

UNC

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Graduate School

Graduate Student Handbook: Policies and Campus Resources

Welcome

Whether you are starting graduate school for the first time, completing your current program, or starting a subsequent graduate degree program, the decision to enter and continue graduate education is huge. Some students say that pursuing their graduate degree was a life-changing decision.

UNC has a long history of offering graduate degrees. Our first cohort of 3 Masters students entered the university in 1911 and all graduated in 1913. Since that small beginning over a century ago, graduate education at UNC has experienced tremendous growth. The university now has almost 3,000 students enrolled in over 100 certificate, masters, specialist, and doctoral programs. While degree programs on the main campus in Greeley remain strong, over 60% of graduate students are enrolled in programs that meet online, at extended campus sites, on the Greeley campus for summer or winter intensives, or some combination of all of these.

It is important that all UNC graduate students know that the staff of the Graduate School and the resources of the university are available to them. The purpose of this handbook is to provide students with a guide to the most commonly referenced policies governing their degrees. The handbook also includes descriptions of UNC student resources, links to offices that provide students with support, and contact information for Graduate School staff.

All of the policies and processes included in this handbook are discussed in the Graduate Catalog. It doesn't replace the catalog or specific degree program handbooks but attempts to distill for students and their advisors the policies they are most likely to encounter during a student's degree program. The Graduate School staff are always here to help.

Go Bears!

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Information about Graduate Faculty

The highly qualified graduate faculty at UNC are active in ongoing research and development of creative works. According to the Graduate Faculty Guidelines adopted by UNC's Board of Trustees, the Graduate Faculty are the only faculty authorized to advise graduate students, teach graduate level courses, serve as program adviser to graduate students (Masters, Specialist, Doctoral), serve on written and/or oral comprehensive committees and research committees, and serve as graduate coordinator. They are expected to maintain continuous and cumulative scholarly or creative productivity appropriate to their discipline.

Graduate Faculty serve their respective disciplines through involvement in scholarly or professional societies and promote the advancement of graduate education at UNC. Those who hold Graduate Faculty status are full-time employees of UNC. They normally possess the accepted terminal degree for their discipline (in most cases this is some type of doctoral degree) or have a graduate degree and an acceptable level of academic and professional experience that qualifies them to teach at the graduate level. These faculty members must demonstrate their ability to contribute to the education and advising of graduate students. Since scholarship and creative works are fundamental activities of graduate-level education, Graduate Faculty members are expected to generate and disseminate new knowledge that their peers judge to be valuable. In other words, graduate students at UNC work with student-centered faculty who are actively involved in their discipline and qualified to mentor potential scholars through their research and graduate courses.

Applying to Graduate School

UNC is a great place to pursue a graduate degree. Of course, the first step is deciding what degree program matches your interests, goals and qualifications. The second step may involve reaching out to faculty in the programs that interest you. The enrollment coach can help you through each step of application process, set up campus visits, and answer questions you may have about the admissions process and financial aid. This section includes information about:

- Application to Graduate School
- Admission Requirements
- Admission
- Admission Denial
- Admission Appeals
- Reapplication
- Change of Admission Term

Application

Admission to the Graduate School at UNC requires an online application <http://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/admissions/domestic-admissions.aspx> by the program application deadline and payment of the application fee. Graduate Enrollment staff evaluate and determine all applicants' eligibility for regular admission. Evaluated applicant files are designated as 'meeting', 'not meeting' or 'partially meeting' Graduate School standards and forwarded to the program faculty for further review/consideration. Program faculty review applicant files and recommended an admission decision directly to Graduate Admissions.

Admission Requirements. Admission deadlines and application requirements vary by program. Prior to beginning your UNC Graduate School Application, visit the [Degrees and Programs webpage](#) of your intended area of study for complete details.

Minimum requirements for all programs:

- A bachelor's degree or master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university or a comparable degree from a foreign institution.
- Minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale on the most recent degree earned or current degree in progress. If a master's degree is in progress, a minimum of 18 credit hours must be completed for the GPA of the master's degree to be used, otherwise the GPA from the bachelor's degree will be used. Applicants admitted based on the requirement to complete a degree in progress must still provide an official transcript within the first semester of enrollment at UNC showing their degree conferred and a GPA of at least 3.0. If the transcript showing degree conferred reports a cumulative GPA less than 3.0, requirements defined by the

program will be added to the student's admission, just as they are for any admit with a GPA below 3.0.

