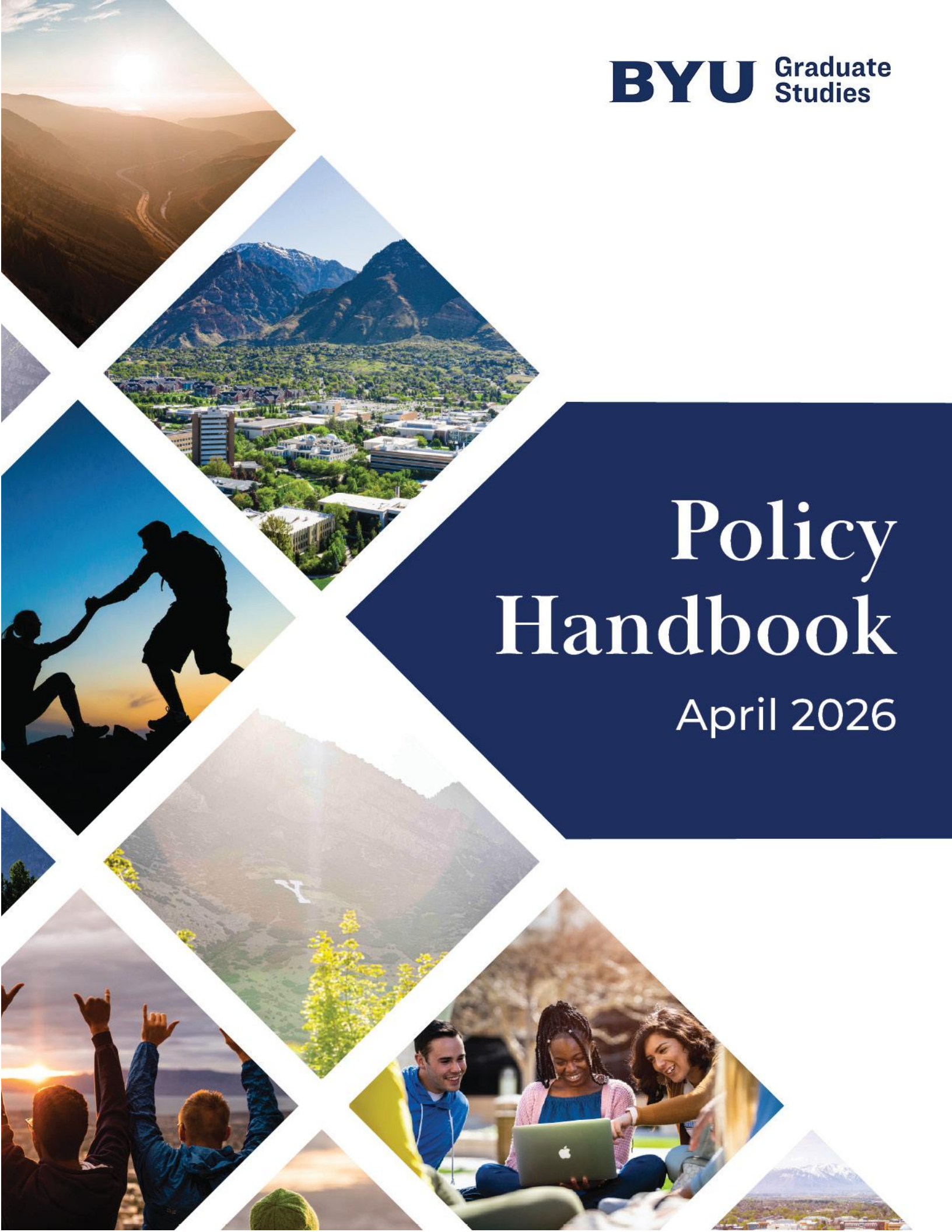


# Policy Handbook

April 2026



# Graduate Studies Policy Handbook

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

### The Mission, Vision, and Values of Graduate Studies

Graduate Studies supports BYU's mission "to assist students in their quest for perfection and eternal life" by providing the leadership and services that enable graduate students in an environment of belonging to pursue high-quality advanced study, independent research, creative works, and professional training. Our vision is to assist graduate programs in raising the quality of admitted students, fostering a sense of belonging among students, and improving the overall graduate experience. Our key values involve establishing and enforcing policies and procedures that ensure the quality and integrity of BYU's graduate programs by

- A. providing supplemental funding for graduate students through department and individual student awards,
- B. processing all graduate students from admission to graduation, including monitoring and advising,
- C. providing training and support for all graduate programs,
- D. supporting BYU's efforts in creating an environment of belonging.

### Principles of Graduate Education at BYU

Graduate education is distinguished by advanced, systematic study and depth of experience—depth in knowledge, understanding, scholarly competence, inquiry, and discovery. Graduates are equipped to teach and transmit knowledge within their disciplines, to conduct research and produce creative works, to apply their learning in the everyday world, and ultimately to extend service to their disciplines and to humanity.

Although variety in focus, methodology, and implementation is expected across the spectrum of graduate programs at BYU, strong programs are characterized by selective admission of highly qualified students, a graduate faculty committed to excellence, and rigorous programs of study conducted in a context of faith.

A few fundamental principles characterize all strong graduate programs and emerge from and complement [The Mission of Brigham Young University](#) and [The Aims of a BYU Education](#). These principles are listed below.

1. Mastery of the subject matter. Graduate education facilitates mastery over the content and skills of the discipline at a level appropriate to the degree sought.
2. Critical thinking. Graduate education develops and refines critical thinking skills, including a thorough knowledge of the assumptions of the discipline and an understanding of viable alternative assumptions.
3. Theoretical understanding. Graduate education provides an understanding of the theoretical bases of the field of study. It grounds application and performance in theory.
4. Proficiency in research and/or creative activities. Graduate education develops proficiencies that advance the knowledge and activities of the discipline. These proficiencies include good writing skills, as well as the ability to present original insights and creative expressions.
5. Spiritual discernment and moral integrity. Graduate education facilitates the growth of integrity and wisdom and the integration of faith into the pursuit of knowledge within the discipline.
6. Service orientation. Graduate education instills responsibility to return the special benefits of graduate training to the larger community.
7. Wide representation of perspectives. Graduate education presents an intellectually and culturally rich encounter with the discipline. Study and inquiry are conducted in a context sensitive to ethnic and cultural differences.

Although the implementation of these principles is primarily the responsibility of departments and colleges, the university Graduate Council and the Dean of Graduate Studies provide guidance and support.

## Chapter 2 Administrative Roles

### The Graduate Council

Chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Council establishes and maintains standards of quality in graduate education at BYU. Additionally, the Council formulates policy governing graduate study. Decisions of this body are presented as recommendations to the Associate Academic Vice President for Graduate Studies and Research and the Academic Vice President (as needed). Membership in the Council originates with the Dean of Graduate Studies and includes one assist from each college. Graduate Council members also generally serve on the Graduate Curriculum Council, which reviews course and program requests. Both the Graduate Council and the Graduate Curriculum Council meet regularly during the fall and winter semesters.

### Graduate Studies

Graduate Studies, located at 105 FPH, oversees all procedures for BYU graduate programs, including graduate admissions, advising on policy and procedure, clearing students for graduation, facilitating graduate student evaluations, and monitoring graduate student progress.

Graduate Studies represents and advocates for the interests of programs and students to other support offices at BYU. Additionally, Graduate Studies serves as a clearinghouse for questions, problems, exceptions to policy, and requests for policy changes.

Graduate Studies receives all applications for admission to graduate study. Graduate Studies records the credentials pertaining to each application, assesses the English competency of all non-native English-speaking applicants, notifies all applicants of admission decisions, and maintains records on all admitted students. The administrative procedures (as well as tracking of student progress after admission and graduation) are performed in AIM, BYU's student information system. The AIM system enforces University and Graduate Studies policies while allowing departments to customize according to their individual requirements.

Graduate Studies sends various reports to departments throughout the year, including correspondence summaries, lists of admitted students by semester, directory reports of address information, graduate faculty committee assignments, GPA lists, lists of students who are reaching their time limit, degree posting lists, lists of applicant files that may be purged, and other reports.

Assistant deans in Graduate Studies oversee admissions and advisement. They are familiar with all policies and procedures related to graduate study, as well as the use of the student information system. They provide assistance to departments and students regarding admissions, student progress through graduate programs, and the requirements for graduation. These assistant deans are also available to train new department graduate coordinators and program managers.

### Graduate Administration at the Department Level

#### Graduate Coordinator

A graduate faculty member is appointed by a department, college or program to the position of graduate coordinator to oversee a graduate program or programs. Graduate coordinators must have graduate faculty status. In the absence of the coordinator, the department chair may act as the coordinator. Graduate coordinators work closely with Graduate Studies personnel to keep abreast of Graduate Studies policies and procedures regarding graduate study. They must work directly with faculty and students to ensure that graduate programs comply with university guidelines, departmental requirements, and recognized graduate standards.

### Graduate Program Manager

Graduate program managers work under the direction of a graduate coordinator to handle many of the procedures concerning graduate programs. Graduate program managers and coordinators actively track the progress of prospective applicants and students from the time that an application is submitted until an admitted student graduates. Graduate program managers are responsible for maintaining records on graduate applicants and students and for using or dispersing reports sent to their department by Graduate Studies. They are often required to respond to questions about the application process and the department's graduate program policies and procedures.

## Chapter 3 Admission Policies

### Non-Discrimination Statement

Graduate Studies follows the [Church Educational System Nondiscrimination Policy](#).

The application for admission does not inquire about applicants' disabilities. In the admission process, applicants do not receive additional consideration, nor are they penalized for having a disability. Contact the [University Accessibility Center \(UAC\)](#) for questions or concerns relating to disabilities. Inquiries regarding sex discrimination and sexual misconduct may be directed to the [Title IX Office](#). Individuals may also contact the [university's 24-hour compliance hotline](#).

### Belonging Statement

“The mission of Brigham Young University—founded, supported, and guided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—is to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life. That assistance should provide a period of intensive learning in a stimulating setting where a commitment to excellence is expected, and the full realization of human potential is pursued.” ([BYU Mission Statement](#))

To this end, the university seeks qualified students who are united by their common primary identity as children of God (Acts 7:29; Psalm 82:6) and who relate together in such a manner that they are “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). Creating an environment of covenant belonging and providing educational opportunities for students who share values based on the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and who come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences, is an important educational asset to BYU. ([BYU Statement on Belonging](#))

Graduate Studies seeks to nurture a community grounded in unity, mutual respect, and charity toward all. We strive to support selected graduate programs of real consequence at Brigham Young University in the following ways:

1. We will develop policies and procedures that promote the recruitment, admission, retention, and support of all current and eligible prospective graduate students.
2. We strive to support an environment of covenant belonging where multiple perspectives are shared, examined, and valued for optimal learning so graduate students may become model citizens and ambassadors, [achieving greater unity while fostering an atmosphere of inclusion and respect for diversity](#)<sup>[1]</sup> and culture, and helping to make our BYU community more just.
3. We will partner with BYU faculty, staff, and administration to foster an environment of covenant belonging in all graduate programs, where individuals of all backgrounds can succeed together in fulfilling BYU's [Mission and Aims](#).
4. We will support graduate programs in mentoring and advancing all graduate faculty, encouraging varied perspectives and contributions to enhance the graduate education experience.
5. Graduate Studies will continue to partner with BYU's Office of Belonging to cultivate an environment where the above objectives can be achieved.

<sup>[1]</sup> “*Hearts Knit in Righteousness and Unity*,” Elder Quentin L. Cook, General Conference, October 2020.

### Ecclesiastical Endorsement and CES Honor Code Commitment

Applicants must have a current active Ecclesiastical Endorsement and complete the CES Honor Code Commitment to be admitted to BYU. Unless granted an exception, an applicant who currently has membership restrictions or a withdrawal of membership from the Church is not admissible until the issue is resolved with the applicant's authorized ecclesiastical leader. After admission, the Ecclesiastical Endorsement and the Honor Code Commitment must be renewed each year, indicating

willingness to abide by the [Honor Code](#), including the [Dress and Grooming Standards](#), whether on or off campus. Additional details are in the University's [Admission Policy](#).

### Recruitment

Graduate programs are primarily responsible for recruiting graduate students. Each program is expected to actively recruit excellent students from undergraduate and graduate programs at other universities. Programs should not rely solely on an applicant pool of their own undergraduates; the Graduate Council has previously identified a desirable student cohort composition in which approximately half of the master's students and two-thirds of the doctoral students have earned undergraduate degrees from a university other than BYU. Graduate Studies hosts the Graduate Studies Recruiting Council and invites all interested parties to attend. These meetings are typically held each month throughout the fall and early winter semesters. Graduate Studies attends several recruiting fairs throughout the year, representing all graduate programs, and helps programs host virtual fairs.

### Inquiries

Online inquiries regarding graduate education are handled jointly by Graduate Studies and individual programs. Prospective applicants may navigate to the [Graduate Studies website](#) and click on the "Program Catalog" link to see the Request Program Information link on the top right. Each inquiry is acknowledged through email. Programs may configure a series of automatic emails that will be sent from Slate to prospective students who request information. Programs may also contact Graduate Studies for assistance in setting up automatic emails in Slate or other Slate training. There is a short inquiry form that prospects can complete on any program page on the Graduate Studies website. This form also populates Slate, and emails are then sent accordingly.

### Applications

All applicants (excluding applicants to the Juris Doctor of Law program and the School of Medicine) apply online through the [Graduate Studies website](#). The J. Reuben Clark Law School and the School of Medicine use a separate application.

Graduate Studies uses Slate, a third-party vendor, for online applications. Applicants click "Apply" at the top right of the Graduate Studies website or through the "Admissions" tab. Applicants will first be directed to set up a BYU account (NetID) by providing their name, email address, birth date, and a password. Applicants may complete the application at their leisure and access it as many times as needed until it is submitted.

### Admissions - Enrollment Increases

If the number of graduate students for a particular program needs to be increased significantly, department and college representatives should send a memo to the Assistant Dean of Admissions to demonstrate that resources are adequate to support additional graduate students and that a larger graduate program in the area would enhance the program and the university. This will be reviewed with the Dean of Graduate Studies.

### Application Deadlines

Each program is encouraged to establish its own application deadlines for each semester and term of entry; however, the selected deadlines should conform to national best practices in graduate admissions for their discipline. The following deadlines are suggested: February 1 for the Fall Semester; August 15 for the Winter Semester; February 1 for the Spring Term; and February 1 for the Summer Term.

Programs should restrict entry semesters to one or at most two to increase the likelihood of selecting a strong class of graduate students. Deadlines should be early enough to allow time for application

details to be reviewed and processed, for the program to give full and fair consideration, for response to be timely, and for the student to accept (or decline) an offer of admission. Programs that admit international applicants should have deadlines early enough to allow international admits sufficient time to obtain a visa.

Programs should submit application deadline changes to Graduate Studies early enough for deadlines to be listed accurately on the Graduate Studies website and Catalog. The Assistant Dean of Admissions sends out requests for annual admission updates each May. Programs requesting changes to deadlines and admission requirements after the admission update deadline may incur a \$500 processing fee.

### Application Requirements

An applicant seeking admission to a program leading to a doctoral or master's degree must meet university and program requirements as outlined in the menu items found at the Graduate Studies website, through the apply button under either domestic or international applicants, and within the [Graduate Program Catalog](#) individual program pages. Admission to graduate study is highly selective and is granted to a specific program for a specific semester or term. At a minimum, applicants who wish to be considered for admission must complete the following steps:

- 1) Submit a complete online graduate application before the application deadline. An application is considered complete upon receipt of the online application with fee paid, uploaded PDFs of unofficial transcripts from each school attended, a completed [CES Honor Code Commitment](#), and a completed [Ecclesiastical Endorsement](#). Applicants applying concurrently to more than one program must complete a separate online application for each program and pay a separate fee for each application; however, they only need to complete one endorsement.
- 2) Receive the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited U.S. university or international university BEFORE the expected semester of entry. As a general rule, graduate programs at Brigham Young University require a 120-credit baccalaureate degree or equivalent from a regionally accredited U.S. or international university. To be considered for admission, recipients of an accredited 90-credit degree must establish strong potential to succeed in their specific graduate program.
- 3) All transcripts uploaded to the online application are considered unofficial. For the application, an unofficial PDF of the transcript is required from the institution from which the degree is anticipated, with transfer credits noted. If applicants are recommended for admission, they will then be asked to submit OFFICIAL transcripts. The following applies to official transcripts.
  - a) Official U.S. transcript(s) must be sent directly to Graduate Studies, either electronically or by regular mail, in a sealed envelope with a certification stamp across the seal.
  - b) Official U.S. transcript(s) need to be received BEFORE the start of the first semester. If the final official conferred transcript is not received by the end of the first semester of residence, the student will be terminated.
  - c) Admitted students may not register until an official, U.S.-conferred transcript is received.
  - d) Applicants who have earned or are earning their bachelor's degree from BYU (Provo) do not need to send official transcripts.
- 4) Applicants must report their overall GPA. This should include transfer coursework applied towards the undergraduate degree. Applicants must have a minimum 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale (a

scholastic average of “B” for international degrees). The minimum GPA for an international undergraduate degree will be derived from the overall scholastic average of all of the courses counted towards the bachelor’s degree.

