form, linked below.

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 was supposed to end they may contact their department to be reactivated early.

**Related Policies and Forms:**

- [Leaves of Absence](#)
- [CLAS Leave of Absence Petition Form](#) (PDF)

**Oral Exams**

All graduate students must complete one or more exams as part of their degree requirements. In addition to department or program guidelines, the University has several policies pertaining to the following exams:

- Master's Exam/Thesis Defense for Master's degree
- Doctoral Comprehensive Oral Exam
- Doctoral Final Exam/Dissertation Defense

Before a student is allowed to sit for any of these three exams, pre-approval from the College is required in advance of the exam date. The College verifies that the student has fulfilled University requirements. 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.

In many cases, programs may have additional exams, such as a written pre-qualifying exam. Exam pre-approval by the College applies **ONLY** to the oral portions of the three exams listed above.

The following are University policies pertaining to these oral exams:

### **Oral Exam Committee Composition**

For all oral exams, the committee members must be appointed members of the Graduate Faculty of KU. In addition, a majority of committee members serving on a graduate student oral examination committee must be tenured/tenure-track faculty holding regular graduate faculty or, in the case of doctoral committees, dissertation faculty status in the candidate's department/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.

### **Oral Exam Attendance (Physical Presence)**

The Oral Exam Attendance policy describes rules for physical versus mediated attendance (e.g. Skype or phone) at oral exams.

In all cases, a majority of committee members must be physically present with the student for an exam to commence. Both the chair and outside member (for doctoral exams) must form part of this majority. **In all cases where the student prefers that all committee members are physically present, the student's preference shall be honored.**

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](#)
- [Oral Exam Attendance](#)
- [Graduate Faculty Appointments](#)



## Graduate Certificate Requirements

The University offers a variety of [Approved Graduate Certificate Programs](#) to encourage current graduate students to pursue interdisciplinary study. Certificate programs also provide an option for a coherent course of advanced study for those not ready to commit to a full degree program. There are certain restrictions on the timing of admissions to a Graduate Certificate program and the granting of credit for courses completed. 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 (M.A. & 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.

COGA's graduation checklists contain a comprehensive list of all University requirements for graduation and should be used by every graduating master's or doctoral student in the College:

### [M.A. DEGREE GRADUATION CHECKLIST](#)

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.

Students who have concerns or questions about fulfillment of graduation requirements may arrange for a Graduation Appointment with the [College Office of Graduate Affairs](#) (COGA) following the defense or final exam and in advance of the applicable Application for Graduation deadline. While this appointment is not a requirement, it can be useful to review all degree requirements with a COGA staff member, verify that the Application for Graduation and Thesis/Dissertation submissions have been completed, and receive guidance on any pending items.

## Graduate Studies Funding Opportunities

The Office of Graduate Studies offers [funding opportunities](#) in several different categories. Students interested in applying should direct inquiries to the department's Director of Graduate

Studies or to the Office of Graduate Studies. Some of the available funding includes:

**Dissertation Fellowships:** intended for doctoral students who have passed their comprehensive examinations; for one academic year, non-renewable.

**Summer Fellowships:** intended primarily for doctoral students.

**Graduate Scholarly Presentation 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 (\$500) only once, and funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

## **Additional Student Resources**

[Academic and Writing Support](#)

[Financial Support and Services](#)

[International Student Resources and Services](#)

[Military-affiliated Student Resources](#)

[Legal Services and Conflict Assistance](#)

[Health and Self-Care Resources](#)

[Campus and Community Engagement](#)

[Careers and Professional Practice Resources](#)