- One official transcript from any accredited college or university where a bachelor's degree or higher was earned or is in progress (if you have earned multiple degrees, bachelor's level or higher, an official transcript is required from each college or university where a degree was conferred). If you received a degree from UNC, you do not need to request a transcript from UNC. The Graduate School reserves the right to request that applicants provide official transcripts from other colleges or universities as needed. Applicants who have earned or are directly pursuing a higher degree from an accredited institution without receiving a bachelor's degree (i.e., PharmD) may be eligible to apply to the Graduate School without the conferral of a bachelor's degree. If an applicant intends to use Veteran's Education Benefits, an official transcript from all colleges or universities attended will be required in order to maintain compliance with Veteran's Affairs policies.

Requirements and supplemental application materials might also require:

- Resume
- Letter(s) of recommendation
- Writing samples
- Auditions
- Samples of your work
- Personal statements
- Official standardized test scores (GRE, GMAT, MCAT, etc.). UNC's Educational Testing Service code is R4074.

Admission. After initial review by Graduate Admissions, applications are sent to the selected program for faculty review. Program faculty then make a recommendation to the Graduate School to admit or deny admission to an applicant. The applicant will be notified via email to check for an admission decision in the online application system. Those who are officially admitted will receive instructions on the next steps to enrolling in their graduate program. The Graduate School reserves the right to make a final decision on admission of any applicant.

Provisions. If the Graduate School, upon compelling recommendation of the program faculty, officially admits an applicant who does not meet the academic standards of the Graduate School, the admitted student will be required to complete a set of measurable provisions within the timeframe stipulated by the program and reviewed and approved by the Graduate School to remain enrolled in the program. The successful completion of provisions is monitored by the program faculty, who report attainment/non-attainment of the provisions to the Graduate School.

Unless the specified provision(s) is/are met during the timeframe stipulated by the program, students are not permitted to:

- register for an additional semester;
- receive financial aid;
- take the comprehensive examination or its equivalent

Failure to complete the requirements within the specified time frame will result in closure of the student's program by the Graduate School.

Conditions. Applicants with conditions are admitted as students but must submit missing required documents specified by the Graduate School (i.e. transcripts showing degree conferred) during the first semester of enrollment. No student will be permitted to:

- register for an additional semester;
- receive financial aid;
- take the comprehensive examination or its equivalent

Failure to meet the condition(s) within the specified timeframe will result in the closure of the student's program by the Graduate School.

Admission Denial. Denied admission refers to applicants who do not meet the Graduate School, program admission requirements, or both.

No Admission Appeal. There is no appeal process for admission denials. Admission application fees are non-refundable, even for applicants who are not admitted.

Applicants who are denied admission cannot appeal to either the Graduate School or the program faculty for reconsideration of their application.

Reapplication. Student denied admission must file a new application and may reapply one additional time to the same program or a new program in subsequent terms and pay the application fee.

Change of admission term. Applicants are admitted for a specific term. Upon approval of the program, applicants are allowed to change their start term ONE time only by submitting the [Change of Term Request](#) form within the year following the first day of the applicant's proposed semester of enrollment. Subsequent requests to change admission term will require submission of an updated application and payment of the application fee.

Getting Ready: Before Classes Begin

Students often feel a mixture of excitement and anxiety when starting a new graduate degree. Even before classes start, there could be a long list of questions to answer, such as:

- ✚ How much will the degree cost?
- ✚ How will I pay for graduate school?
- ✚ Will I be able to work while attending school?
- ✚ Where will I live if I relocate?
- ✚ What services will be available to me?
- ✚ How do I register for classes?
- ✚ Where do I find books for my courses?
- ✚ What if I need accommodations for a disability?

Even questions as simple as “Where will I park?” and “Can I eat in the dining halls?” spark some anxiety when people are already making a transition to graduate school.

Although what follows in this section is not an exhaustive list, it provides links to information that may help ease the transition as students get started on their graduate degree.