- 5) Satisfy specified departmental requirements before the application deadline, including national examinations (such as the GRE), letters of recommendation, and essay responses, including the statement of intent or other supplemental materials. Separate statements of intent and letters of recommendation are required for each program to which an applicant applies.
- 6) Each application requires a non-refundable application fee. Occasionally, programs may wish to pay the fee for an exceptional applicant whose application is otherwise complete and meets the requirements. To do so, the program sends OGS Form 1 to the Graduate Studies Budget Intern. Once the payment has been cleared on the applicant record in Slate, the applicant will move out of the “Awaiting Payment” bin and proceed to the next stage of the admissions process.
- 7) Foreign Credential Evaluation – applies to both domestic and international applicants

An applicant whose degree is awarded outside the United States should send all transcripts, mark sheets, and degree certificates, as well as accompanying English translations, to the approved credential evaluation agencies listed in their recommendation for admission letter. Successful completion and receipt of the credential evaluation report will clear the GPA and bachelor’s degree admission requirements. Applicants should request that an electronic report be sent directly to the Graduate Studies’ International Transcript Specialist.

The [credential evaluation](#) is not required for some programs until the program recommends the applicant for admission by placing an admit decision in Slate. However, applicants in the following programs are required to send the evaluations as part of the application process: Chaplaincy, Computer Science, Educational Leadership, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Exercise Science, Geological Sciences, IT & Cybersecurity, Law, Linguistics, Mass Communications, MAT, MBA, MPA, MPH, Music, Neuroscience, Nursing, Physics & Astronomy, Psychology, Religious Education, School Psychology, SLaT, Sociology, or Statistics.

#### International Applicants (Not a US Citizen or Permanent Resident)

- 8) Transcripts from Online US Bachelor’s Degree Programs  
Applicants who reside outside the US, are completing a US bachelor’s degree, and are subsequently recommended for admission, must provide final, official transcripts documenting successful completion of a U.S. bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited U.S. university BEFORE the start date of the expected semester of entry.
- 9) English Proficiency.  
Satisfy the minimum score requirements for English proficiency as outlined:

Minimum Scores on English Proficiency Tests	
CAE	180 or C minimum
DET	Overall minimum score of 130 (with minimum listening, reading, speaking, and writing scores of 125).
IELTS	Total band score of 7.0 (minimum band score of 6.0 in each module)
TOEFL(Paper-Based)	580
TOEFL iBT	Scoring previous to January 21, 2026: Total 85 (minimum score of 22 in Speaking; minimum score of 21 in Listening, Reading, and Writing)
	Scoring after January 21, 2026: Minimum sub-scores of at least 4.0 in Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing, comprising an overall score of at least 4.5.

The MA in Linguistics and the MA in TESOL only accept the TOEFL exam. English MA, English MFA, Portuguese MA, SLaT MA, and Spanish MA only accept the IELTS and TOEFL exams.

Please note: Some departments may require higher minimum scores. Score reports must be sent directly to BYU from the testing agency. Student copies are unacceptable. Generally, all applicants are required to demonstrate an acceptable level of English proficiency to meet the university's graduate admission requirements, unless an applicable exemption or waiver applies.

Only applicants who are citizens of the following countries (or those applicants who have received a residential bachelor's degree or higher from said countries, within the previous 24 months of the intended start date of their respective graduate program) are 'exempt' from this requirement.

Australia	Barbados	Belize	Bermuda
Botswana	Canada	Cook Islands	England
Grenada	Guyana	Ireland, Northern	Ireland, Republic of
Jamaica	Lesotho	Malta	New Zealand
South Africa, Republic of	Scotland	Sierra Leone	Singapore
St Kitts and Nevis	St Lucia	Swaziland	United States of America
Wales	Zambia		

All other applicants are either required to 1) obtain the required minimum English language proficiency scores for the DET, IELTS, or TOEFL tests; or 2) obtain an English language proficiency 'waiver' from their respective Graduate Program, to be eligible for graduate admission. To petition for an English proficiency exam exception, the applicant must have taken *one* of our accepted exams before submitting the petition. We recognize, however, that there may be certain circumstances where the exam is unnecessary. We continue to welcome these petitions, but for the petition to be approved, evidence must be submitted demonstrating an applicant's listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills.

The university retains the right to require any applicant to provide evidence of their English language proficiency, regardless of whether an exemption or waiver applies.

### ***Acceptable English Proficiency Tests***

The CAE, DET, IELTS, and TOEFL tests are designed to measure a candidate's ability to communicate in English in an academic or professional setting. The tests cover four language skills—listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

Cambridge Assessment English (CAE) tests for and establishes proof of high-level achievement in English, and is the ideal qualification to prepare you for university or professional life. Applicants applying to graduate school are required to successfully pass the C1 Advanced test. Information regarding the CAE C1 Advanced test is available [here](#).

The Duolingo English Test (DET) is a standardized English proficiency exam that evaluates listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills. It is an internet-based test that adapts in real-time based on the test taker's responses. Information regarding the DET exam is available [here](#).

IELTS is jointly managed by the British Council, the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, and IDP: IELTS Australia. There are two types of reading and writing modules: Academic and General Training. Candidates applying for admission to a graduate program at BYU are required to take the Academic reading and writing modules of the test. Information regarding the IELTS is available at [www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org). BYU Graduate Studies now accepts IELTS One Skill Retake scores and IELTS Online.

The TOEFL test measures English language proficiency in reading, listening, writing, and speaking. The test is administered by the Educational Testing Service. Information regarding the TOEFL is available at [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org). BYU Graduate Studies now accepts the Home Edition test but *does not* accept the iBT MyBest scores.

Some departments may require a higher English proficiency test score. CAE, DET, IELTS, and TOEFL scores must be less than two years old at the time of enrollment.

Note: Graduate programs may still require an English exam even if an applicant meets the exemption criteria.

Upon official notification of admission to the university, all international applicants will receive further instructions from the International Student and Scholars Services (ISSS) Office regarding the process for obtaining their respective visa documentation to enter the US or to change visa status.

### Post-Baccalaureate Studies Applicants

Prospective applicants for BYU graduate programs should not register for classes on a post-baccalaureate studies basis in hopes of subsequent admission to a graduate program. Students who have earned a baccalaureate degree and wish to take classes at BYU without being admitted to a graduate program must apply through the visiting student application. Questions about post-baccalaureate studies applications should be directed to the [BYU Office of Visiting Students](#).

### Joint Programs

Students applying for a joint graduate degree program are subject to the following requirements:

- Students can apply and participate only in formally approved joint programs.
- When both degree programs require a culminating graduate experience, the student must complete a separate experience for each degree.
- Standard restrictions on time spent in the program will apply. Admitted students are required to finish both degrees at the same time.
- International students should carefully examine federal immigration requirements in consultation with the ISSS office and obtain any special permissions that may be needed to participate in joint programs.

## Chapter 4 Admissions Decision Processes

### Admissions Standards and Practices

Programs should have clearly stated, effectively communicated admissions standards that are regularly reviewed and revised as needed. High expectations should include several criteria, such as the undergraduate GPA, entrance examination scores, and professional experience. Applicants should only be admitted when all or virtually all prerequisite requirements have been met; provisional admittance may be granted if an applicant shows exceptional promise.

Departments should be consistent in applying their admission standards and make admission decisions in a timely manner. The decisions are made by a faculty admissions committee, including input from all authorized members invited to participate in the admission process. Only as many students as can be effectively guided through a rigorous and carefully advised program should be admitted.

### Role of Graduate Studies

#### Recommending Admission

Graduate Studies receives and checks the university requirements for each application. Each applicant selects a term of entry in the application. On some AIM screens, a five-digit, year/term code displays, indicating the year and semester (or term) of a student's entry into a program. The first four digits refer to the year, and the last digit represents the semester or term. Semesters and terms are coded as follows:

1 = Winter; 3 = Spring; 4 = Summer; 5 = Fall

In this system, a code of 20205 indicates the Fall 2020 semester.

Applicants self-report a final overall GPA. Upon receipt of the foreign credential evaluation, the GPA is updated for applicants with foreign degrees.

An Ecclesiastical Endorsement is required for all applicants, and completed endorsements are matched to the respective applicant files daily. Once all university requirements have been met (such as GPA, receipt of unofficial transcripts, bachelor's degree, Honor Code Commitment, and Ecclesiastical Endorsement), an official Admit decision may be entered in Slate for non-international applicants by the program.

International applicants must submit a test of English proficiency and a foreign credential evaluation. An official admission decision will not be finalized until all university requirements have been cleared.

Note: Programs may recommend an applicant for admission, but ONLY Graduate Studies can issue an official offer of admission letter online in Slate.

#### Recommending Denial of Admission

In most cases, Graduate Studies does not intervene in the decision to admit or deny an applicant. Nevertheless, the University may deny an applicant without departmental review for the following reasons, including but not limited to:

- The applicant has previously been dismissed from BYU.
- The applicant lacks a prerequisite undergraduate degree.
- An international applicant fails to meet the minimum score required on a test of English.
- An applicant is or has been involved in criminal activity.
- An applicant is unable to complete all requirements of admission.

In such cases, Graduate Studies collects additional information if necessary and, if sufficient cause for denial exists, sends an appropriate letter to the applicant, with a copy sent to the program.

### Role of the Program

The online application data is viewed and reviewed in Slate. Applicant data is exported to AIM after decisions are entered into Slate. Faculty readers can view the application, recommendations, and unofficial transcripts in Slate as a PDF. Programs determine procedures and criteria for evaluating applications and decide whom to admit.

Applicants may be judged on criteria such as academic record, performance on the GRE or other required exams, preparation for advanced study in the field of interest, letters of recommendation, written intentions for graduate study, and scholarly interests matching the program's offerings. Additional materials may be required, such as writing samples, interviews, portfolios of previous work, or other test scores.

Although it is inadvisable to act on an application before it is complete, programs may, in unusual cases, waive any or all department requirements of the application for a particular applicant, or recommend an applicant for admission even if university portions are missing, by sending an admission petition. Programs cannot recommend an applicant for admission if the ecclesiastical endorsement is still needed. An official letter of acceptance will not be sent until all the university requirements have been met.

Applications that are submitted but not completed by the program application deadline should be denied and do not need to be considered.

Applications that are started but never submitted for consideration are archived by Graduate Studies at the end of each admissions cycle.

In corresponding with applicants, programs can continue to express interest or communicate that they intend to recommend the applicant for admission, but should refrain from communicating anything that could imply that the applicant has been formally "admitted" until Graduate Studies has released the official admit decision. Programs should also be careful not to promise admission if an Ecclesiastical Endorsement is not received.

### Slate Application Review

The goal of application review in Slate is for faculty to review graduate applications entirely online, without having to circulate paper files of applicants. The PDF of the application data and uploads is available for review in Slate, and faculty can add comments and ratings for each applicant.

Each faculty reviewer can enter their ratings and comments, and recommend to admit or deny in the Slate Reader.

### Recommending Provisional Admission

An applicant who lacks certain prerequisite courses or academic preparation may be provisionally admitted, in which case the respective graduate program may require that the applicant complete certain requirements (typically during their graduate study) as a condition of admission and/or continued enrollment.

Prerequisite undergraduate classes may be required as a condition of admission, provided the applicant is also enrolled in at least two credit hours of graduate-level classes each semester of enrollment (totaling six credit hours of graduate-level classes per academic year). Failure to enroll in at least two credit hours of graduate-level classes will result in non-satisfaction of the minimum registration requirement and subject them to termination from their program.

Conversely, graduate programs are discouraged from requiring newly admitted graduate students (who have already completed at least their undergraduate degree) to complete any prerequisite classes at BYU PRIOR to officially starting graduate study.

Programs may require newly admitted graduate students to complete entrance exams like the GRE, etc., during their studies as a condition of their provisional admission, provided the condition is clearly articulated. Programs cannot, however, require newly admitted graduate students to RETAKE standardized exams as a condition of their provisional admission. Graduate programs are solely responsible for enforcing the conditions of the provisional admit. Applicants with a GPA below 3.0 *may* also be provisionally admitted.

If the applicant's GPA is below 2.5, the program must submit a petition for exception, providing substantive evidence that the student can succeed in a graduate program as determined by the admissions committee. Graduate Studies must grant approval of said petition before the student can be officially admitted.

## Application Statuses Defined

### Reader Bins

**Awaiting submission:** Holding bin for unsubmitted applications.

**Awaiting payment, materials, or endorsement:** Holding bin for submitted applications that are missing the application fee or other university requirements.

**Submitted to Review:** Application is ready for the graduate program manager to assign to the respective faculty admission committee review bins: Bins 1–5.

**Complete – Send to Grad:** Holding bin for completed applications awaiting assignment by the graduate program managers to the department decision bins.

**Notified – Waitlisted:** Holding bin for applications that have been waitlisted and processed as such until they are either admitted or denied.

**Notified – Conditional Admit:** Holding bin for applications that have been conditionally admitted and processed as such until the condition/s are satisfied.

### Decisions

**Withdrawn:** Applications may be designated as withdrawn when 1) the applicant formally notifies the university that they do not wish to pursue the application process further or 2) a program decides to close its admission cycle and subsequently withdraws any submitted applications that are incomplete or late. Programs should immediately change the decision to *withdraw* in Slate and indicate that the withdrawal is applicant-initiated for options one and program-initiated for option two. Applicants will receive an "Update" notification in their application portal along with the corresponding withdrawal letter, which can be viewed online.

**Conditional Admit:** Conditionally admitted students are classified as applicants who must satisfy a requirement BEFORE beginning their program of study. A conditional admit is usually used for an applicant with a foreign degree who needs to complete the foreign credential evaluation. In rare cases, conditional admission can be granted if a class must be completed and a specific grade is earned BEFORE an official admission decision can be made.

If the class is held outside of BYU or is not associated with BYU, the student would be classified as a conditional admit. This requirement is often hard to complete before the start of the program of study. If the student is an international applicant, the student would not have enough time to take a class, receive a grade, and receive an official offer of admission to begin the student visa process. For

domestic and international students who need a class outside of BYU BEFORE an official admission decision can be made, we recommend that programs direct domestic and international applicants to apply for the following academic year so that they can complete the requirement/s that would fall under conditional admittance.

Applicants who are conditionally admitted will receive a letter indicating a recommendation for admission with missing items in their status portal in Slate. The letter will clearly articulate the conditions and the deadline for completing them. The letter will also advise the applicant that no official university acceptance can be offered until the condition is satisfied.

For applicants with foreign degrees, the foreign credential evaluation is a university condition that must be cleared before they can be officially admitted to the university. Graduate Studies will monitor and clear this university's condition once the official electronic copy of the foreign credential evaluation is received. Any other condition(s) articulated by the respective graduate program must be monitored and tracked by the program and then communicated to Graduate Studies once the condition(s) are satisfied. At this time, the applicant can then be formally admitted to the university.

**Admit:** Admitted applicants receive an email notice to login to their application to view the "update" on their status portal in Slate. Once the admit letter is viewed, they are presented with a "Reply to offer of admission" form where they may indicate accept or decline.

**Provisional Admit:** Provisionally admitted applicants are admitted with a condition set by the respective graduate program admission committee that addresses a deficiency or concern. This deficiency or concern regarding the applicant must be satisfied BEFORE their program begins if the requirement(s) are associated with BYU, or DURING their program of study. Failure to satisfy the provision in a timely manner is grounds for termination from the program.

Applicants receive an email notice to login to their application to view the "update" on their status portal in Slate. In the provisional letter, the programs will clearly articulate the conditions and the deadline for completing them. Once the admit letter is viewed, the applicant is presented with a "Reply to offer of admission" form where they may indicate accept or decline.

**Waitlist:** Applicant status and online letter indicate the program would be likely to admit them if space becomes available.

**Admit/decline or Provisional Admit/Decline:** Applicant has responded to the offer of admission on their application portal with an 'I decline' on the "Reply to Offer of Admission" form. This status will delete their active program in AIM and remove the registration eligibility for the admit semester. The applicant receives a notification that their offer of admission has been withdrawn. This action will subsequently create space for other applicants to be admitted, including those on the Waitlist.

## Special Situations for Applications

### Change Application Term

Requests to change the admit term to an earlier start date must be initiated by the respective graduate program on behalf of the admitted student. To initiate the change in admit term, email the Assistant Dean of Recruiting and Admissions the name of the student, their NetID, and the new admit term to change in Slate and AIM.

Please note that students who are admitted for the upcoming Fall semester are permitted to work on campus during the preceding Spring and Summer terms. Any student who is admitted to the Spring or Summer term must meet minimum registration requirements, e.g., enroll in at least two credit hours of graduate-level classes, or they will be dropped from their program for failure to meet minimum registration requirements.

## Deferments

Admission deferment options—medical, military, mission, and visa—allow students to defer the start of their program for a period of one semester to one year. These deferments may be renewed for a second year upon request and approval. After two years of deferment, students will be reassessed to determine eligibility to start their program. In most cases, students who request to exceed the two-year deferment limit will be advised to reapply for admission. Matriculated students are unable to request a deferment but may apply for a leave of absence (refer to the Leave of Absence policy). For situations that do not match these deferment options, applicants may be reconsidered with a new applicant pool for a subsequent semester or term.

Granting a deferral is for enrollment only and does not imply the deferral of scholarships, fellowships, or assistantships. Any commitments made to affiliate with a specific faculty adviser, lab, or research project will no longer apply.

All graduate degree programs are subject to a time limit (eight years for a doctoral degree and five years for a master's degree). Time to degree begins with the semester in which the student matriculates into their graduate program.

### *Graduate Student Missionary Deferral*

Missionary deferments will be granted to graduate students who want to defer their initial enrollment for an LDS Mission. The program manager must complete a [Graduate Missionary Deferment Form](#).