- [New Graduate Student Orientation \(NGSO\)](#)
- [Tuition](#)
- [Tuition Classification](#)
- [Financial Aid](#)
- [Graduate Scholarships](#)
- [Assistantships](#)
- [Student Employment](#)
- [Western Regional Graduate Program](#)

New Graduate Student Orientation

The Graduate School and the Graduate Admissions staff members are working with other campus partners to offer virtual New Graduate Student Orientation for on-campus and Extended Campus students at the start of each semester. Registration information will be sent to new students through their admissions portal or email communication. Engaging with [NGSO](#) gives students the opportunity to meet the staff of the Graduate School and Extended Campus, connect with other graduate students, and learn about the university services available to them.

Additional information is available online in the [GO! Guide](#).

Paying for Graduate School

Tuition. It is important to ensure you have adequate financial resources to support your graduate education. [Check tuition and fee](#) information for resident, nonresident, and international students before registering for courses.

Extended Campus programs charge a flat per-credit tuition rate for all students (in-state or out-of-state) with student fees incorporated into the flat rate. Certain courses may require [additional course fees](#) for services or materials.

Tuition Classification. Students who are classified as in-state are permitted to enroll at the University at a significantly lower tuition rate because the University is assisted by the taxpayers of Colorado in addition to the student tuition and fees. The determination of a student's tuition status is provided for under State Law Title 23, Article 7, Colorado Revised Statutes 1997 Repl. Vol., 1994 Supplement.

A student's tuition classification (in-state, out-of-state, or international) is determined before or at the time of admission. If, at a later date, the student thinks the classification is no longer correct, the student must petition for a change in tuition classification.

For information on petitioning to change tuition classification, please see: [Residency Classification](#).

Those who receive tuition waivers as part of a Graduate Assistantship or Teaching Assistant should pay particular attention to their tuition classification. The assistantship terms and conditions require eligible students to apply to change residency before the second year of their assistantship. Departments or Schools have the option to budget one academic year of non-resident tuition for a non-resident domestic student. It must be the student's first assistantship contract. Beyond that first contract year, domestic students can receive only resident tuition waiver. Students will be responsible for the difference in cost between resident and non-resident tuition rates.

Financial Aid and Scholarships

Office of Financial Aid. Funding for graduate education is a perpetual concern for students. One of the first tasks to complete after submitting your application for a graduate degree is to check out what financial aid may be available to you. See the [Office of Financial Aid's website](#) for helpful information and instructions to apply for federal and institutional financial aid.

Graduate Scholarships. UNC offers a variety of scholarships, and our scholarship application process is fast and easy. Any student wanting to apply for scholarships offered through UNC must complete and submit a UNC Scholarship Application, available online via [URSA](#) (see below for information on URSA).

A [full list of scholarships](#) available to graduate students can be found on the [Office of Financial Aid website](#).

For further information see the [Graduate Scholarship eligibility webpage](#).

Assistantships. Teaching Assistantships, Graduate Assistantships, and Graduate Research Assistantships are available through the individual academic programs and administrative departments after the student has been admitted. Awards are comprised of a monthly stipend and/or a tuition scholarship, based proportionally in exchange for a work assignment. These tax qualifying awards are disseminated according to individual program budgets. For more information students should contact their program.

Students who are awarded assistantships should read their [Assistantship Agreement](#) thoroughly, paying special attention to the contracted hours per week, stipend, residency classification, and the “Important Terms and Conditions”. They should also consult the Handbook for Graduate Assistants and Graduate Teaching Assistants.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships and Graduate Part-time Instructors must attend a **mandatory** Teaching Conference held each year just before the beginning of the fall semester. Graduate Assistants also have an annual training conference. Anyone working directly with students or student data must complete workshops on Title IX, equity compliance, campus resources for assisting students, and FERPA.

Administrative offices and other units in the university post advertisements for graduate assistants with instructions on how to apply on [Handshake](#) and on the [Graduate Student Employment webpage](#).

Additionally, many offices hire students as hourly employees. The Student Employment Office keeps an online listing of on- and off-campus employment opportunities in [Handshake](#) and on the [Work-Study and Student Employment webpage](#).

Western Regional Graduate Program/WICHE. Residents of the 15 participating states are eligible to enroll in available programs outside of their home state at Colorado resident tuition rates. Students must meet [eligibility requirements](#) for WRGP/WICHE and be enrolled in designated programs to receive the resident tuition rate.

Considering Room and Board Options

- Housing
- Dining options

Housing and Residential Education. Northern Colorado is a beautiful region where residents enjoy a good quality of life. Students in main campus programs will find that they have access to Rocky Mountain National Park, numerous recreational

activities, restaurants, craft breweries, music venues, and a thriving arts scene. There are options for on-campus apartments that graduate students may find attractive and more reasonably priced than off-campus alternatives. Contact the [Office of Housing](#) and Residential Education for information.

[Dining Services](#). UNC offers many different options for dining on campus, including retail food chains, and [meal plans](#) for students living on or off campus. The dining rooms cater for special dietary needs and offer menus with healthy options.

Any UNC student can purchase Dining Dollars in increments of \$25. Dining Dollars can be used to purchase food and beverage at campus retail dining locations using the UNC Card.

Accessing University Services

So, it is almost time for classes to start. There are UNC tools and services that students should access even before classes start:

- UNC card
- URSA account activation
- UNC email (Bear Email)
- Disability Support Services (if applicable)
- Veterans Services (if applicable)
- Parking permit (for main campus)
- UNC Bookstore

University ID Card

The UNC Card is your connection to campus life and the many university services listed in this section. You can use the card as a banking card, library card, door access and in many other convenient ways, such as discounts at many of your local retail stores and restaurants.

Graduate students in **main campus** programs should stop by the Card Office in the University Center after you register for classes to get your photo taken for your new Bear I.D. card. Alternatively, students may receive an email message inviting them to submit a photograph, copy of their driver's license, and Bear ID# to the Card Office using their UNC student email account. Students can stop by the Card Office to pick up their UNC card.

Students in **off-campus or Extended Campus** programs have the option of obtaining a student I.D. Card via email and electronic photo submission rather than coming into the Card Office on the Greeley Campus. Please send an email request to: [UNC Card Office](#). **Please be sure to use a computer or mobile device with Outlook or other email software installed.**

- Register for classes **prior** to submitting your UNC Card request;
- **Submit your request from your active Bear email account;**
- Include your Bear number and a phone number where you can be reached in your email message;
- Attach a copy of your driver's license or government issued I.D. for verification of your identity and
- Attach a jpg photo of yourself that meets the criteria detailed on the [card office website](#).

URSA

URSA is UNC's online student registration and records portal. Through URSA you can register for classes, pay fees, check your class schedule, and find information on required books and materials for courses. Detailed instructions for activating your URSA account are [here](#).

Email Account

Since all official communication from UNC, the Graduate School, program advisors, research advisors, Canvas, and course faculty are sent to students through their university email address, known as Bear Mail, it is essential that you check your Bear Mail account ***daily***. You can find your UNC email address by activating or logging into your URSA account. *Bear in mind that applications for Graduate Scholarships must be sent from your UNC email account or they won't be considered.*

Disability Support Services

The DSS office provides disability accommodations for students with documented disabilities to ensure equal opportunity and equal access to information, programs, and services. Services may include accommodations such as testing assistance, use of a volunteer note-taker, ASL interpreters, textbooks in alternative format, and assistive technology.

Students must submit disability documentation to DSS and meet with a DSS staff member to discuss eligibility and to determine appropriate accommodation. It is the student's responsibility to give UNC advance notice of needed accommodations and services. Students with documented disabilities should contact the DSS office prior to starting classes.

Please note that faculty will implement accommodations only after receiving a request for accommodation verified by DSS. For contact information and details on the range of services offered by DSS, please see the [Disability Resource Center webpage](#).

To begin the process for requesting accommodation(s), please see [here](#).

Veterans' Services

The University of Northern Colorado proudly supports the military affiliated community by assisting in the transition process and providing a stand-alone space with a strong inclusive community. The acceptance of military credit and VA education benefits, awareness events, and the unlimited contributions and uncapped opportunities for the Yellow Ribbon program are just a few reasons why students choose UNC.

See the [Veterans Services](#) website for details on educational benefits, commonly-needed forms, and other information.

Parking

Although there are some free spaces for parking around UNC's campus, most parking on the main Greeley campus requires a parking permit. Parking rules and regulations are enforced all year round. If you want to purchase a parking permit, you may do so through your URSA account. Check out the [Parking Services](#) website for more information and a link to frequently asked questions about student permit.

UNC Parking permits are not required for the Extended Campus sites.