The deferment form should be submitted to Graduate Studies after a mission call but before entering the MTC, and before the start of the first semester of expected enrollment; otherwise, the student will be dropped as a “no-show.” The following conditions must be met:

- Do not attend any college or university between leaving and returning from the mission.
- Receive an honorable release and an ecclesiastical endorsement from the Mission President.
- Return for the semester or term indicated on the Graduate Student Missionary Deferment form, which must comply with the following schedule:

Return from Mission	Enroll No Later Than
October – April	Fall Semester
May – September	Winter Semester

### *Graduate Studies Military Deferment*

Military deferments will be granted to graduate students who need to defer their initial enrollment due to military deployments lasting no more than 12 months. The program manager must complete the [Graduate Student Military Deferment form](#).

The deferment form should be submitted to Graduate Studies as soon as the deferring student receives orders and before the start of the first semester of expected enrollment; otherwise, the student will be dropped as a “no-show.” The following conditions must be met:

- Do not attend any college or university between leaving for and returning from the military assignment.
- Submit a copy of proof of Military Deployment orders.
- Return for the semester or term indicated on the Graduate Student Military Deferment form, which must comply with the following schedule:

Return from Deployment	Enroll No Later Than
October – April	Fall Semester
May – September	Winter Semester

#### *Graduate Studies Medical Deferment*

Medical deferments will be granted to graduate students who need to defer their initial enrollment because of a medical condition. A deferment will be granted for a condition that substantially prevents the student from physically attending classes before the add/drop deadline of the first semester for which he or she is recommended for admission. A deferment cannot exceed four semesters (spring and summer terms combined count as one semester). The program manager must complete the [Graduate Student Medical Deferment form](#).

The deferment form should be submitted to Graduate Studies before the start of the first semester of expected enrollment; otherwise, the student will be dropped as a “no-show.” The following conditions must be met:

- Do not attend any college or university between leaving for medical reasons and returning.
- Submit an official note from a certified physician indicating the medical condition(s) preventing the student from physically attending classes.
- Return for the semester or term indicated on the Graduate Student Medical Deferment form, which must comply with the following schedule:

End of Medical Deferment	Enroll No Later Than
October – April	Fall Semester
May – September	Winter Semester

#### *Graduate Studies International Student Visa Deferment*

International student visa deferments will be granted to graduate students who need to defer their initial enrollment because of visa issues. A deferment should not exceed more than four semesters (spring and summer terms combined count as one semester). The program manager must complete the [International Student Visa Deferment form](#).

The deferment form should be submitted to Graduate Studies before the start of the first semester of expected enrollment (otherwise the student will be dropped as a “no-show”). The following conditions must be met:

- The deferment form explains the visa issue preventing the student from enrolling in the semester of admission.
- Matriculate in the semester or term indicated on the International Student Visa Deferment form, which must comply with the following schedule:

End of International Visa Deferment	Enroll No Later Than
October – April	Fall Semester
May – September	Winter Semester

### Applicants Previously Suspended from BYU

Individuals who were previously suspended from BYU for academic reasons but have subsequently received a baccalaureate degree from another university may apply for graduate study at BYU. The application requirements and the admission process are the same for all applicants. Graduate Studies can help contact the appropriate office to have the suspension hold removed.

### Full Disclosure and Confidentiality

In the graduate application, the submission of inaccurate or falsified information constitutes grounds for immediate dismissal and the loss of all credit earned at BYU. Once the university receives application materials, they become university property and are kept in the strictest confidence, as required by university policy.

### Recommendations: Waive or Do Not Waive Right of Access

In the online letter of recommendation request, applicants indicate either that they waive or do not waive their right of access to the form and letter of recommendation. When an applicant waives their right of access, the recommender understands that his or her comments will remain confidential and is therefore more likely to make candid observations than would be the case if no such pledge of confidentiality had been made. For this reason, if the applicant has waived their right of access, he or she should never, under any circumstances, be shown, given information contained in, or have released to him or her or a third party a copy of the recommendation.

Under the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974* (FERPA), applicants who have not waived their right of access have the right to see comments written about them only after they have been admitted and have enrolled. This act does not apply to applicants who are not admitted or to admitted applicants who do not enroll. **Admitted** students who did not waive their right of access and wish to view their letters of recommendation may be shown the letters after submitting a written request to Graduate Studies after the admit semester has begun. Students are not permitted to make copies for their personal use and may only view their documents at Graduate Studies in a controlled environment with an appointment.

If applicants (in person or by telephone) ask about the status of their application, they must first verify their identity via picture ID and/or their BYU ID Number and birth date. Questions may then be answered with the following restrictions:

- Applicants will not be given information about letters of recommendation (content or ratings).
- Employees should NOT say to an applicant, "You've been admitted."
- Occasionally, a friend or relative will telephone or visit Graduate Studies to check on an applicant's status or to look at the application. Giving information to a third party may be a violation of BYU's confidentiality policy (depending on the information given and what guest access they have been granted by the applicant), so university policy requires applicants to email or telephone directly rather than having others check for them.

## Chapter 5 Advisement Policies

### Matriculation Defined

**Matriculated:** Once a student is admitted to a graduate program, he/she is considered matriculated if enrolled in at least two credits of graduate-level coursework beyond the add/drop deadline of the semester of acceptance. A newly admitted graduate student must complete at least a two-credit-hour graduate-level course during their semester or term of acceptance; if they do not complete a two-credit-hour course during their first semester, they are deleted as a graduate student in that program. However, after the first semester, an admitted graduate student is considered a matriculated student even if they are not enrolled in any coursework, as long as they meet the yearly minimum of six total credits. After the first semester, a matriculated student is eligible to enroll in classes but does not necessarily need to enroll in every semester until he/she graduates.

**Enrolled:** A graduate student is enrolled, effective on the first day of classes for the semester/term of registration, if he/she is registered for at least two credit hours of coursework in a semester or one credit hour of coursework in a term and continues in those courses beyond the add/drop deadline.

### In-Person Graduate Experience

BYU's mission statement describes the importance of "selected graduate programs of real consequence" in the furtherance of scholarly work. Graduate study at BYU provides students with a unique in-person opportunity to incorporate faith with scholarship, an integral part of BYU's dual heritage. Our graduate programs are designed to provide deep disciplinary knowledge and broad scientific and/or creative discovery, with students and faculty working together as partners in pursuing significant scholarship.

### Degree Requirements

The university has established minimum standards for graduate degrees; department requirements may exceed those standards. Current information about specific program requirements should be published in the department graduate student handbooks.

### Master's Degree

The following requirements must be met:

1. At least 30 credit hours (excluding prerequisite courses) must be completed in the master's program after completion of a baccalaureate degree. (See the Credit Policies section for information about credits that may not apply toward a graduate degree.) The program of study may not include more than the minimum required thesis hours (6) or project hours (0-6). Only students actively involved in thesis or project work should register for thesis or project credit. A graduate committee or appointed program advisor helps each student prepare a program of study.
2. Most master's degree programs are designed to be completed within two years. All master's degrees must be completed within five years of the first semester of enrollment in the program. Matriculation in a program may be terminated at any time for failure to make satisfactory progress toward the degree.
3. To receive a minor, a master's student must:
  - a. Obtain the approval of the department chair or graduate coordinator of the major and minor departments.
  - b. Have the major department add the minor in AIM (*ADV07*).
  - c. Select a graduate faculty member from the minor department in Gradprog (approved by the department chair or graduate coordinator of the minor department) to serve as a graduate committee member.

- d. Register for and complete nine credit hours of approved graduate courses in the minor. Graduate Studies relies on the minor committee member to ensure that the student's exposure is sufficient.

### Doctoral Degree

The following requirements must be met:

1. The student must complete the minimum number of credit hours required by the graduate program. The program of study may not exceed the minimum required dissertation credits (18). Registration for dissertation credit and work on the dissertation must be concurrent. Doctoral students may not earn all dissertation credit in a single term or semester. With graduate committee approval, students may apply up to 36 credit hours of an earned master's degree towards a doctoral degree. The following are the minimum required hours for doctoral degrees:
  - a. For students with no master's degree, the minimum requirement is 54 hours beyond a bachelor's degree; however, the 54 hours may not include undergraduate courses (100 to 400 level), other courses needed to fulfill prerequisite and skill requirements, or more than 18 hours of dissertation credit.
  - b. 36 hours earned at BYU for a Doctor of Philosophy degree, 18 of which are doctoral dissertation credits, if a master's degree has been earned. Note: Transfer credits from other universities may be considered for BYU doctoral programs, provided they do not exceed the university's minimums and meet the rules for transfer credit.
2. Most doctoral degree programs are designed to be completed within four to five years. All doctoral degrees must be completed within eight years of the first semester of enrollment in the program. Matriculation in a program may be terminated at any time for failure to make satisfactory progress toward the degree.
3. To receive a minor, a doctoral student must:
  - a. Obtain the approval of the department chair or graduate coordinator of the major and minor departments.
  - b. Have the major department add the minor in AIM (*ADV07*).
  - c. Select a graduate faculty member from the minor department in Gradprog (approved by the department chair or graduate coordinator of the minor department) to serve as a graduate committee member.
  - d. Register for and complete 12 credit hours of approved graduate coursework in the minor. Graduate Studies relies on the minor committee member to ensure that the student's exposure is sufficient.

### Handbook Requirement

Programs are required to provide all entering graduate students with access to a graduate student handbook describing current policies, requirements, expectations, and procedures that graduate students need to know to complete a degree successfully. The handbook must be accurate, updated annually, made available to students online or in hard copy, and ensure reception through sign-off.

This handbook should provide details on degree requirements, including coursework, committees, examinations, dissertations, theses, projects, internships, practice, etc., and explain program-specific policies and procedures for obtaining advisement, forming a committee, establishing a program of study, evaluation processes, etc. In addition to the details of the department's graduate offering (i.e., courses, program/track options, etc.), the handbook should contain information on university procedures that students need to be aware of, such as applying for graduation, scheduling final exams, and submitting dissertations or theses.

Programs will specify what constitutes satisfactory, marginal, and unsatisfactory progress in their handbooks and will inform students of the rating process and its consequences. The handbook should also specify program and university policies and procedures regarding dismissal and grievances. Another important element of the handbook is a discussion of financial aid opportunities available through the program and the university.

Programs should have formal orientation procedures or seminars to acquaint new students with the expectations and requirements of graduate study in the department and the university. At the time of admission, programs may assign an initial advisor who makes sure new students are well informed and assists in selecting a permanent advisor. The permanent advisor should be selected by the end of the student's first semester.

## Student Progress

### Committee Requirements

The following university requirements apply to graduate committees:

- The chair must be from the students' major department (students who desire an interdisciplinary experience should see the section on Interdisciplinary Graduate Study).
- Master's degree committees must consist of at least three members. At least two members must have graduate faculty status at BYU. In some cases, an individual external to BYU may be petitioned as the third committee member.
- Doctoral committees must consist of at least four members. At least two members must have graduate faculty status at BYU. In some cases, an individual external to BYU may be petitioned as the third and/or fourth committee member.
- Special committee members are current BYU employees who do not have graduate faculty status. They do not count toward the required number of committee members (three for master's and four for doctoral), but are always in addition to that number. Retired BYU employees who had graduate faculty status may also be considered special committee members. Special committee members are added by petition.
- The student in Gradprog can request the committee member, and faculty members receive an email notification to accept or decline their committee membership through Gradprog. The program manager approves the committee in Gradprog or *ADV08* in AIM.
- Departments may require more than the minimum number of committee members.
- Committee co-chairs are not permitted; students may acknowledge a committee member as contributing a large part to their graduate program and/or thesis/dissertation on the acknowledgement page, but only the chair listed in Gradprog and AIM is included on the title page of the student's electronic thesis or dissertation.
- If a student declares a minor, one member of the committee must be from the minor department.

### Program of Study

The program of study is a carefully considered plan approved by the graduate committee, which identifies the student's major and lists all program and course requirements. It may also include a minor. Prerequisite and skill courses are neither determined nor required by the university, but they are tracked in AIM if entered on the program of study. Each program of study must meet the minimum university degree requirements given above in the "Degree Requirements" section. Necessary changes in a student's program or committee can be made if authorized by the student's committee. After making a change, for instance, if the student submits new courses to be considered in Gradprog, the graduate program manager must approve the program of study in *ADV08*.

Master's students should plan their program of study under the direction of their graduate committee during their first semester and submit it no later than the third week of the second semester.

Doctoral students should submit and receive approval of their program of study during the first year, with completion no later than the third week of the second year of study.

For students who have not submitted a program of study, departments may contact Graduate Studies to place a hold that prevents a student from registering for subsequent semesters until the program of study has been created and approved.

Programs should publish and distribute a multi-year schedule of course offerings, so graduate students may plan their course of study. Graduate course offerings must be sequenced appropriately and offered with sufficient frequency to prevent delays in degree completion.

### Graduate Progress Webpage

Gradprog, also known as Graduate Progress, is an online "progress to degree" tracking page. This site allows students to request committee members, create programs of study, and manage additional graduation requirements without obtaining physical signatures. All approvals and notifications are done electronically. Additionally, students have access to the resources they need as they progress through their graduate program.

1. For faculty, the "Active Students/Committee Member" tab shows the lists of names and their workflow state.
2. Faculty may also view a list of all the students for whom they serve as a committee chair or member.
3. The "Active Committee Members" list shows any given faculty who have graduate faculty status, and the student committees on which they serve. Some faculty listed here are NOT in the home department.

### Progress Report

A progress report lists all course requirements from a student's program of study. It summarizes the student's progress, including completed classes, current registration, deficient classes, the number of credit hours taken, and grade point average. In addition, the report indicates possible problems with academic status, GPA, current registration, prerequisite degrees and courses, minimum registration requirements, and time limits. Students are responsible for working with their program to make any necessary changes to their program of study. Programs and students may view and print the student's progress report located in Gradprog for their own records or for distribution at any time while the student is matriculated in their graduate program.

### Grade-Point Average (GPA) Requirements

Graduate students whose program of study GPA falls below 3.0 (prerequisite and skill courses are exempt) will not be allowed to graduate and may be dismissed from their graduate programs. Graduate faculty should consult with students whose grades frequently fall in the C range or below about the advisability of continuing graduate study. No D credit may apply toward a graduate degree.

### Evaluations of Student Progress

Departments should encourage students to complete their degree programs promptly. Graduate students matriculating in programs should continually be enrolled in coursework, be completing internships, and/or be actively involved in scholarly or creative work. Departments should recognize that a student's first responsibility is to his or her own academic program. Other duties, such as teaching assignments, should enhance the graduate education experience rather than impede progress toward a degree. Departments should strictly limit the number of courses a graduate student teaches. Programs are required to formally monitor each graduate student's progress twice during the

academic year, at clearly designated times, and to inform the student, electronically or in writing, of his or her status.

According to the semester in which the student matriculated, only in the first year is the following number of evaluations required.

Fall	2 evaluations
Winter	1 evaluation
Spring or Summer	0 evaluations

In subsequent years, at least two evaluations per academic year are required.

Evaluations must be recorded on the AIM screen *ADV12* by September 30<sup>th</sup> for the previous academic year. Because the Department of Education requires students to maintain satisfactory progress toward completing their degree to receive financial aid, students who receive an unsatisfactory rating or do not receive an evaluation may not be eligible to receive federal financial aid.

### Evaluation Procedures

Programs must evaluate graduate student progress at least twice each academic year. The procedure is detailed below.

1. The graduate faculty or a committee consisting of graduate faculty (at least the student's thesis/dissertation advisory committee or program advisor [for non-thesis programs] and the graduate coordinator) discusses the progress of each student.
2. Each student is rated as making satisfactory, marginal, or unsatisfactory progress.
3. Students are notified electronically or in writing of their progress.
4. Programs will specify what constitutes satisfactory, marginal, and unsatisfactory progress in their handbooks and will inform students of the rating process and the consequences of the ratings.

A student must be notified when an (unacceptable) marginal or unsatisfactory rating is given. The communication should be in electronic or written form and detail the reasons for the marginal or unsatisfactory rating. Communication should also indicate which tasks the student must complete to return to a satisfactory rating, when these tasks must be completed, which faculty member(s) should be contacted for information/support, and what will happen if the tasks are not completed. For international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa who receive an unacceptable evaluation, they should be further advised in this communication that this progress rating could impact their enrollment status at the university and, consequently, their immigration status, and that they should reach out to BYU ISSS and their [international advisor](#) for advice regarding their immigration status. The student must physically or digitally sign the unacceptable progress communication, acknowledging receipt, having read it, and being informed of the requirements to return to satisfactory status.

**Marginal** progress may include the following:

- Failure to submit a program of study.
- Failure to establish a graduate committee.
- Registering for thesis hours when little or no work has been done.
- Failure to submit an approved thesis/dissertation prospectus.
- Minimal contact with chair or advisory committee members.
- Prospectus or thesis/dissertation draft not approved.
- Limited progress toward courses and requirements in the program of study.
- Poor performance in clinical internship/externship/applied experience.
- Poor performance in research.

**Unsatisfactory** progress may include the following:

- Grade in a course falling below B-.
- Failure to complete the program of study.
- Failure to establish a graduate committee.
- Failing a course.
- Registering for thesis hours when little or no work has been done.
- Failure to submit an approved thesis/dissertation prospectus.
- Failure of comprehensive exams.
- Minimal or no contact with chair or advisory committee members.
- Prospectus or thesis/dissertation draft not approved.
- Lacking progress toward courses and requirements in the program of study.
- Poor performance in clinical internship/externship/applied experience.
- Rated as marginal in the previous review and has not remediated weak areas.
- Concerns about ethical or professional behavior.
- Poor performance in research.
- Failure to resolve any problems or fulfill any requirements indicated in a previous marginal or unsatisfactory review.

If a student receives a marginal rating and is not making satisfactory progress in the next evaluation, the student must be rated as making unsatisfactory progress (successive marginal progress ratings are not allowed, as failure to correct marginal progress is unsatisfactory).