UNC Bookstore

The University Bookstore is on the lower level of the University Center. The store provides course textbooks and general reading books, and sells a large selection of University of Northern Colorado imprinted clothing, greeting cards, posters, school and art supplies and other necessities for students. UNC Graduate School apparel can be ordered online through the bookstore's on-demand service. Additional services include book buyback, textbook rental, special order books and book information.

Managing Wellness

The activities involved in completing a graduate degree can be time consuming. While some graduate students are managing family life, full-time or part-time jobs, and online study, others are teaching or working in offices on campus, working on research, and trying to find some time for a social life with their peers. Managing physical and psychological wellness amidst stressful schedules might not be on the top of the priority list. UNC offers services to help student manage their own well-being. In this section you'll find information about:

- Proof of immunization (required for admitted students)
- Health Insurance (required for all students)
- Student Health Center
- Counseling Services
- Recreation Center

Required Proof of Immunization.

The State of Colorado Immunization law (C.R.S. 25-4-901) requires all students to submit proof of immunizations. Students must submit records prior to registering for classes at UNC. Students will not be allowed to register until after they have submitted a completed record of [immunizations](#). The immunizations webpage has detailed instructions for those wanting to waive the immunization requirements.

Health Insurance

All Degree Seeking Graduate students with 6 or more credits, regardless of the type of class (on campus, off campus, online only) are required to have full coverage health insurance. Students who meet the credit hour criteria will be automatically enrolled in the UNC Student Health Insurance Plan and the [cost](#) will be added to your UNC student tuition bill.

Domestic students have the option to waive out of the UNC insurance plan by completing the online insurance waiver showing proof of [comparable coverage](#) prior to the deadline, which is always the **10th day of classes** each semester. If a waiver is completed for the UNC Student Health Insurance Plan for Fall semester, the enrollment and subsequent charge for Spring semester will also be waived.

International students who have health insurance that meets UNC's [minimum requirements](#) and want to apply for a waiver **must follow the waiver process through the [UNC Global Portal](#)**. International students cannot waive on the UNC URSA site. All Degree Seeking Graduate students registered for 6 or more credits, regardless of the type of class (on campus, off campus, online only) are required to have full coverage health insurance. You will automatically be charged for the UNC Student Health Insurance Plan and the cost will be added to your UNC student bill.

The [Student Health Insurance Program](#) webpage has contact information and answers to frequently asked questions.

Student Health Center

The Health Center is a walk-in clinic located at 1901 10th Ave in Cassidy Hall.

All UNC students are eligible to use the health center and most insurance plans can be billed. The clinic offers many [services](#) to students.

Counseling Center

The [Counseling Center](#) (970-351-2496) offers free and confidential counseling services to UNC students. The Counseling Center Senior Staff is made up of licensed psychologists and licensed professional counselors who specialize in working with the college population. Additionally, the Center offers psychiatric services at a lower cost. The UNC Counseling Center is accredited by the International Association of Counseling Services and our doctoral level Internship Training Program is a member of the Association of Psychology Post-doctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC).

Recreation Center

The **Campus Recreation Center** is a multi-purpose facility with several activity spaces, including: a weight room for strength training and cardiovascular conditioning, three multi-purpose gymnasiums, an indoor jogging track, two racquetball courts, an indoor climbing wall, two group fitness rooms, locker rooms, administrative offices and meeting spaces, and access to the Butler-Hancock swimming pool. Students paying full student fees are automatically enrolled as members of the rec center, while reduced-cost memberships are available for spouses/domestic partners of students.

The staff in the [Department of Recreation](#) are committed to diversity and inclusivity, which is reflected in the facilities and programs offered.

Enrolling in Classes

Students often report through the Graduate School's Quality of Life Survey that getting to know graduate faculty and completing challenging graduate courses are among the best parts of being a graduate student at UNC. This section of the handbook provides information to assist graduate advising and enrolling in classes.

- Academic Calendar
- Academic Advising
- Registering for Classes
- Transferring Credit
- Degree Works
- Getting to Know Canvas

Academic Calendar

The university publishes academic calendars for each term, a three-year academic [calendar](#), and schedules for registrations.