Two unacceptable ratings will have the following consequences:

If a student receives a marginal and unsatisfactory or two unsatisfactory ratings in succession, the university will:

- Terminate the student's program at the conclusion of the semester (NOTE: A report that includes the names of students with two unacceptable evaluations will run September 30th, January 30th, and May 30<sup>th</sup>; a termination letter will be sent to these students unless Graduate Studies receives a Petition for Exception from the student's program).
- OR allow the student to continue if Graduate Studies receives an online Petition for Exception, OGS Form 2 ([gs-petition.sim.byu.edu](http://gs-petition.sim.byu.edu)), from the student's program making a convincing case that the student be given another semester to demonstrate satisfactory progress. A copy of a contract to restore satisfactory progress, listing student and faculty responsibilities and a timeline, must be attached. This document must also include the student's signature and the student's graduate committee chair's signature. Note: The completion deadline in AIM may be shortened based on this contract.

### Time Limit

A master's degree must be completed within five years of the first semester of matriculation. A doctoral degree must be completed within eight years of the first semester of matriculation. Students who transition from the master's degree level to the doctoral level, or vice versa, during their program retain their original acceptance date for calculating their maximum allowed time to graduation.

### Time Limit Extensions

Programs may petition for a student extension of up to one year by providing reasonable evidence that extenuating circumstances caused an unavoidable delay in the student's progress toward a degree. The graduate program manager creates the petition on behalf of the student, and the student's advisory chair, graduate coordinator/department chair, and their college's associate dean (representative) must approve it before it reaches the Graduate Studies' queue. To petition for an extension beyond the five

years for master's students or eight years for doctoral students, the student must enter into a contract with a detailed timeline for degree completion. This timeline-to-degree-completion contract must include dates for when specific items will be completed within the petitioned extension. Also, the petition must include a course competency document detailing how any outdated credits have been updated through retaking courses, special reading courses, examinations, or field work. Each outdated course must be listed in the course competency document, with an explanation supported by the advisory committee chair explaining how the student is current in that specific course.

A timeline-to-degree-completion contract, as well as the course competency document, must be signed by the student and their advisory chair and attached to the petition.

### Leave of Absence

Students must have completed at least two graduate-level credit hours in the semester of admission with acceptable grades to be eligible for a leave of absence. Students may request a leave of absence for the following reasons: medical, military, or mission. While on leave, the student will be excused from minimum registration requirements (which would typically require six credit hours per academic year). Also, students on leave will not be required to demonstrate satisfactory progress in the program (which is usually assessed by two evaluations per academic year). However, the five-year time limit for the master's degree and the eight-year time limit for the doctoral degree will still apply.

Students requesting leave must submit the Leave of Absence [ADV Form 5](#). Additionally, students requesting leave will be required to provide the following documentation, depending on the reason for the requested leave:

- **Medical**—letter from a doctor or therapist, including the amount of leave time recommended by the professional (up to one year at a time).
- **Military**—copy of the military assignment, including the length of assignment (up to one year at a time).
- **Mission**—copy of mission call letter, including anticipated date of return (up to two years, plus one semester/term).

Once Graduate Studies has received and processed the request, the “leave” status will appear in the AIM system on *ADV12* (Graduate Evaluations), *REG01* (Registration), and Gradprog.

### Application to Resume Graduate Study

Students may apply to resume their graduate program only if they have completed at least one (two credit-hour) graduate-level course with an acceptable grade in their first semester of graduate study. Students who were dropped from programs for failure to meet the yearly minimum registration requirement and wish to resume their graduate study may do so with departmental and Graduate Studies approval.

Students should expect their previous coursework to be re-evaluated and their degree requirements to reflect the program's current expectations as departments make recommendations for resuming the program. The committee may choose to readmit the student with specific provisions or with a change in the program of study that addresses any expired coursework that needs to be repeated or revised to ensure currency. This will require submitting the electronic Petition for Exception form with appropriate approvals and a completion timeline.

**Note: Resuming a student's program of study DOES NOT extend their time limit for completion of the degree (five years from the semester of entry or the first course that applies to the master's program of study, OR eight years from the semester of entry or the first course that applies to the doctoral program of study).**

Applicants wishing to resume their graduate program must complete the following steps:

- Submit the Application to Resume Graduate Study, [GS Form 6](#).
- Obtain an ecclesiastical endorsement: [endorse.byu.edu](http://endorse.byu.edu)
- Complete the Honor Code Commitment agreement located in MyMap.
- Pay a non-refundable processing fee, which will be charged to the student's account once they are approved to resume their program.
- International students: Proof of finances must be sent to ISSS before the program can be resumed.
- Register for at least two graduate-level credit hours in the semester or term of readmission. The semester of readmission determines the minimum credit hours required for registration for the academic year: six for the Fall Semester, four for the Winter Semester, and two for the Spring/Summer Terms. International students must register for a full course of study (nine hours for a semester or 4.5 hours for a term).

After receipt of the approved Application to Resume Graduate Study, Graduate Studies will process the readmission form.

Please note: If a former student wants to return to a previously started program and applies through Slate as a new applicant, no previously earned coursework will apply to the new program if admitted.

### Joint Degree Programs

There are a few programs at BYU that are approved as joint degree programs. These programs provide students with the opportunity to earn two graduate degrees simultaneously within their course of study at BYU. Joint programs respond to innovations in thought, practice, and technology, preparing graduate students to integrate knowledge from two or more disciplines to enhance their career preparation.

Approved joint programs have a defined agreement on the number of shared credits and which courses can be shared.

Applicants to an approved joint degree program must apply for and be recommended for admission to both programs to be eligible for joint degree program status. They must then submit the [GS Form 5](#) to Graduate Studies along with all required signatures from both program representatives attesting to their admission to the joint program. Graduate Studies will process the [GS Form 5](#) once it is received by designating both programs as a joint program in *ADV07* - "Attributes" tab.

### Concurrent Programs

A student may, with the approval of both programs, be admitted to two graduate degrees and work concurrently towards their completion:

1. Programs may admit students to a PhD and either (a) allow or (b) require them to complete the master's degree first.
2. Programs may admit students to a master's degree program and then admit them to continue on in a PhD program before the completion of the master's degree. A Change of Degree form, [GS Form 7](#), is required in these instances. Programs send the Change of Degree form to Graduate Studies for processing.
3. Students may be interested in pursuing two separate master's degrees or two separate doctoral degrees concurrently. If acceptable to both programs and the student makes appropriate progress in both degrees, the student may be enrolled in two programs simultaneously. However, all hours required for each program must be met separately, with no double-counting of credits on either program of study. The student must receive at least two evaluations in each program for each academic year.

## Integrated Programs

There are a few integrated master's programs in which students will earn their baccalaureate and master's degrees concurrently. Students in an integrated program will:

1. Be admitted as a graduate student at least two semesters before graduation.
2. Complete a Notification of Integrated or Joint Program Status: [GS Form 5](#).
3. Pay at least two semesters (or one full-time semester and two full-time terms) of full-time graduate student tuition.
4. Earn no fewer than 150 semester hours for both degrees (120 for the bachelor's degree; 30 for the master's degree).
5. Receive both the bachelor's degree and the master's degree simultaneously (the same semester and year/term).
6. Once admitted, students will not be allowed to backdate their graduate admission to a prior semester/term.
7. Graduate Studies cannot consider a prior semester's undergraduate tuition as partial payment for graduate tuition.

## Interdisciplinary Graduate Study

Interdisciplinary study involves combining two or more academic disciplines through the sharing of theory, methodology, and applications. A student wishing to engage in interdisciplinary graduate study must therefore associate with multiple academic units. The following stipulations will govern the administration of interdisciplinary graduate study at BYU:

### Operational Issues

The request for interdisciplinary graduate study must be initiated by the student, who must seek out faculty members interested and willing to serve as advisors. Once such connections are made, the student must constitute a formal advisory committee and establish a program of study. Since such arrangements typically cross departmental and even college boundaries, the coordination and approval of all involved departments and colleges are essential. Establishing coordination requires the following definitions.

- Student's home department: The department in which the student resides.
- Advisor's home department: The department in which the advisor resides.
- Host department: The department that houses the degree program where interdisciplinary study is desired.

The following proposed principles govern the establishment of an interdisciplinary student advisory committee chair:

- A request for assigning a chair outside the student's home department must originate with the student.
- Each request for interdisciplinary graduate study must be submitted to Graduate Studies as a formal proposal. A Request for Interdisciplinary Graduate Study form, [ADV Form 1](#) must be jointly prepared by the students' home department, the advisory committee chair's home department, and the host department.
- There will be no standing approvals for faculty members to serve as graduate faculty members outside of their home departments.
- A faculty member serving as the advisor of a student not in the advisor's home department must meet the graduate faculty standards of the host department.
- Both the home and the host departments must agree that the faculty member has the expertise to guide the students' research.

- All approvals are mandatory. If anyone objects, the proposal cannot go forward. The procedures will apply to all academic units across the university.

Precedent is not acceptable as justification for trying to accomplish these ends in some way other than as described herein.

The student's program of study must be approved by both the student's home department and the host department. Progress will be jointly assessed by the students' home department and the advisory chair's home department. The home department will enter the evaluations in AIM. The student is not expected to meet all the requirements of all departments simultaneously. Instead, it must be recognized that the study is interdisciplinary. Achieving this approval will require the student to submit a persuasive justification for the changes from the host department's regular degree requirements. The student must convince the host department that he or she possesses additional breadth and depth from his/her home department that will compensate for the possible lack of breadth and depth relevant to the host department. The host department, in conjunction with the student's home department, may need to compose a special qualifying exam for the interdisciplinary student.

### Administrative Issues

Allowing students and faculty to function outside their own departments can have consequences that are difficult to predict, such as with the yearly evaluation processes. To ensure compatibility and accountability, approvals must be obtained for all concerned parties.

The faculty member's home department will have to consider the faculty member's workload, just as they would when assigning an additional task to a student in their own department.

The host department does not assume any of the valuation of a hosted faculty member for rank and status, salary, etc.

The host department does not assume any compensation for a hosted faculty member.

The departments involved must agree up front who will cover research costs, student funding, and which department will receive the student count for Graduate Studies/college funding allocations.

The two college deans may use the signature line for information only, or they may impose any criteria they wish.

### Termination of Graduate Status

A student's graduate status may be terminated for the following reasons:

#### Academic

- Failure to receive final, official conferred transcript(s) by the end of the first semester in residence.
- Failure to satisfactorily complete the conditions of acceptance.
- Failure to fulfill the university's minimum registration requirement.
- A request to withdraw (with the intent to pursue a degree at another university, for personal reasons, or in response to department recommendation).
- Two consecutive unacceptable evaluations.
- Failure to make what the department or the university deems to be satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree.
- Failure on the departmental comprehensive examination.
- Failure on the final oral examination (defense of dissertation or thesis).
- Failure to comply with the time limit (five years for master's, eight years for doctoral).

A student dismissed or facing dismissal for academic reasons may request a review, also known as a grievance, of the termination or an impending termination. Written/electronic communication should be provided to the student that indicates the reasons for termination or impending termination. For international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa who receive a termination or an impending termination communication, they should be further advised in the written communication that this could impact their immigration status and that they should reach out to their [international advisor](#) in the International Student & Scholar Services office. See the section titled Student Academic Grievance Policy for more information about graduate academic grievance policies and procedures.

### Non-academic

- Failure to live up to the university's behavioral or professionalism standards as set forth in the university's policies, procedures, and publications, including but not limited to those set forth in:
  - the [Church Education System Honor Code](#),
  - the [Sexual Harassment Policy](#),
  - the [Academic Honesty Policy](#),
  - the [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#),
  - the [Student Behavioral Intervention Policy](#), and
  - the [Sex Offender Policy](#).
- Failure to live up to the professionalism standards published by a particular college or department or imposed by a state licensure authority in connection with the degree being sought by the student.

### Withdrawal from Program

When a student withdraws from a program or the department wishes to terminate the student's program, the department should submit a Departmental Request to Expire (Terminate) Graduate Status, [ADV Form 7](#).

This notifies Graduate Studies to expire the student's graduate status.

The ADV Form 7 allows the program to indicate how the student's record should officially reflect the withdrawal. Selecting Academic Suspension places a suspension notice on the student's transcript, preventing the student from being readmitted to BYU. The other three withdrawal categories do not affect the student's transcript, and the student may be considered for readmission.

The ADV Form 7 need not be submitted in any of the following circumstances:

- No Show
  - The student fails to register for two graduate credit hours in the first semester of admission.
- Minimum Registration Requirement
  - The student registers for fewer than six graduate credit hours in an academic year.
- Time Limit for Program Completion
  - The student fails to complete the degree within the specified time limit.

### Full Withdrawal

If graduate students need to withdraw from all classes in a semester or term, they must initiate this process online at the Enrollment Services [website](#).

Students will need to meet the minimum six-credit-hour registration requirement for the academic year or the two-credit-hour registration requirement if they defend or graduate within that same academic

year. However, if they fully withdraw in a semester or term and still meet the above requirements, they should contact Graduate Studies to see if they are eligible to register.

### Granting Graduate Degrees Posthumously

In some cases, a graduate degree may be awarded posthumously at the request of the student's family and the department. The general principle underlying the awarding of posthumous degrees is that the student had completed most program requirements at the time of death. The following conditions should apply:

1. The graduate student completed all coursework requirements and received a "pass" or "pass with qualifications" in the defense of the culminating graduate product (e.g., thesis, project, or dissertation).
2. In a non-thesis program, the student completed all coursework and applied experiences (practicum, internships) except for a few requirements in the last semester of study.

Procedure: Requests for awarding a degree posthumously must come from the student's academic department to the college dean. The college dean makes a recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies, who makes a recommendation to the Academic Vice President.

## Chapter 6 Graduate Faculty

Graduate education requires a level of faculty mentoring that guides students to a sufficient understanding of their disciplines to generate new knowledge. In addition, mentoring must be sensitive to students' needs and illustrate the advancement of world knowledge through the blending of spiritual and intellectual endeavor. To ensure the kind of mentoring required for excellent graduate programs, colleges and departments nominate a graduate faculty member to receive graduate faculty status.

The strength of each graduate department resides in its faculty. The graduate faculty consists of individuals responsible for designing and implementing graduate programs. University policy for graduate faculty status specifies criteria including full-time status at the university with professorial rank, a terminal degree, a commitment to mentor graduate students, and sustained, substantial, and consequential research efforts or creative endeavors evidenced by regular publications or creative works in visible and influential peer-reviewed or juried forums. Colleges devise appointment criteria appropriate for the disciplines within their departments.

Graduate faculty members are authorized to sit on graduate committees and teach graduate courses. Graduate faculty members are supported at the college level on departmental recommendation and approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

All committee members share responsibility for conscientiously advising and directing the student regarding coursework, degree requirements, research (thesis and dissertation), and creative work. For example, all will participate in such events as prospectus meetings, comprehensive exams, and dissertation or thesis defenses, and will be responsible for evaluating the student's performance.

The individual contribution of committee members may vary in effort and intensity, but all members must be available for frequent scholarly interaction with the students they advise. Effective committee members comment on thesis drafts and other materials promptly so that students do not experience unnecessary delays in completing their programs.

### College Criteria

Each college has established minimum criteria/expectations for faculty to qualify for graduate faculty status. Colleges submit criteria for designating graduate faculty status and a description of the procedures followed to identify graduate faculty to the Graduate Council. Sustained, substantial, and consequential research effort or creative endeavor evidenced by regular publications or creative works in visible and influential peer-reviewed or juried forums may be part of their consideration. When a new faculty member is hired, the college associate dean considers all the criteria and makes a recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies, after which the requested member may be approved as graduate faculty. The Graduate Council and the Dean of Graduate Studies work with each college to determine that the criteria are in harmony with those specified above. Every three years, Graduate Studies works with colleges and departments to confirm graduate faculty to be included or removed from the graduate catalog.

### Minimum Requirements for Graduate Faculty Status

1. Have a doctoral or terminal degree in their respective discipline.
2. Hold the rank of at least a full-time assistant professor and be on the track for continuing faculty status.
3. Possess a comprehensive and continual record of productive research, publication, creative activity, and/or scholarly activity, appropriate to the respective discipline, as determined by the respective department, college, and Graduate Council. Teaching and mentoring experience are also highly desirable.
4. Have the support of and be recommended by the department chair and college associate dean.

5. Be endorsed and approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

### Term of Appointment

The term of appointment shall be at the discretion of the respective college dean.

### Administrative Appointments

Candidates currently serving in administrative appointments, or returning to the faculty from such appointments, are eligible for Graduate Faculty Status, conditioned on meeting the aforementioned requirements 1-3 before serving as an administrator and subsequently being nominated by their respective college dean and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

### Graduate Faculty Status

Graduate Faculty Status may be requested by the department graduate program manager or chair for faculty to serve as graduate student committee chairs or committee members. The *Faculty/Staff Forms/Graduate Faculty Status Request* application may be found [here](#) and should include the following:

- A brief justification must accompany the request.
- Additional required documentation includes the faculty member's CV updated to reflect the faculty member's current position and title at BYU and a brief bio of the candidate that includes their name, recent photo, department, degrees earned, institutions, and scholarly specialties.

Once the form is completed and submitted, it is routed to the next-level approver for consideration: the department chair, the graduate associate dean, the Assistant to the Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

If approved, the Assistant to the Dean of Graduate Studies will send a letter of approval to the faculty member, with copies to their department chair, the graduate associate dean, and the dean. Any other necessary communications will be sent by the Assistant to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Following approval, the faculty who have been granted graduate faculty status will be available for graduate students to select to serve on their graduate committees.

## Chapter 7 Credit Policies

### Graduate Credit

500-level courses: Advanced undergraduates who are willing and able to meet graduate-level standards may enroll in 500-level courses. Post-baccalaureate students may also register for 500-level courses.

600- and 700-level courses: Courses at the 600-level and above are reserved for graduate students. In rare circumstances, advanced undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students may register for a 600-level course with the instructor's permission and upon receipt of an add code.

Integrated students (working on undergraduate and graduate degrees at the same time) may enroll in graduate courses without special permission.

### Senior Credit

In some instances, students seeking a master's degree may apply credit taken during the undergraduate experience at BYU toward the degree, but in no case can this credit apply to both a baccalaureate and a graduate degree. Senior and post-baccalaureate credit combined cannot exceed 10 credit hours in a graduate program.

### Post-Baccalaureate Studies Credit

Credit taken after the awarding of a baccalaureate degree without admission to a graduate program is defined as post-baccalaureate studies credit. Students subsequently admitted to graduate programs **should not** expect all post-baccalaureate credit to apply to their graduate programs. Similarly, departments should not encourage students to enroll in post-baccalaureate courses to gain admission to graduate programs. In some instances, departments may apply post-baccalaureate credit toward a master's or doctoral degree; however, post-baccalaureate credit and senior credit combined cannot exceed 10 credit hours in a master's or doctoral program.

### Other BYU Credit

In some instances, a limited number of 400-level courses (a maximum of 10 credit hours) can count toward a master's degree. However, lower-division courses (100, 200, and 300 level), Independent Study (correspondence) courses, 300- and 400-level religion courses, and education courses numbered 514R cannot be applied toward a graduate degree. On rare occasions, and only with an approved petition, one 300-level course (not to exceed three credit hours) may count towards a graduate degree. No undergraduate courses may apply toward a doctoral degree (except those already applied to a master's degree). Additional credit hour information can be found [here](#).

### Transfer Credit

Credit taken at other accredited universities in the United States or in Canada may, with approval, be applied toward a graduate degree at BYU under the following conditions:

- Transfer credits must be graduate-level.
- The grade for any such course must be B or higher; pass/fail credit is non-transferable.
- Home study, correspondence, and extension courses are non-transferable.
- Courses taken at another university after the student has begun study at BYU must be pre-approved by graduate committee members and the graduate coordinator; the proposed credit must be submitted on the program of study (*ADV08*) in AIM.
- Only credit taken within the student's time limit may count towards the degree (8 years for doctoral and 5 years for master's degree).
- Credit cannot have already been applied to another degree.

The number of credits a student may transfer varies according to the number of credit hours required for the BYU graduate program. The maximum number of transfer credits must constitute no more than 25% of the total required for the program, not to exceed 15 credit hours in any program. For example, if senior and/or post-baccalaureate credits are used in conjunction with transfer credit, the total may not exceed 15 credit hours.

Required Program Hours	Transfer Credit Limit
30	7
36	9
40	10
50	12
60	15
61+	15

NOTE: Transfer credits taken at other universities may be considered for BYU doctoral programs as long as they exceed the university minimums (see doctoral degree) *and* they meet the rules for transfer credit.

### International Transfer Credit

Under certain circumstances, credit from accredited or certified international universities may be considered for transfer if all the conditions required for transferring credit are met and the program submits a written justification assuring the following, *before the classes are taken*:

- The international university is highly regarded as an institution of higher education and is accredited by the International Association of Universities.
- The content, rigor, and applicability of the courses are appropriate for the student's graduate program and will enrich the student's graduate experience.

### Combined Credit Limit

The number of combined transfer, senior, and post-baccalaureate credit hours may not constitute more than 25% of the total hours required for the program and may not exceed 15 credit hours in any program.

Required Program Hours	Combined Transfer /Senior/ PBS Credit Limit
30	10
36	10
40	10
50	12
60	15
61+	15

### Credits Certified by Challenge Examination

A student may also choose to transfer the credit by successfully completing a challenge examination in the course(s). In rare circumstances, with the approval of the program and Graduate Studies, up to 10 semester hours may be certified by challenge examination. For example:

- A student may wish to transfer normally disallowed graduate credit from a non-accredited institution or from an international university.

- A student may wish to challenge a course in the program of study that covers material already mastered.

A graduate student may challenge only credits specific to the graduate program to which he or she has been admitted. The committee chair determines the appropriate method for ascertaining currency. The Graduate Degree Course Challenge Examination ADV Form 3d can be found [here](#).

### Registration Limit

Because graduate study is more rigorous than undergraduate study, students should generally not be required to register for more than 12 credit hours in a semester or six credit hours in a term. In many programs, even that may be too much. Graduate students may not register for more than 22 credit hours in a semester or 11 credit hours in a term.

Departments should monitor course loads carefully. Furthermore, registration for thesis or dissertation credit, as well as work on the thesis or dissertation, should be concurrent and reasonable. It would be inappropriate, for example, for a student to register for all 18 dissertation credit hours in one semester or term. Students should consult with their committee chair in determining an appropriate and reasonable credit enrollment.

### Outdated/Expired Graduate Credit

Graduate courses are considered current for five years for master's students and eight years for doctoral students. Graduate students may work with their advisor and program to show currency for outdated credit. Departments may choose to have students retake the course, complete special readings in outdated material, examinations, etc., before the course can be included in a program of study. Coordination with Graduate Studies through the Petition for Exception form ([gs-petition.sim.byu.edu](http://gs-petition.sim.byu.edu)) is required to include outdated credit in a program of study.

## Chapter 8 Grades

BYU's [Undergraduate Academic Credit, Grades, and Records Policy](#) applies to undergraduate students. Graduate student grading policies are provided below.

### Grades

After the semester or term has ended and the faculty have submitted all grades, students may access their grades online. Grade point averages are calculated by assigning numeric values to the letter grades, except in the Law School and School of Medicine, whose policies are detailed after the general Graduate Studies policy. The grade in a course is the instructor's evaluation of the student's performance, achievement, and understanding of the subject covered in the class. Graduate course grades should accurately reflect student achievement and should not be inflated. It is recognized, however, that graduate courses are usually graded based on competency rather than on a competitive model. Only program of study grades are applied to the graduate student's GPA and towards graduation requirements.

### General Graduate Program Grade Values

The table below describes graduate grade values for all colleges except the Law School and the School of Medicine.

Grade	Grade Points	Earned	Graded
A	4.0	Yes	Yes
A-	3.7	Yes	Yes
B+	3.4	Yes	Yes
B	3.0	Yes	Yes
B-	2.7	Yes	Yes
C+	2.4	Yes	Yes
C	2.0	Yes	Yes
C-	1.7	Yes	Yes
D+	1.4	Yes	Yes
D	1.0	Yes	Yes
D-	0.7	Yes	Yes
E	0.0	No	Yes
W	N/A	No	No
Credit (CR)	N/A	Yes	No
No Credit (NC)	N/A	No	No
I	N/A	No	No
IE	0.0	No	Yes
T	N/A	No	No
NS	N/A	No	No

### Law School Grade Values

The Law School uses the grading scale below.

Description	Fall 1994 to Present
Superior	3.7–4.0
Excellent	3.4–3.6
High Pass	3.0–3.3
Pass	2.7–2.9
Low Pass	2.2–2.6
Failing	1.6–2.1

## School of Medicine Grade Values

The future BYU School of Medicine grade values are under development.

## Grade Implications

1. If a student drops a class by the add/drop deadline, the transcript will not show any registration for that class. If the student officially withdraws from a class after the add/drop deadline but before or on the withdrawal deadline, the record will be marked W (official withdrawal). A grade of W is not calculated into the GPA.
2. A grade of CR (credit) indicates a passing grade. It has no effect on the GPA.
3. A grade of NC (no credit) indicates no credit received. It has no effect on the GPA.
4. A grade of I (incomplete) is recorded as part of a contract between the instructor and a student who is unable to complete the work by the end of the semester or term. See Incomplete Grades below.
5. A grade of IE (incomplete failure) is recorded and calculated as a failing grade when a student is unable to complete the work within the contract period. See Incomplete Grades below.
6. A grade of T (temporary) indicates coursework in progress and is used only in certain approved courses in which work may extend beyond the semester. It is not calculated into the GPA. A grade of T may be changed to A, B, C, D, E, or CR (depending on the grade rule for the course) when the work is completed.
7. A grade of NS (not submitted) is placed on the student record when a grade roll has not been submitted to the Registrar's Office by the grade submission deadline. After the deadline, an official grade change must be submitted by the instructor, either online through the grade roll or with a Grade Change Authorization form. An NS is not calculated into the GPA.

## Incomplete Grades

An incomplete grade may be recorded for nonacademic extenuating circumstances (e.g., serious illness, personal injury, death in the immediate family) that arise *after* the withdraw deadline if a student enters into an approved Incomplete Contract. To be eligible for an Incomplete Contract, the student must be attending and passing the class through the withdraw deadline. If extenuating circumstances arise before the withdraw deadline, the student should withdraw or petition through the Registrar's Office to be officially withdrawn from the course(s).

An Incomplete Contract must be requested by the student and approved by the instructor no later than 30 days after the grade submission deadline. The contract deadline (the time the student has to complete the remaining course requirements) is determined by the instructor and may not exceed one year. An I grade is posted to the student's record after the contract is approved and remains until the instructor gives a final grade or the contract expires.

If the work is not completed and the instructor does not submit a new grade by the agreed-upon deadline, the I grade is changed to IE. The instructor and student may agree upon a new deadline at any time if still within one year beyond the semester.

Class attendance in a subsequent semester or reregistration is not permitted to fulfill the Incomplete Contract. In some special instances, such as a lab class, attendance may be required for the portion of the class or lab section missed.

## Grade Changes

After the final grade submission deadline, grades may be changed for the following reasons only:

- making an error in calculating the grade
- posting the wrong grade to the grade roll

- changing a grade of T after the coursework is completed
- posting a grade if no grade was submitted
- reevaluating the previous grade with no additional work submitted

When such corrections are needed, the instructor must submit an official grade change.

If a student completes any additional work beyond the end of the semester or term (original grade of T excluded), grade changes should not be made. For non-academic extenuating circumstances that arise after the withdraw deadline, the student should request an Incomplete Contract.

An instructor cannot change a previous grade to a W (official withdrawal). In case of a non-academic emergency, the student should file a petition for withdrawal with the Registrar's Office.

### Grade Change Authorizations

Graduate students typically take project, thesis, or dissertation credits (698R, 699R, or 799R) throughout their graduate program. Nevertheless, until the thesis or dissertation has been successfully defended, only a *T* (coursework in progress) grade is assigned for these credits. Some 698R courses may require a letter grade, while others receive a T grade. After the student successfully defends the thesis or dissertation and clears any qualifications, the committee chair enters Pass in the Defense milestone in Gradprog. The T grades should automatically change to CR for 699R (thesis) or 799R (dissertation) courses, and when applicable, to 698R. Please note that a grade change will be required for students who register for 699R or 799R *after* they have passed their defense (see Grade Change Authorizations). In rare cases, if a "T" grade does not automatically change to a "CR" grade after the student successfully passes their defense, the committee chair should submit a grade-change request to change the "T" grade to a "CR" grade at the end of the semester.

### Repeating Courses

Graduate students may take a BYU course up to three times if the course is still being taught or an equivalent course exists. Each official withdrawal from a class (a section of a course), regardless of when the withdrawal occurred, counts as one of the three times. For the desired grade to be reflected in the Program of Study GPA, the student must ask their graduate program manager to update Gradprog. All previous grades are retained on the transcript, denoted by RPT. For a previously completed course to be marked as repeated, the most recent attempt must have equal or greater credit hours.

Courses with an R-suffix are not subject to the limitations of this Repeating Courses subsection, and all attempts on the program of study are factored into the overall graduate GPA calculation.

Courses repeated at institutions other than where they were originally taken (and other than BYU) are not counted as repeats under this policy.

### Student Academic Transcripts

The Registrar's Office is responsible for issuing official transcripts of credit. The Registrar's Office provides a student's (or former student's) official transcript within 60 days of receiving a request from the student or the student's authorized representative (see BYU's [Access to Student Records Policy](#)). Official transcripts include only credits completed through BYU. Transcripts and reordered diplomas are issued regardless of existing holds or lack of a current ecclesiastical endorsement.

## Grade References

To see other grade topics, please refer to the following section headings:

- Grade-Point Average (GPA) Requirements
- Evaluations of Student Progress
- Leave of Absence
- Application to Resume Graduate Study
- Credits Certified by Challenge Examination
- Transfer Credit
- Free Religion Courses

## Chapter 9 Registration

### Eligibility and Requirements

**New Students:** Upon receipt of an official notification of acceptance from Graduate Studies, new graduate students are eligible to register. Because acceptance is granted for a specific semester, to maintain graduate status and registration eligibility, new students must register for a minimum of 2.0 graduate-level credit hours in the first semester or term for which they have been admitted or the acceptance is forfeited. Programs may not defer an applicant's acceptance to a subsequent semester or term unless approved by Graduate Studies. New students who do not register for their first semester or have an approved deferral and wish to enroll in a subsequent semester will need to reapply and pay the application fee. Acceptance to a graduate program in one semester or term does not guarantee acceptance in a subsequent semester or term.

**Current Students:** After the first semester, a graduate student is eligible to register for subsequent semesters if the following requirements are met:

- The student has fulfilled the minimum registration requirement (6.0 credit hours with acceptable grades per academic year) for the prior academic year, if applicable.
- The student has submitted a program of study as required: master's students are to submit by the third week of the second semester after admission, doctoral students by the third week of the beginning of the second year.
- Graduate Studies has received an official transcript showing that the required prerequisite degree has been conferred.
- The student's time limit has not expired unless an approved petition is in place.
- The student has not voluntarily withdrawn or been terminated by the program.
- The student is making satisfactory progress toward degree completion and has not had two unacceptable evaluations in succession.
- The student has submitted an annual continuing ecclesiastical endorsement and completed the Honor Code Commitment.
- The student has filled out the Financial Responsibility form.
- The student has not completed the current degree program.

Students who are admitted and begin graduate studies in the middle of an academic year must fulfill partial minimum registration requirements as listed below:

- Students who are admitted and begin graduate study in the winter semester are required to register for and receive acceptable grades for at least four graduate-level credit hours over the remaining course of the academic year (winter, spring, and summer).
- Students who are admitted and begin graduate study in the spring or summer term are required to register for and receive acceptable grades for at least two graduate-level credit hours for the term for which they are admitted to begin.

Thereafter, all students are required to register for and receive acceptable grades in at least 6 credit hours during the full academic year (fall, winter, spring, and summer).

Students who do not fulfill the minimum registration requirements are terminated from their graduate programs during the first week of July; they lose their graduate status and must apply to resume graduate study if they decide to complete their graduate degree (see Application to Resume Graduate Studies located on the [Graduate Studies website](#)).

**Graduating student registration requirement:** Students must be registered for a minimum of 2 credit hours of a graduate-level course when they defend and graduate, unless they graduate in Spring, in which case they must register for one credit hour. If the student is registered for the Spring term and plans to graduate in the Summer, the student only needs to enroll in 1 credit for the Summer. However, if they are not registered for the Spring term, they will need to enroll in 2 credits for the Summer term. Exceptions are made for integrated students, who may register for at least two credit hours of an undergraduate course rather than a graduate-level course if they prefer.

Semester/Term of Graduation	Required Registration Hours
Fall	2 hours
Winter	2 hours
Spring	1 hour
Summer	1-2 hours

Students who apply for graduation in August and are unable to defend until Fall will be changed to a December graduation and will need to meet the six-credit-hour requirement for the previous academic year, as well as the two-credit-hour requirement to defend and graduate in the Fall semester. If they have not fulfilled the six credit-hour requirement for the previous academic year, their graduate program will be terminated, and they must apply to resume graduate study as described above before they may defend and graduate.

### Minimum Registration Reporting

In January, Graduate Studies sends a report to each program listing students who have not met the yearly minimum registration requirement after Winter semester registration. Students on this list must register for the additional credits needed by the Summer term add deadline to avoid being terminated from their program during the first week of July.

Each year in June, a report is sent to all graduate programs notifying them of students who will be dropped for failure to meet the minimum registration requirement. Programs have ten days to notify Graduate Studies of any errors before students are notified by email of minimum registration problems. Once a student is dropped, he or she loses graduate student status and may not register for classes nor use BYU facilities unless they are reinstated into their graduate program through the "Application to Resume Graduate Studies" form [located on the Graduate Studies website](#).

Graduate students from the United States and international students who are permanent U.S. residents are required to register for at least two credit hours and receive acceptable grades during any semester or term in which they use any university facilities, consult with faculty, or take comprehensive oral or written examinations. The number of graduate credit hours for which they register must, in the judgment of the faculty advisor, accurately reflect the student's involvement in graduate study and use of university resources such as libraries, laboratories, and computer facilities. In no case will the registration be for fewer than two credit hours per semester, except for those graduating in Spring.

International students must register for at least nine credit hours in both the Fall and Winter semesters to meet U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) requirements. Questions should be directed to International Student and Scholar Services.

### General Registration Requirements

A student is responsible for complying with any registration requirements established by sponsoring agents for student loans, loan payment deferrals, assistantships, internships, scholarships, and awards. U.S. graduate students receiving assistantships, awards, or internships through BYU must register for

at least two credit hours per semester or for one credit hour per term. Departmental requirements may exceed these minimums.

Only degree-seeking students enrolled in day school are eligible for short-term BYU tuition loans. Since the amount borrowed is applied directly to tuition costs, no minimum enrollment is required.