Advising

Each student will be assigned an academic advisor upon being admitted into a graduate program. Only members of the graduate faculty are authorized to serve as program advisors for graduate students. The program advisor is responsible for:

- helping students be aware of and understand the expectations and requirements of their academic programs (e.g., degree requirements, deadlines, program and University policy).
- assisting students with questions regarding their academic programs and professional guidance.
- explaining Graduate School policies and procedures
- explaining expectations for comprehensive examinations, theses, scholarly project, or dissertation
- explaining expectations for internships
- identifying and helping students understand any expectations, ethical codes, or competencies published by professional, accrediting, or licensing bodies
- communicating in writing to the Graduate School any deviations from published program requirements or plans of study (this helps the graduation check process)

- assisting students as they integrate the program content with their academic and professional goals

It is the responsibility of the school/department to notify the Graduate School of the advisor assignment and any change in advisor assignment. *The importance of the program advisor cannot be overstated.* Program advisement includes all aspects of students' present and future academic and professional planning. It is often the program advisor who is able to help students conceptualize their academic program within the context of their own professional goals and aspirations. This responsibility is likely to involve extensive discussions of academic or professional goals well beyond the current program.

Masters students and their advisors should go over the curriculum requirements listed in the catalog for that degree program. The curriculum requirements shape the plan of study for the student. Any adjustments to the requirements will require the advisor and student to inform the Graduate School and submit a Course Adjustment Form through OnBase. There is more on this process later in the handbook.

Specialist and doctoral students and their advisors are required to complete a Plan of Study and submit it to the Graduate School no later than the end of the second semester of enrollment. Doctoral students will not be permitted to have comprehensive exam results recorded, move to candidacy, submit their dissertation, or apply for graduation without a [Plan of Study](#) on file in the Graduate School. Any deviation from the Plan of Study will require submission of a Course Adjustment Form. A student's faculty adviser initiates the Course Adjustment Form through OnBase, completes the details, and submits it. The form then goes to the Graduate School for review. There is more on the Plan of Study and the course adjustments in Curriculum Policy section of this handbook.

Registering for Courses

New Graduate Students. The first step before registering for courses is to visit with your advisor to discuss your program requirements and the courses you should take in your first semester. [The Go! Guide](#) has some great tips on preparing for your first meeting with your program advisor.

Returning Graduate Students. Returning graduate students are eligible to register on the first day of the pre-registration schedule. Graduate students do not require a PIN to register. Please check the [Pre-Registration Schedule](#) for dates. For general information about registration, see the [Registration Information page](#).

Registration Process. Registration is accessed through URSA, which is UNC's online single point of access to secure information and tools. You can use URSA to manage registration, view grades, order transcripts, view and pay student bills, complete forms and more. Directions for activation of URSA accounts for students in main campus programs can be found [here](#).

The Extended Campus has its own set of URSA activation instructions with screenshots and further links to Canvas – directions for Extended Campus can be found [here](#).

1. Log into [URSA](#) – To access URSA you will need your Bear Number, which was sent in your acceptance letter. If you've never logged into URSA, select the "New Student" link under "Log in".
2. Go to the Student Tab/Registrar for Class;
3. Click on "Register, Add or Drop Classes" link;
4. Choose appropriate term;
5. If you know the CRN number of the course you want to take, enter it in the Add Classes Worksheet. If not, you may search for the course using the Class Search button;
6. When finished, click Acknowledge/Submit.

For more detailed instructions, visit UNC's [Registration Assistance](#) page.

Course Add Process and Deadlines.

Full Semester Courses. These may be added using [URSA](#) through the 5th day (add deadline) of the semester for full-semester courses. Tuition and fees are adjusted accordingly.

Late Add Process. Instructors may, at their discretion, authorize you to add their course during days 6-10 of the semester.

- You may access the add request form on the Office of the Registrar's web site. This form will only be available on the website during days 6-10.
- The form requires your signature and the signature of the instructor.
- Please fax it to 970-351-1870, scan and email to registrar@unco.edu or bring it to our office, Carter Hall 3002.
- At that time, we will register you for the course.

After day 10, you may submit a [Petition to Late Add a Course](#) to the Office of the Registrar for consideration. This petition will only be approved if there were extenuating circumstances beyond your control that kept you from adhering to the published deadlines. **You must have been attending on or before the drop deadline to be considered.** The Registrar has the final approval/denial of the course(s). For the full procedure to request a late add, click [here](#).

Short Courses. Short courses are those that do not meet for an entire semester. You may add courses using URSA through the add deadline of the short course. See short course deadlines [here](#). Choose the term and click Run.

For information on late add for short courses, see the [Registrar's website](#).