Students should consult the Financial Aid Office for information on credit-hour requirements for obtaining and deferring federal student loans. Only degree-seeking students who are making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) will be eligible for federal financial assistance. The U.S. Department of Education requires students to maintain satisfactory progress toward completing their degree in order to receive financial aid. See <https://enrollment.byu.edu/financial-aid/satisfactory-academic-progress> for the complete SAP Policy. Evaluations must be recorded on *ADV12*; failure to enter evaluations may result in the student being turned down for federal financial aid.

#### Enrollment Status (Full-time, Half-time, etc.)

**Full-time U.S. citizens and permanent residents:** To be considered full-time for tuition purposes, students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents must register for at least **8.5 credit hours** in both fall and winter semesters or at least 4.5 credit hours in a term.

**Full-time international students:** International students are required to be registered as full-time students. To be considered full-time for tuition and immigration purposes, international students must register for at least **nine credit hours in both the fall and winter semesters**, or at least 4.5 credit hours in a term.

**Half-time U.S. citizens and permanent residents:** A student enrolled in 4.5-8.0 hours in a fall or winter semester or 2.5-4.0 credit hours a term is considered a half-time student.

Graduate students may request verification of their enrollment status from the [Verifications](#) link on the Records Office website.

#### Petition for Graduate Full-Time Status

Part-time graduate students who are enrolled for at least two hours of acceptable credit per semester or one hour per term (or clinical psychology students who are registered for at least 0.5 credit hours fall, winter and spring/summer semesters) can be certified by their department as being engaged full-time in pursuit of their degree and petition for graduate full-time status using [ADV Form 2a](#). Requests for such exceptions are submitted to Graduate Studies.

Programs determine whether a student is certified as engaged full-time in pursuit of a degree. In making this judgment, programs must be rigorous and consistent in the criteria they use, since these criteria determine a student's eligibility to initiate loans and defer payments on existing student loans. Students must have an approved committee and program of study. Students are not granted full-time status certification in advance for future semesters. **Full-time** pursuit of a degree means the student is devoting 40 or more hours per week to fulfilling graduate degree requirements during the semester in question. A student's full-time load may include any combination of courses, assistantships, research, or special studies. Valid reasons for a student registering for fewer than 8.5 credit hours per semester or 4.5 credit hours per term and petitioning for full-time status include the following:

- The student has completed all the required coursework for the degree and is working full-time on the dissertation, thesis, project, or internship and is enrolled for at least two hours of acceptable credit per semester or one credit hour per term. Acceptable credit would be dissertation hours (799R), thesis hours (699R), project hours (698R), research hours (697R and 797R), or internship hours (multiple designations) OR

- The department limits the student's enrollment to less than full-time because of a required TA/RA assignment. The combination of TA/RA assignment and registration must be equivalent to a full-time load, e.g., half-time assistantship plus six credit hours of registration per semester (acceptable credit could be anything listed on the student's program of study). There are only a few programs wherein an agreement has been made for students in these circumstances.

Students who are employed full-time, are newly admitted (unless the department limits enrollment), or are international students on F-1 or J-1 visas and do not have the approval of ISSS, are not eligible to submit a petition for full-time status.

### Eligibility for Campus Services

Graduate students who are registered for at least two credit hours per semester or one credit hour per term receive a university ID card and are eligible for all on-campus privileges afforded students who are registered full time (i.e., on-campus employment, student housing, student insurance, intramurals, use of physical education facilities, graduate parking privileges, discount admission to sporting and cultural events, counseling services, free religion courses, and UTA bus pass). Students enrolled in the executive management programs, EMBA and EMPA, are not eligible for all privileges; however, physical education facilities are available to these students for a fee.

### Free Religion Courses

Graduate students enrolled in a degree-seeking graduate program and registered for at least 2 credit hours in a semester or 1 credit hour in a term are eligible (on a space available basis and with instructor approval) to attend religion courses without incurring additional tuition costs. TAs and all faculty have the ability to add students as a guest in Learning Suite for a course which will grant all the access they need but will not require that a grade be submitted. However, if a student registers for a course or audits a course, they are required to pay for the course. If they do not want to pay for the course, they must fill out the "No Cost, No Credit Religion Course Request" form found on the [Graduate Studies website](#). This form includes the professor's signature verifying the student may attend the class.

### Student Health Plan

Graduate students with at least nine credit hours per semester or 4.5 credit hours per term are automatically enrolled in the Student Health Plan. Graduate students with at least two hours of credit are eligible for the Student Health Plan but are not automatically enrolled. Rates for all graduate students are not included in tuition and fees and require additional funds. Information describing the Student Health Center and the Student Health Plan is available from the Health Center (1750 North Wymount Terrace Drive) and online at [health.byu.edu](http://health.byu.edu).

### Graduate Parking

The university has reserved parking spaces for graduate students (G spaces). G parking access allows students to park in designated G and Y stalls when space is available. While these spaces are reserved for graduate students, a parking permit is still required, which can be paid for on the [BYU vehicles and registration page](#). Students register their vehicle through the parking registration page or on myBYU. A vehicle identification number (VIN) and license plate number are required to register. Paid Parking dates are as follows:

- Fall Semester: July 1 – end of the semester
- Winter Semester: December 1 – end of the semester
- Spring and Summer: No charge for parking in Y or G lots, but vehicles must be registered

## Chapter 10 Financial Assistance

### Graduate Student Funding

Programs are encouraged to provide adequate financial support for graduate students. Sources of funds for graduate students include college and department funds, funds allocated by Graduate Studies, endowments, gifts, and external grants and contracts.

Four types of funding are offered through individual programs: assistantships, internships, private scholarships, and supplementary awards. Most graduate awards given by BYU are in the form of teaching and research assistantships because teaching and research are vital components of graduate programs. Supplementary awards can be given in cash, as tuition, or as a travel award. Audit credit, special examination credit, or independent study courses may not be paid for by a supplementary tuition award.

New students may inquire about departmental graduate funding during the regular admission process by contacting their program. Continuing students may also obtain information and applications from their program. To be eligible for an assistantship or supplementary award, one must be a degree-seeking graduate student in good standing who is registered for at least two credit hours in the semester (or one credit hour in the term) for which the award is granted.

In addition, Graduate Studies lists on its website some funding opportunities available to graduate students. Awards and eligibility vary. Departments should publish information about financial aid opportunities for students in their programs.

### Professional Presentation Awards

Graduate students presenting original research at conferences or performing or displaying creative work are eligible to receive a Professional Presentation Award (PPA) of \$1000. PPAs are intended to enable graduate students to travel to key conferences or events in their discipline to present their scholarly and creative work. PPAs are awarded twice each year and distributed within two months of the application deadline. The application deadline falls in the middle of an award period, allowing students who have already presented their research/creative work or are planning to do so within the specified time period to apply. Approximately one-third of the applicants receive an award.

Students may apply for one of two types of PPAs: research or creative work. This distinction between these award types was made to improve the review process for graduate students who intend to travel to conferences and events to perform or display their creative work or develop their talents at a workshop in their discipline. The application is linked [here](#), and deadlines are listed below.

Term	Applicant Deadlines	Conference Date
Fall	Oct 31 at 11:59 pm MST	Jul - Dec
Winter	Mar 1 at 11:59 pm MST	Jan - June

### Student Loans

Two types of student loans are available to graduate students who qualify: BYU loans (short-term, Law School, and Marriott School) and Federal Stafford Loans. Only degree-seeking students who are making satisfactory academic progress will be considered for loan approval. International students are not eligible for Federal Stafford Loans.

### On-Campus Employment

Student campus jobs other than assistantships and internships are listed at Student Employment Services. Graduate students wishing to seek on-campus employment must be registered for a

minimum of two credit hours during the semester they would like to work. Full-time graduate students are not permitted to work more than 20 hours at on-campus employment outside of their academic departments or 28 hours within their departments. International students must be registered for at least 9 credit hours or have full-time status in order to work on campus. Special employment restrictions may apply to international students. For more information regarding on-campus employment, contact Student Employment Services <https://hrs.byu.edu/student-employment>.

### International Student Employment

International students are eligible to seek part-time employment after receiving approval from ISSS (<https://iss.byu.edu/>). Students with F-1 visas are not permitted to work off campus. F-2 visa holders are not permitted to be employed or to attend the university. For more information, contact ISSS.

## Chapter 11 Graduation

Before applying for graduation, a graduate student should have completed all coursework in his or her approved program of study or be currently registered for the remaining courses. During the final semester and/or the semester of final oral and written examinations, a graduate student must register for at least two credit hours, unless they are graduating in the Spring term; Spring term graduates must register for one credit hour. In special cases, students may pay an equivalent registration fee through Graduate Studies if they have completed all coursework listed on their program of study. Audit and independent study credits are not acceptable. Students who miss the graduation deadlines for any given semester must register for at least two credit hours (one credit hour for the Spring term), preferably project, thesis, dissertation, or internship credit, or pay the equivalent minimum registration fee, and will graduate the following semester.

The graduate committee chair (or advisor) should work closely with students as they prepare to complete the final requirements for their degree and apply for graduation. Missed deadlines and misunderstandings about final requirements can lead to serious delays in graduation plans. The graduate committee chair should periodically review the student's progress report to assess progress and identify any needed support.

All graduate students must have a valid ecclesiastical endorsement and Honor Code Commitment agreement to apply for graduation. Graduate students should apply for graduation by the deadlines listed in the Graduation Deadlines for Graduate Students found on the [Graduate Studies website](#).

Applications received after the deadlines will be processed for the next graduation. All students must apply for graduation online in AIM (GRADAPP). After the departments have **accepted** the graduation application in AIM (gradq), Graduate Studies will email students to remind them to review their progress report. Students should report any discrepancies to their departments. Students who do not meet graduation deadlines will be withdrawn from graduation and must reapply.

### Comprehensive Examinations

Departmental comprehensive and oral examinations are expected to be demanding and fair. They should require currency in the field, thorough analysis of the questions or problems posed, and synthesis of knowledge in the discipline, all at a level appropriate for the degree to be awarded. They should also require skill in expression.

Departments should provide published and well-publicized criteria for what constitutes acceptable performance on oral and comprehensive examinations. The purpose, format, range of content, and nature of examinations should be described. Departments are expected to apply consistent, rigorous standards when evaluating examinations. Departments are required to establish a mechanism for providing feedback and a clear policy on retaking failed comprehensive examinations.

### Master's Students

Departments may require students to take an oral exam or a master's coursework exam. The examination is normally given when the student has completed the required coursework for the degree. If a student has a declared minor, the examination is expected to include subject matter from that minor field. Some master's degree programs require comprehensive exams in lieu of a thesis.

### Doctoral Students

Doctoral students must pass a written comprehensive examination or qualifying experience in their field under the direction of the major department. Departments determine whether a written/oral comprehensive exam or qualifying experience assesses doctoral student competency and preparation for degree completion. In the case of a declared minor, it is expected that the examination or qualifying experience will also include subject matter from the minor field.

## Culminating Experience

Every department is expected to require a culminating experience for its graduate students, regardless of whether the student is in a traditional or applied program. The culminating experience is usually a research-based dissertation or thesis, but it may be submitted or published articles, a project, or a report in a master's program.

## Final Oral Examination (Defense)

The final oral examination (defense of the dissertation or thesis) must be scheduled by the department in Gradprog at least one day in advance of the defense meeting. Their graduate committee chair should remind students of this deadline as their work nears completion. All members of the BYU academic community are invited to attend the final oral examination and ask questions, but only members of the student's graduate committee may examine the candidate and vote on his or her performance. Examination questions are to be carefully framed to require a grasp of discipline essentials and the ability to analyze and synthesize the researched material.

The oral examination or defense of the thesis, dissertation, performance, or other culminating product is an important part of graduate education. Accordingly, the Principles and Characteristics of Graduate Education note that exams should be "demanding and fair". They require currency in the field, thorough analysis of the questions or problems posed, and synthesis of knowledge in the discipline, all at a level appropriate for the degree to be awarded" (p.8). In order for students to pass the final defense/exam (with or without qualifications), they must demonstrate a sound understanding of their work and its implications. Programs are encouraged to help students prepare for the defense of the culminating experience by communicating expectations for student performance. Such expectations might include the following:

1. A well thought-out, well-organized, cogent summary of the student's work including:
  - a. An explanation of how the current work relates to the student's discipline.
  - b. The rationale behind the project in the context of available literature.
  - c. If the student has been part of a research team or lab, an explanation of the student's intellectual contribution to the project and a description of how the student's work fits into the broader research conducted in the lab.
  - d. The questions or issues the current work is designed to address.
  - e. The way the design, method, and/or approach addresses those questions.
  - f. The analysis of data gathered.
  - g. The results, outcomes, final products, or performance.
2. An interpretation of results, findings, contributions, insights, and conclusions and their significance. What does this work add to existing knowledge?
3. A discussion of implications the work suggests for future research or creative endeavor.
4. A discussion of any applied or clinical implications suggested by the work.
5. Thoughtful, well-founded responses to all questions the committee members might ask.
6. Student defenses are held in person with the student, chair, and committee members in attendance. In-person defenses are the expectation and the standard; exceptions to this standard should be exceptional.

In extenuating circumstances (not just inconvenience, but to avoid real hardship), the committee chair may request that the graduate program manager initiate a petition for an exception to this standard, using the existing petition platform and approval flow (<https://gs-petition.sim.byu.edu/>).

If it is deemed necessary to hold the student defense as a hybrid in-person/remote event and approval is granted via the aforementioned petition process, the following best practices should be followed:

- Virtual venues should be chosen carefully to minimize distractions and provide a professional environment for the defense
- The Committee Chair should be a host/co-host of the meeting, using a BYU Zoom account
- Remote participants should have their camera on
- In-person participants should be in a room with suitable A/V capabilities so remote participants can be seen and heard, and remote participants can see and hear in-person participants
- A/V technology should be thoroughly tested in advance to ensure sufficient bandwidth and proper function of presentation technologies
- Participants should have the microphone muted except when speaking
- The Committee Chair should control the chat feature to keep distractions to a minimum
- If the degree candidate participates virtually, the student should be placed in the Zoom waiting room during committee deliberations
- Family and friends may be invited to the student presentation over Zoom as directed by the Committee Chair

The graduate committee may vote to “pass”, “pass with qualifications”, “recess”, or “fail” the student’s defense. If the decision is to “pass” the defense, no further work is required.

If the decision is to “pass with qualifications”, the committee may require minor revisions of the dissertation or thesis or may request that the candidate strengthen his or her preparation in subject matter areas, or both. When these qualifications are cleared, and the committee chair has properly recorded the clearance in Gradprog by selecting “pass” in the Defense milestone, the student is judged to have passed the examination.

If two or more examiners vote to recess, the examination is recessed. The committee will provide a detailed summary to the student, the department, and Graduate Studies of the expectations for improvement in the subject matter and/or changes required in the dissertation or thesis before the examination is reconvened. A memo with the committee’s expectations must be sent to Graduate Studies. With the Graduate Committee’s approval, the candidate may schedule a second and final examination. The new examination cannot be held sooner than a month after the recessed examination.

If two or more examiners vote to “fail” the defense, the examination is failed, and the student’s graduate degree program is terminated. Because examination results of recess or fail may lead to termination of graduate status, the department is required to submit a memo to Graduate Studies, including the reasons for the decision.

### Thesis and Dissertation Students

Students should take their department’s research methodology course before they begin the culminating writing experience. The student’s graduate committee should carefully direct the culminating writing experience, including the research design, the prospectus preparation, the research itself, and the preparation of the written document. The topic should be one of consequence that makes substantial contributions to some aspect of the discipline, and one that the graduate committee chair is well prepared to direct. The prospectus is a critical aspect of the student’s project that precedes intensive research; careful graduate committee review of the prospectus should eliminate any major problems. By their excellence and uniqueness, these research and writing experiences impressively demonstrate the achievements, knowledge, and skills of the students at the time the graduate degree is completed. The final product should be well-written and lead directly to a publishable piece of work. Faculty mentors should encourage students to publish their work and should assist in that effort. The Dean of Graduate Studies, as part of the university review of academic programs, selects dissertations, theses, and creative works for external review.

### Minimum Standards for Submitting Dissertations and Theses

BYU Graduate Studies does not dictate style standards for the chapters of a thesis or dissertation (e.g., line spacing and fonts).

### Thesis and Dissertation Formatting Policy

BYU Graduate Studies requires that a title page, abstract, and table of contents be included in each thesis and dissertation. The format of the title page must comply with University style standards as communicated at gradstudies.byu.edu.

Formatting of the abstract and table of contents is at the discretion of the college's style standards. If needed, default formatting guidelines for each of these pages, the thesis body, and sample documents are available at gradstudies.byu.edu.

### BYU Graduate Studies ETD Requirements

#### Formatting

To ensure that each thesis and dissertation is legible and accessible in printed and digital format, BYU Graduate Studies requires:

- US Letter size pages (BYU Print and Mail suggests margins of at least  $\frac{3}{4}$ " to ensure quality of printed and bound documents)
- All fonts embedded in the PDF
- Bookmarks for each chapter and heading that is present in the Table of Contents section in the PDF

### Article-Based Chapters

BYU Graduate Studies supports article-based formatting for chapters in theses and dissertations when it is consistent with disciplinary norms and College style standards. If applicable, accepted or published articles on which the student is a primary author may be inserted as chapters in the thesis or dissertation. Submitted articles are subject to college formatting requirements. **Article-based chapters using accepted or published articles must include a complete citation and the following statement: "I hereby confirm that the use of this article is compliant with all publishing agreements."** BYU Graduate Studies will examine dissertations and theses regularly to ensure reasonable levels of quality and consistency.

### College Requirements

In addition to the requirements stated above, each thesis and dissertation must meet standards for content and formatting consistent with national/international disciplinary norms, as determined by the graduate program and the college. The program and college are responsible for establishing and enforcing adherence to their standards.

Questions should be sent to the Advisement Intern or Assistant Dean of Advisement.

#### Advisement Intern

- gsadvisemetnintern@byu.edu
- Phone 801-422-1677

#### Taylor Adams, Assistant Dean of Advisement

- taylor\_adams@byu.edu
- Phone 801-422-4541

### ETD Release Options

Student authors select a release option at the appropriate stage on the Gradprog page in the "Thesis Defense" milestone. The level of access should be carefully considered, taking into account patent,

publication, and other proprietary issues. Students should ask the BYU Technology Transfer Office for advice and discuss this with their chair if intellectual property is involved. If intending to work with a publisher regarding journal or book publications, the student should understand any policies and agreements he or she signs.

BYU allows the following four levels of access:

Immediate Release. This allows worldwide access to the entire work through the internet and is recommended by the University. This option makes the information freely available.

Delayed Release. This delays the release of the entire work for up to one year due to publication or other proprietary reasons. After a one-year delay, the work is released for worldwide access in the digital library.

Secure Access. This secures/embargoes the entire work for patent OR export control reasons. The University Technology Transfer Office will determine, with guidance from the student and advisor, whether the embargo is for patent or export control restriction purposes. At the end of the secure period, the work will be released for cataloging in the digital library. This secure option requires approval from Graduate Studies and must be reviewed annually via email with the University Technology Transfer office and the student's chair.

Creative Work Embargo. This option is only available for English Creative Writing MFA students, and the student's work is held indefinitely.

#### Grade Change Authorizations

Graduate students typically take dissertation, thesis, or project credits (799R, 699R, or 698R) throughout their graduate program. Nevertheless, until the dissertation or thesis has been successfully defended, only a "T" (coursework in progress) grade is assigned for these credits. Some 698R courses may require a letter grade, while others receive a "T" grade. After the student successfully defends the dissertation or thesis and clears any qualifications, the committee chair selects "Pass" in the Gradprog Defense milestone. The "T" grades should automatically change to CR for 799R (dissertation) or 699R (thesis) courses.

## Chapter 12 Academic Standards

### Curriculum and Coursework

Graduate programs should be able to articulate the following:

1. What defines a “Program of Consequence” in your field?
2. How do you measure “Consequence” based on your definition?
3. What data outcomes support this measure?
4. How is the program essential to BYU’s mission; how does it impact undergraduate experience?

Graduate curricula should be well-designed and up-to-date, resulting in strong student preparation. Departments should offer enough courses to support a full graduate program and not list courses that are “on the books” but rarely taught. The curriculum should be appropriate to the faculty's preparation and specialties and reflect leadership in the discipline. The classroom experience should be qualitatively different from courses in the undergraduate program. Departments should not double-list courses by undergraduate and graduate numbers (such as 400 and 600) and should avoid all practices that dilute the classroom experience for graduate students. A master’s program of study should consist largely of 600-level courses, while doctoral programs should consist largely of 600 and 700-level courses. No classes below the 500-level are allowed for doctoral students.

#### Guiding Principles:

- Graduate courses and programs should differ qualitatively from undergraduate programs and courses.
- An excellent undergraduate experience should not require enrollment in graduate-level courses, except in the case of an integrated bachelor's/master's program.
- Exceptional undergraduates who are willing and able to meet graduate-level standards may enroll in any 500-level courses that are not restricted to only graduate students.
- For all 500-level courses, the expectation for all students is the same.
- Advanced graduate-level courses should be numbered at the 600 and 700 levels.

#### Approved uses for 500-level courses:

- As introductory, foundation, or elective graduate courses.
- As courses that require 400-level prerequisites.
- As advanced undergraduate elective courses that must exceed upper-division (300-499) level.
- As foundational or introductory post-baccalaureate courses leading to professional certification or licensure.
- As courses essential to integrated bachelor's/master's programs.

#### Inappropriate Uses of 500-level courses:

- Cross-listing similar undergraduate and graduate courses.
- Mixing graduate and undergraduate students because of inadequate department resources.
- Permitting a small class environment for *undergraduate-level* mentoring.
- Providing advanced graduate-level courses.

Programs are expected to enrich their graduate curriculum with presentations by visiting lecturers, colloquia, and other opportunities for learning outside the regular curriculum, even within the disciplines of other departments.

Every graduate course should have a course outline and syllabus that clearly state the instructor’s expectations and provide a comprehensive, clear course description. Courses are to require extensive writing assignments of substance and consequence that train students to think critically.

Student papers should adhere to high standards of composition and be carefully critiqued and assessed by both the instructor and peers, as appropriate. All courses, even those considered applied, should have a strong theoretical foundation grounded in current scholarship. They should require investigation beyond classroom experiences and textbooks. Where possible, they should include demanding essay examinations. Graduate course grades should accurately reflect student achievement and should not be inflated. It is recognized, however, that graduate courses are usually graded on the basis of competency rather than on a competitive model.

Credits earned through directed readings, independent or off-campus projects, or employment-related projects should be kept to a minimum; such courses must be approved by the department and should be as rigorous and demanding as regular courses. For credit to be applied, the instructor and student formulate an agreement of requirements and expectations and file that “contract” with the department office. The student will receive credit only when the agreement has been fulfilled.

### Graduate Program Policies

Minimum standards for graduate degrees have been established by the university; individual program requirements often exceed these standards.

Program Type	Minimum hours	Other hour requirements
	<b>Masters</b>	
Thesis	30	6 Thesis hours
Project	30	0-6 Project hours
Non-Thesis	30	
Minor	9	
	<b>Doctorate</b>	
Without a master’s degree	54	18 Dissertation hours
With a master’s degree	36	18 Dissertation hours
Minor	12	

## Chapter 13 Curriculum

### Course Catalog Numbers

The teaching area (five-character limit abbreviation) and a 3-digit number (which may have a letter suffix) are used to designate each course.

#### Course Number and Type of Course

1 to 99 Preparatory and remedial (non-credit)

100 to 299 Lower-division

300 to 499 Upper-division

500 to 599 Graduate courses that will allow advanced undergraduates (90 hours completed and/or departmental approval)

600 to 799 Graduate course reserved numbers

599R, 688R — Internships

589 — In-service course with school districts

698R and 798R — Field project in lieu of thesis and dissertation

699R — Master's thesis research and writing

799R — Doctoral dissertation research and writing

### Course Descriptions

Course descriptions should be clearly written in language understandable to prospective students. The following are guidelines for writing a course description:

- Be concise.
- Use active voice.
- Delete articles wherever possible. Restrict adverbs and adjectives. Use parallel structure.
- Don't repeat information contained in the course title.
- Avoid unnecessary introductory phrases (e.g., A course in . . . ; A study of . . . ; etc.).
- Avoid jargon. Remember that those outside this field of study need to know what this course is — not just those trained in the field.
- Observe the standard word limit of 35.

Descriptions submitted for a course will be edited to ensure there is consistency in voice and structure throughout the catalog.

### Program Requests/Changes

Departments may submit graduate program or course curriculum changes (core requirements, program hours, etc.) in Coursedog for their college curriculum representative to review at any time, but they should consider the timing of the change in relation to the admissions cycle. Such changes may include additions, deletions, or alterations to any course offerings or program requirements. The college curriculum representative, in turn, submits the proposal through Coursedog to the Graduate Curriculum Council (GCC) for review and approval.

The GCC, composed of associate deans from all colleges on campus, is responsible for approving all changes to graduate curricula.

Proposals may be submitted at any time during the academic year, but will be reviewed by the GCC each October through February. Approved proposals will be effective the following Fall semester unless they require approval beyond the GCC.

Proposals requiring further approvals after the GCC and Dean of Graduate Studies are then directed to the Associate Academic Vice President, who will present them to the Academic Vice President, the President's Council, and, in some cases, the Church Commissioner of Education, the Board of Trustees, and the Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities (NWCCU).

### New Program Proposals

Graduate Studies welcomes new program proposals. Key questions to consider when proposing a new graduate program:

- Will this proposal support the current program-level learning outcomes?
- What are the positive and/or negative impacts of this proposal (i.e., time-to-graduation)?
- What are the potential resource implications?
- Will this proposal affect other departments?

Departments should prepare documentation regarding the new proposed program that responds to all of the questions/statements in the instructions found here ([New Graduate Program Proposal Guide](#)). All documentation should be submitted through Coursedog for the proper levels of review and approval by the GCC before it is submitted to the AVPs and the Presidents Council, and on to the Board of Trustees.

### Joint Program Proposals

Multiple departments seeking to offer a joint graduate degree program should consult with their respective program counterpart(s) to ensure that the guiding requirements of the program, department, and relevant accreditation organizations are satisfied. The departments should also determine whether there will be restrictions on the number of applicants admitted as joint graduate-degree-seeking students. Once these determinations have been established, the respective departments must submit their proposed joint graduate degree proposal to Graduate Studies through Coursedog for initial evaluation. Proposed joint graduate degrees will be subject to evaluation and approval by the BYU Board of Trustees. Joint graduate degrees may not be advertised until official approval is received.

### Department/Program Requirements

Departments requesting a joint graduate degree program must provide the following information in their request:

1. A statement articulating the benefit to students to participate in the proposed joint graduate degree program.
2. A list of the required credit hours for both programs.
3. The number of shared credit hours (with a maximum of 20% of the total combined coursework hours) for the completion of both degrees.
4. A list of courses that will be accepted as shared credit by both programs.
5. The maximum number of students that may be matriculated as joint graduate degree program participants.
6. An explanation of all changes in resource requirements that will result from the proposed joint graduate degree program (including money, faculty time, physical space, etc.).
7. A clear plan for how the degrees will be awarded upon completion.

This information should be submitted with the Joint Program Request [OGS Form 6](#), including the above information, to Graduate Studies for evaluation through Coursedog.

Once approved, both programs may advertise the joint graduate degree program. Departments should inform students who wish to complete a joint graduate degree program that they must complete [GS Form 5](#) prior to beginning their 2nd graduate degree program. Students in joint graduate degree programs must be evaluated twice each year in both programs. Programs must share the student evaluations with each other and ensure that the student is on track to graduate and is making satisfactory progress in all aspects of the joint graduate degree program.

### Student Requirements

Students applying for a joint graduate degree program are subject to the following requirements:

1. Students can apply and participate only in formally approved joint programs.
2. When both degree programs require a culminating graduate experience, the student must complete a separate experience for each degree.
3. Standard restrictions on time spent in the program will apply. Admitted students are not required to complete both degrees at the same time, although the departments may require it as part of the joint graduate degree program agreement.
4. International students should carefully examine federal immigration requirements and obtain any special permissions that may be needed to participate in joint programs.

### Course Change Procedures

#### Curriculum Review

The curriculum (courses and programs) is actively reviewed, discussed, and approved by the GCC from September through mid-February. Proposals are generally approved for the following academic year. The mid-February deadline is necessary to meet publication timelines, make database changes, and allow programs and Graduate Studies time to implement approved changes.

#### Course Creation

1. New course requests are submitted through Coursedog for review and approval.
2. The course proposal should indicate the resource impact of the course. The department and college will need to negotiate any necessary resource adjustments.
3. To add a new course to a degree program, submit a program request. The request should make clear any changes in total program hours.
4. As the justification for creating a new course, explain why the course should be offered.  
Questions to consider:
  - a. How will the course add value to the degree for the student?
  - b. How will the course help students adapt to changing standards in the field of study?
  - c. How will it better prepare students for the job market?
5. New course requests should include specific learning outcomes that are linked to program learning outcomes.

#### Course Changes

1. Course changes are submitted through Coursedog for review and approval.
2. If changes to the course title, description, and/or credit hours are extensive, the course should be submitted as a new course and not a change to an existing course.
3. If the course is used by other departments as a prerequisite course or as part of their degree programs, contact the departments so they are aware of the change and can give approval as necessary.

4. If the course is cross-listed with another course, and the same curriculum index number is used for both courses, both departments must agree on the changes being made.

Curriculum changes that affect undergraduate program requirements or dependencies, typically course prerequisites, will need to be reviewed and approved by the University Curriculum Council (UCC) in addition to the GCC.

Matriculated graduate students are allowed to follow the degree requirements in effect when admitted, but are given the option of changing to new degree requirements if desired.

#### Course Expiration

1. Course expiration proposals are submitted through Coursedog for review and approval.
2. If the course is used by another department as a prerequisite or part of their degree program, consult with the department to ensure that student needs are met through another course or avenue.
3. If the expired course was part of a degree program in the department, submit a program request to the GCC to account for the course's removal.

## Chapter 14 Academic Program Temporary Discontinuance

Circumstances may arise where the best course of action is to stop admitting new students to a graduate program for a period of time. For example, there may need to be (1) restructuring, (2) improvements, or (3) new faculty hired before the program can continue providing a compelling academic experience for graduate students.

### Temporary Discontinuance

When a department determines it is necessary to stop admitting graduate students to a graduate program for up to 12 months, a Temporary Discontinue is requested by submitting [OGS Form 5](#), Temporary Discontinuance of Graduate Program, to the Assistant Dean of Admissions for approval. A Temporary Discontinuance can be granted for up to one year.

If a department determines that more than one year is needed to make changes to a graduate program, they should submit a new OGS Form 5, Temporary Discontinuance of Graduate Program request, for approval.

Note: If a Temporary Discontinuance of Graduate Program request is denied, departments must admit students to their program or take steps to expire the program.

### Academic Program Expiration

If a department desires to expire a program, a Program Request is submitted through Coursedog for approval. The request will be reviewed by the GCC and the Dean of Graduate Studies and will require final approval from the AVP Council, the President Council, and the Board of Trustees. Notification will also be sent to NWCCU.

## Chapter 15 Graduate Academic Grievance Policy

Despite the well-meaning efforts of students and faculty, there may be occasions when a graduate student feels that his or her work has been unfairly or inadequately evaluated. Usually, such differences can be amicably resolved between the student and the faculty member, or through the student's department or college. The following procedures are designed to encourage the satisfactory resolution of academic grievances with minimal formal procedures.

Academic evaluations subject to this policy include grading, restrictions limiting participation in university academic programs, dismissal from the university or a university program for academic reasons, actions arising from incidents of academic dishonesty, the withholding and/or revocation of a diploma for academic reasons, and the withholding of special notations on transcripts for academic reasons.

Evaluations relating to admissions to the university, ecclesiastical endorsements, discipline administered by the Honor Code office, or petitions are not covered by this policy. Honor Code violations are handled through the Honor Code Office and are not subject to the same procedures as academic grievances. For more information regarding Honor Code policies and procedures, contact the Honor Code Office. Persons who believe they have been unlawfully discriminated against or sexually harassed should contact the Equal Opportunity Office.

### Graduate Academic Grievance Process

A grievance related to restrictions limiting participation in university academic programs must be initiated within 30 days of the decision in question. All other grievances must be initiated by the graduate student no later than 120 days from the last day of the examination period of the semester in which the alleged unfair or inadequate evaluation occurred.

International students who intend to file a grievance are encouraged to consult with their advisor in the ISSS office as soon as possible. The advisor will be able to discuss visa implications and timing considerations.

The graduate student should initially address the grievance to the involved faculty member for review and resolution. If, for any reason, the faculty member is unavailable or the student believes the matter will not be fairly dealt with or may result in retribution, the student may direct the grievance to the department chair within 30 days. If there is no department chair, the grievance shall be directed to the graduate coordinator or other person designated by the dean of the college to consider such matters (hereinafter referred to as the department chair). The faculty member or department chair shall have the right to consult others regarding the matter as reasonable, with due regard for the graduate student's right to privacy under the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*.

If a department or college has a process for such grievances, the student will follow the department or college's procedures. If the department or college does not have a specific grievance process in place, then the department chair will review the student's grievance. Decisions of the department chair, including matters originating with the department chair, shall be given in writing to both the student and the faculty member within 30 days of the student's written request for review. If no further request for review is taken, as described in the following paragraph, the decision of the department chair will be implemented.

If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction by the department chair, the student may submit a written request for review to the dean of the college or school as appropriate to the academic unit, outlining the grievance, explaining its disposition, and setting forth facts supporting the student's request. The request for review must be made within 30 days of the date of the written disposition by the department chair. The college dean will conduct a review and will communicate his/her decision in

writing to the student and to the department chair within 30 days of receipt of the graduate student's request for review.

If the matter involves terminating a graduate student from a program and is not resolved to the graduate student's satisfaction by the college dean, the student may submit a written request for review addressed to the Dean of Graduate Studies and sent to the dean's assistant. The request for review must be made within 30 days of the date of the written disposition by the college dean.

The written request for review should contain an outline of the grievance, the processes that have been followed in an effort to resolve the grievance, and its disposition, as well as setting forth the specific basis for the request to overturn the college dean's termination decision.

To overturn a college dean's decision to terminate a student from a graduate program, the Dean of Graduate Studies must find either that 1) the college dean's consideration of the grievance did not comply with the college's standards and procedures for review of academic grievances, or, 2) that the student was deprived of a fair review process; and, the Dean of Graduate Studies must find that the college dean's failure to comply with the college's standards or unfair review process had a material impact on the decision or in other words that the student was wrongfully removed from the program.

If terminating a graduate student from his or her graduate program is involved, the Dean of Graduate Studies will convene a formal administrative review of matters that have not been resolved at the department and college level. Following the proceeding, which takes place under "Administrative Proceeding Format" as described below, the review panel will deliberate in a closed session and make a formal recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies. The final decision reviewing termination is made by the Dean of Graduate Studies and cannot be appealed.