Course Drop Process and Deadlines.

Full semester courses. You may drop courses using [URSA](#) through the 10th day of the semester for full semester courses.

Short courses. (courses that do not meet for the entire semester) You may drop courses using [URSA](#) through the drop deadline of the course. [Please see the short-course calendar](#) or specific deadlines. It is your responsibility to know the drop deadlines for your courses.

Course Withdrawal.

Full-semester courses. You may withdraw from individual courses using [URSA](#) through the Individual Course Withdrawal Deadline. There is no adjustment made to the tuition.

Short courses. (courses that do not meet for the entire semester) You may withdraw from individual short courses using URSA through the drop deadline of the course. [Please see the short-course calendar](#) for specific deadlines. It is your responsibility to know the drop deadlines for your courses. There is no adjustment made to the tuition.

Complete course withdrawal procedure. If you need to withdraw completely from your entire schedule for the semester, please contact the Office of the Registrar at 970-351-2231 or registrar@unco.edu to begin the withdrawal process. Additional withdrawal information may be found on the [Registrar's website](#).

Be mindful that complete withdrawals may have implications for tuition and federal financial aid.

Faculty course drop for non-attendance. An instructor has the option to drop a student from class if the student does not attend the first two hours during which the class meets, in order to allow other students to enroll. Once notified by the instructor, the Office of the Registrar will contact the student to confirm non-attendance. The student will be issued a drop by the instructor from the course if prior to the drop deadline for the given term or issued a grade of **UW** if after the drop deadline for a given course. Not all instructors will exercise this option; therefore, a student should not assume that non-attendance will automatically drop him or her from class.

Transferring Credit

A student who wishes to transfer graduate-level credit from another university complete a [Transfer of Credit](#) form in OnBase and must obtain an official transcript(s) showing the course(s) to be transferred. The student must then present the completed petition and an official transcript to the program advisor for approval or disapproval. Often the student's advisor or the program coordinator will want to see a course description, syllabus, and some examples of completed work for each course the student requests to transfer. If the program advisor approves and signs the petition, it must be sent to the Graduate School along with the official transcript for final approval/disapproval. This process must occur no later than three weeks prior to the end of the semester that the student plans to graduate.

Courses requested for transfer must meet all criteria for credit transfer and be approved by the Graduate School. See the criteria and other requirements for transfer credit [here](#).

Master's degree. Students can transfer up to six (6) qualifying credits (e.g. credits earned within the last five years, with a grade of "B" or better) from an accredited institution, that offers graduate degrees, into a 30 credit hour degree program.

Specialist degree. Students can transfer up to six (6) credits from another accredited institution that offers graduate degrees, into a 30 credit hour specialist degree program.

Doctoral degree. Doctoral students must complete a minimum of 40 semester hours through UNC of the 64-minimum required for a doctoral degree. If the program requirements exceed the 64-credit minimum, students are allowed to transfer additional credits, as determined by their advisor, from another accredited institution that grants doctoral degrees. Doctoral students without a master's degree must complete 64 of the 94 required credits at UNC for a doctoral degree.

As long as the minimum number of credits through UNC are observed, [transfer credit](#) allowances to students will be determined by program faculty and can vary on a case by case basis.

Degree Works

[Degree Works](#) is a web-based tool that will help you track your academic progress toward degree completion. It combines specific program degree requirements and the coursework that have been completed with easy-to-read worksheets. The program will also show transfer credit, course substitutions, and doctoral committee members. These worksheets will show how courses, which have been completed, count toward degree requirements and show what courses and requirements still need to be completed.

Getting to Know Canvas

UNC uses an Online Learning System called Canvas. Students in online and hybrid courses will need to become well acquainted with Canvas. Main campus students will find that many of their course instructors use the online system for posting assignments and student grades. Beginning in fall 2019, all graduate programs will move to an online process for the review and submission of theses and dissertations. The new process will use Canvas – so get to know it well. There is a tutorial for students within the Canvas system. Information and module teaching students how to navigate Canvas available [here](#).