A member of the Graduate Council chairs the administrative review and may ask questions, but is not a voting member of the three-person review panel for a master's student or a four-person review panel for a doctoral student. Review panel members will consist of two graduate faculty members and one graduate student from a department outside the department of the graduate student requesting the review. Review panel members will be appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Please note that Integrated students will follow the [Undergraduate Student Academic Grievance Policy](#) until recognized as a graduate student in AIM. Once the Integrated student is recognized in AIM, they will follow the Graduate Academic Grievance Policy.

### Administrative Proceeding Format

The format for an administrative proceeding is as follows:

1. Panel chair's introduction, summary of issues, and process overview.
2. The grievant graduate student's presentation of issues (15 minutes maximum).
3. College representative's presentation of issues (15 minutes maximum).
4. Optional presentation by witnesses (limited to three per side and a maximum of 15 minutes per side).
5. The grievant's rebuttal (limited to 10 minutes).
6. Questions by panel members.
7. Opportunity for the college representative and the grievant to make a final statement with the grievant following the college representatives (limited to 5 minutes each).
8. Dismissal of presenters and witnesses.
9. Deliberation by panel members on the questions of whether the college dean's termination of a student from a graduate program complied with the college's standards and procedures for review of academic grievances or whether the student was deprived of a fair review process.

10. Written recommendations by the review panel to the Dean of Graduate Studies within 30 calendar days, unless extended by the panel by written notification to the Dean of Graduate Studies, the grievant, and the college.
11. Written decision by the Dean of Graduate Studies within 30 days of receipt of the written recommendation of the panel, unless extended by the Dean of Graduate Studies with written notice of the extension to all parties.

### Preparation for the Administrative Proceeding

All materials, including a list of witnesses with a short summary of the content of their presentations and a short statement (not to exceed two pages) of the issues and facts to be considered by the review panel, must be submitted to Graduate Studies at least two weeks (14 days) in advance of the administrative review. Materials will then be distributed to the grievant(s), to the representative of the college against which the grievance has been filed, and to the members of the review panel. Thereafter, if any of the parties wish to have additional materials or witnesses considered by members of the review panel, such materials or witness names must be received by Graduate Studies no later than one week in advance of the administrative review, at which time all materials will be distributed to the parties as well as to the members of the review panel.

Graduate Studies will pay for reasonable reproduction costs, but the cost of reproducing packets in excess of 50 pages will be charged to the submitting party (graduate student or college). No audio/visual equipment will be allowed at the administrative review unless a written request for equipment is received by Graduate Studies at least one week before the scheduled date of the administrative review. The requesting party is responsible for providing the requested audio/visual equipment.

The chair of the review panel may, at his or her discretion, convene separate planning meetings with the college representative and the grievant to discuss the material and witnesses submitted, in order to expedite the review by eliminating redundant and irrelevant information and by defining the precise issues that will be considered by the panel.

Presentation of the issues should be concise and relevant. The chair of the review panel shall be responsible for conducting the administrative review and making decisions regarding applicable procedures. The points of dispute may be summarized or illustrated by anecdote. Experience suggests that the best approach is to carefully tailor the formal presentation to the pertinent issues and to allow the panel members time for questions.

### Attendance at the Administrative Proceeding

The review panel described in this document operates as part of an academic administrative review, not a judicial proceeding. Attorneys are not allowed to attend at any point in the review process. The grievant, however, may bring one or two additional persons to the administrative review for support and counsel, but the grievant will be solely responsible for his or her presentation. The graduate student must also notify Graduate Studies, in writing, at least two weeks before the scheduled date of the administrative review of the names of one or two additional persons requested to be present. The presence of these additional person(s) does not change the proceeding, as they will not be able to examine witnesses, ask questions, advocate, or otherwise take part.

### Honor Code Violations

Honor Code violations are handled through the Honor Code Office and are not subject to the same procedures as academic grievances. For more information regarding Honor Code policies and procedures, contact the Honor Code Office.

## Chapter 16 Records Management and Retention

Graduate Studies maintains student records pertinent to graduate study at BYU, including applications and official transcripts received from other universities. All U.S. student application files are imaged, as are the credential evaluations for international students who are admitted. The images of students who are admitted but fail to complete their degrees are destroyed after 10 years. Records of students who are admitted and complete their degrees are maintained in an imaging system for permanent storage. Access to student records is governed by the University [Access to Student Records Policy](#).

Some of the information in this document was obtained from the pamphlet entitled *Principles and Characteristics of Graduate Education*. For information on national policies and standards for graduate study, you may contact the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), One Dupont Circle, N.W., Suite 230, Washington, DC 20036-1173, or telephone at (202) 331-7157, or visit the CGS website at <http://www.cgsnet.org/>. CGS publishes numerous handbooks and policy statements relating to various aspects of graduate study.

## Chapter 17 Glossary

### Terms Related to Graduate Studies at BYU

**Access** – authorization to view or update fields in AIM or Slate.

**Administrative Proceeding** – the final hearing of a student's academic grievance.

**Admit** – 1) to accept an applicant into a particular program; 2) an individual admitted to a graduate program; 3) the designation in AIM given to an applicant who has been accepted to a program.

**AIM** – (Academic Information Management) BYU's student information system.

**Applicant** – one who is applying for admission to a BYU graduate program.

**Assistantship** – an academic position given to a graduate student by a department that usually carries a stipend and involves part-time teaching or research.

**BYUGSS** – Brigham Young University Graduate Student Society. University-wide organization that includes all BYU graduate students.

**Challenge Examination** – an examination to evaluate if a graduate student may receive graded credit for a course without enrolling in and taking the class.

**Commencement** – university graduation ceremony held in April

**Comprehensive Examination** – examination to assess the competency of a student within his/her program.

**Convocations** – college or school graduation ceremonies held in April.

**Copyright** – legal ownership right afforded to original creative works, including dissertations, theses, and projects.

**Courses** – classes or seminars in which a student may enroll.

**Credit** – official recognition that a student successfully completed a course.

**Credit Certified by Challenge Examination** – graded credit given to a student for successful completion of a challenge examination.

**Credit Limit** – a limit determined by departments on the number of credits for which a student is allowed to register in an academic semester or term. The university's maximum for graduate students is 22 per semester and 11 per term.

**Defense** – (Final Oral Examination), a culminating examination experience that usually includes a presentation and justification of a dissertation or thesis.

**Degree** – an academic title conferred on a student after completing all graduate program requirements.

**Deny** – decision to recommend that a student not be admitted to a graduate program.

**Department Chair** – faculty member in each department responsible for department administration.

**DET** – (Duolingo English Test) a standardized English proficiency exam that evaluates listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills. The DET is an internet-based test that adapts in real-time based on the test taker's responses.

**Dismissal** – termination of graduate status.

**Dissertation** – a formal scholarly treatise written by a doctoral candidate.

**Doctoral Skill Requirement** – requirement of doctoral students related to a particular skill, such as developing proficiency in a foreign language, computer programming, mathematics, or statistics.

**Ecclesiastical Endorsement** – two levels of endorsement are required for graduate applicants. The endorsement interview for LDS applicants is to be completed by the applicant's bishop and stake president. Non-LDS applicants can either bring a paper copy of the endorsement to their ecclesiastical leader and complete their second-level endorsement with the University Chaplain, or they may interview with an LDS bishop and the University Chaplain.

Continuing graduate students need one level of endorsement from their bishop each year, as well as when applying for graduation.

**Eligibility** – (Registration Eligibility) access to register in AIM for a specific semester or term.

**Emphasis** – focus or track within a degree program. Emphasis does not appear on the transcript.

**Enrolled** – student currently registered for classes.

**Enrollment Status** – a designation (full-time or part-time) given to a student based on the number of credit hours for which he/she is registered; full-time status is 8.5 credits per semester (9.0 credits for international students) and 4.5 credits per term.

**ETD** – (Electronic Thesis or Dissertation) accepted ETDs are available in the digital library

**ETS** – (Educational Testing Service) organization responsible for administering entrance examinations, including the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

**Expire** – the action taken to make a student's graduate program inactive.

**Fellowship** – money granted for advanced study or research.

**FERPA** – (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) under this act, students who have not waived their right of access possess the right to see comments written about them in their application only after they have been admitted and are enrolled. FERPA does not apply to unsuccessful applicants and admitted applicants who do not enroll.

**Final Oral Examination** – culminating examination experience, which includes a defense of a

dissertation or thesis.

**Financial Aid** – financial assistance with education. Financial aid at BYU includes department fellowships, scholarships, and assistantships, short-term loans, and Federal Stafford Loans.

**GMAT** – (Graduate Management Admission Test) examination taken by prospective graduate applicants for particular graduate programs, including business management, accounting, and public administration.

**G-Parking** - privilege given by the BYU Traffic Office to graduate students.

**GPA Requirement** – graduate students are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA in their program of study courses. If a graduate student's (program of study GPA falls below 3.0, the student will not be allowed to graduate and may be dismissed from the graduate program. No D credit may apply toward a graduate degree.

**Gradprog** – also known as Grad Progress - is an online, secure system for students, faculty, and program administrators to request and grant approvals for committees, programs of study, thesis defenses, and ETD submissions.

**Graduate Advisor** – the term refers to a temporary graduate advisor assigned to a student before the student has chosen a graduate committee chair. The Graduate Advisor may become the Graduate Committee Chair.

**Graduate Catalog** – online listing of graduate programs, available courses, and graduate faculty.

**Graduate Committee** – chosen graduate faculty members who have agreed to direct and advise a graduate student through his or her degree requirements, including coursework and research, including a dissertation, thesis, or project.

**Graduate Committee Chair** – head of the graduate committee that directs and advises a student through all aspects of his/her graduate program.

**Graduate Coordinator** – a designated graduate faculty member responsible for the department's graduate program administration.

**Graduate Council** – council, chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies, responsible for establishing policy and maintaining standards of quality in graduate education.

**Graduate Curriculum Council** – council, co-chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Assistant Dean of Curriculum, responsible for approving new graduate curriculum or curriculum changes.

**Graduate Faculty Status** – designation given to faculty members who have met established university and college criteria. Graduate faculty members design and implement graduate programs and direct graduate students' scholarly and creative work.

**Graduate Handbook** – online or written document detailing department policies and guidelines related to graduate study.

**Graduate Minor** – a degree component earned by completing graduate-level courses outside of the student's major department.

**Graduate Program Manager** – non-faculty BYU employee working with the graduate coordinator to handle procedural issues related to student graduate programs.

**Graduate Student Society (GSS)** – (BYUGSS) university-wide organization that includes all BYU graduate students.

**Graduate Studies** – unit that takes care of the central procedures concerning university admissions to graduate programs and includes advising on policy and procedure, clearing students for graduation, facilitating graduate student evaluations, and monitoring graduate student progress.

**Graduation Deferral** – a change in the year or term of graduation.

**GRE** – (Graduate Record Examination) examination taken by prospective graduate applicants, consisting of three sections: verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, and analytical writing.

**GRE Subject Test** – an examination taken by prospective graduate applicants on a particular subject. Subject tests exist in the following areas: Mathematics; Physics; and Psychology.

**Grievance** – (Student Academic Grievance) an academic complaint issued by a student and governed by the Graduate Student Academic Grievance policy.

**Honor Code** – code of conduct which emphasizes being honest, living a chaste and virtuous life, abstaining from alcohol and tobacco, using clean language, and following other values encompassed in the doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The code is supplemented by additional guidelines on dress, grooming, and housing. All BYU students agree to live by the honor code.

**I-20** – Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status, issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security after all admission requirements are cleared. Obtaining an I-20 does not guarantee the granting of an F-1 visa.

**IELTS** – (International English Language Testing System) administered to prospective applicants whose native language is not English and who have not earned a baccalaureate degree from an English-speaking country.

**Imaged** – final designation given to a document that has been digitized by Imaging.

**Imaging** – 1) system used to view imaged documents; 2) the BYU organization responsible for digitizing documents, including non-BYU transcripts, application components, and other forms.

**In-Process** – designation given to an application while it is under consideration.

**Interdisciplinary Study** - combining multiple disciplines by sharing theory, methodology, and applications. At BYU, this requires approvals at the department and college levels, as well as by Graduate Studies.

**Internship** – paid or unpaid applied experience designed to augment academic training. Internships

may or may not be taken for credit. Internships may be completed on or off campus.

**International Applicant** – an applicant who requires an international student visa (F-1 or J-1) to attend BYU.

**J-1 Visa** – visa for non-immigrants to come to the U.S. for teaching, studying, researching, consulting, demonstrating special skills, or receiving training.

**Late** – designation given to an application when it is received after the university application deadline. Departments may designate applications as late if they are received after the department application deadline or if the application is not complete by the department deadline.

**Letter of Recommendation** – a letter of endorsement written on behalf of a graduate applicant or admitted student.

**LSAT** – (Law School Admission Test) examination taken by prospective law school applicants.

**Major** – approved graduate-degree-granting program.

**Matriculated Student** – a student who is active in a graduate degree program and eligible to register for classes.

**Missionary Deferral** – deferring the admission start time of an admitted but not enrolled graduate student who is currently serving a mission.

**Non-Degree Seeking Students** – see Post-Baccalaureate Studies.

**Non-Degree Credit** – see Post-Baccalaureate Studies Credit.

**Oral Defense** – (Final Oral Examination), the culminating examination experience, which usually includes a defense of a dissertation or thesis.

**Outdated Credit** – credit taken outside the time limit for a degree (eight years for doctoral degrees and five years for master's degrees). Outdated credit cannot be applied to a graduate degree except under special circumstances through a petition for exception.

**Pearson Vue** – organization responsible for administering the GMAT test.

**Petition for Exception** – petition completed by the graduate committee chair/department on a student's behalf, requesting an exception to a Graduate Studies policy or procedure.

**Petition for Full-Time Graduate Status** – petition for a part-time student who meets specific criteria to be granted full-time status.

**Post-Baccalaureate Studies Student** – a student not currently admitted to a graduate program who is taking courses for credit after earning a baccalaureate degree.

**Post-Baccalaureate Studies Credit** – credit received by an individual who is not in a graduate degree program after earning a bachelor's degree.

**Prerequisite Course(s)** – required class or classes that must be passed before a student may register for a specific course.

**Prerequisite Degree** – earned degree required in order for an applicant to be admitted to a graduate program. A baccalaureate degree or equivalent is the prerequisite degree for all graduate programs at BYU. Departments may require a master's degree for doctoral degree programs.

**Program** – approved graduate-degree-granting major.

**Program Code** – unique six-digit number used to designate a field of study (program/major).

**Program of Study** – a list of courses a graduate student must complete and pass in order to fulfill the coursework component of the graduate program.

**Progress Report** – an account of a student's academic progress in their program available in AIM.

**Project** – final culminating practical learning experience required by some departments.

**Prospectus** – written plan to complete the dissertation, thesis or project. A student's prospectus must be approved by the graduate committee on Gradprog before the dissertation, thesis or project work formally begins.

**Registration Eligibility** – designated access to register for a specific semester or term.

**Professional Presentation Award (PPA)** – financial reimbursement award from Graduate Studies for qualified graduate students who travel to present scholarly work (administered through BYUGSS).

**Reader** – level of access granted to faculty members to review and rate applications in Slate

**Scholarship** – financial aid provided by a department to a student, typically based on academic merit.

**Secure** – designation given to a dissertation or thesis that is not immediately released to the public for patent, proprietary, or export control purposes.

**Senior Credit** – credit earned prior to receiving the bachelor's degree. In some cases, up to 10 hours of senior credit may be applied to a graduate program, but in no instances may credit apply to both an undergraduate and a graduate degree.

**Short Term Loan** – a loan given by BYU for tuition only, which must be repaid during the same semester/ term it is borrowed.

**Skill Course** – a course specified by a department to fulfill part of a doctoral skill requirement.

**Slate** – the admissions platform used for managing and communicating with prospects, applicants, admitted, and enrolled applicants

**Specialization** – a specialty area within a major or program. A student's specialization appears on the official transcript.

**Specialization Code** – a unique six-digit number used to designate a specialization.

**Stafford Loan** – a loan facilitated by the U.S. government to cover educational expenses. There are two types of loans: 1) subsidized, where the loan is given on the basis of need and the government pays the interest while a student is in school; 2) unsubsidized, a loan where the student pays all the interest, but payments may be deferred until after graduation.

**Statement of Intent** – a personal statement written as part of the application process.

**Student Evaluation** – evaluation of a graduate student's progress in his/her graduate program. Must be completed twice a year.

**Student Visa** – (F-1 or J-1 Visa) international student visa issued by U.S. consulates or embassies.

**Supporting Financial Documents** – official (original, certified, attested, or notarized) documents verifying the monetary amounts listed as support for an international admit and I-20.

**Terminate** – expire a program for a graduate student who voluntarily discontinues graduate work or if a department desires to end a student's graduate program.

**Thesis** – a formal scholarly treatise required in many departments for the completion of the master's degree.

**Time Limit** – maximum amount of time allotted for the completion of degree requirements.

**TOEFL** – (Test of English as a Foreign Language) administered to prospective applicants whose native language is not English and who have not earned a baccalaureate degree from an English-speaking country.

**Transfer Credit** – Credit taken at other accredited universities in the United States or Canada applied to a BYU degree.

**U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)** – U.S. government agency responsible for issuing visas.

**Visa** – official authorization appended to a passport permitting entry into and travel within a particular country.

**Withdraw** – 1) admission designation entered in AIM when an applicant withdraws an application or indicates that he or she is unable to accept an offer of admission; 2) the designation of the hold placed on graduate students whose graduate status has been terminated.

**Year/Term Code** – five-digit code that indicates the year and semester (or term). The first four digits refer to the year and the last digit represents the semester or term. Semesters and terms have the following codes: 1 = Winter, 3= Spring, 4= Summer, 5 = Fall.