Meeting Term Limits and Enrollment Requirements

Academic and curriculum policies have different sources at UNC. Some come from the Board of Trustees, a few are specific to the Graduate School, the Registrar's Office, and even a student's program. Policies ensure that the Graduate School and specific graduate programs have processes for protecting the rights of students and faculty. It is very important to understand the different policies that affect your graduate education. A number of significant policies are noted below. Students should familiarize themselves with the [Graduate School Catalog](#), as well as with others policies and processes that may be explained in the handbook adopted by their graduate program. The purpose of this Graduate Student Handbook is to point students to many of the commonly used policies from the Graduate School Catalog. It is not a replacement for either that Catalog or the student's degree program handbook.

Degree Time Limits

Master's degree. The maximum time allowed for the completion of the master's degree is five calendar years beginning with the first semester of enrollment after admission has been granted. However, program time limits are adjusted to reflect approval of transfer credit or unclassified hours. Student must complete the degree within five calendar years beginning with the earliest work counted in the program (which would include transfer credit and unclassified hours).

Specialist degree. The maximum time allowed for completion of the Specialist in Education degree is six calendar years beginning with the first semester of enrollment after admission has been granted. However, program time limits are adjusted to reflect approval of transfer credit or unclassified hours. Student must complete the degree within six calendar years beginning with the earliest work counted in the program (which would include transfer credit and unclassified hours).

Doctoral degree. The maximum time allowed for completion of a doctoral degree is eight calendar years beginning with the student's first semester of enrollment after admission has been granted. However, if a student has approval to count work taken before first enrollment after admission, the student must complete the degree within eight calendar years beginning with the earliest work counted in the program.

If a student has completed a Specialist in Education degree at the time he/she begins a doctoral degree program and if the student is permitted to include 21 semester hours of his/her specialist degree credit in the doctoral program, the student shall have a maximum time limit of five calendar years to earn the doctoral degree.

Continuous Enrollment/Registration Policy

Master's and Specialist Students

All master's and specialist students must register for at least 1 semester hour from the time they start their program until the semester they graduate. If they fail to enroll, they will be charged a fee of \$150 for nonenrollment. Students who have already completed all required credits will be automatically assessed the \$150 continuation fee for the semester when they take comprehensive exams and the semester they graduate.

Doctoral Students

All doctoral students are required to register continuously from the time they first enroll in their graduate degree program until the semester or term in which they graduate. Doctoral Students must be enrolled for at least 1 credit hour each academic semester (fall and spring) to be in compliance with this policy.

Doctoral students not in compliance with the continuous registration policy will automatically be assessed the \$150 continuous registration fee each semester. Payment of the continuous enrollment fee does exempt the student from financial aid obligations or the health insurance requirement. Students paying the continuous registration fee have 1 year (3 semesters) to enroll in courses before their program is closed for lack of enrollment.

All doctoral students must enroll in at least 1 credit hour during the semester (fall, spring or summer) they take scheduled doctoral examinations (i.e., oral comprehensive examination or dissertation/capstone defense) and/or intend to graduate unless they have already completed all required credits for their degree (including 797 and 799 credits).

Doctoral students engaged in the above referenced activities but who have not completed all required credits and have not enrolled in at least 1 credit will automatically be assessed the \$150 continuous registration fee for that semester; which will not allow these students to have the results of their examinations recorded and will not be allowed to graduate.

Petitions for Exception

Graduate students may petition to be excepted from certain procedures, rules, policies, and requirements within the purview of the Graduate School. Students discuss the need for the Petition with their academic advisor prior to submitting the request to the Graduate School. Students may not file a petition for exception when they are actively engaged in the academic appeals process.

The petition must include:

- the specific policy or guideline for which the student desires an exception,
- a clear rationale for the exception,

- a description of how the exception would:
 - enhance the academic program;
 - allow the continuation of a productive academic program;
 - allow recovery from lost opportunity due to health or traumatic events or
 - allow the student to profit from unique educational opportunities impeded by Graduate School regulations.

Requests for an extension of program time limit, must:

- document the specific academic and degree requirements to be completed
- provide detailed timeline for each task to be completed

Similarly, students submitting a petition to be readmitted to their degree program following closure due to failure to continuously enroll for more than one year, must:

- indicate the degree requirements to be completed
- a specific timeline for completion

In all cases, signatures of the program advisor and school director or department chair **are required on this form** prior to submitting the request to the Graduate School. Faculty signatures indicate approval of and support for the request. Petitions submitted without the required signatures will be returned to the student. The Graduate Student Petition for Exception form is available in OnBase.

If a student on a petition for exception and related timeline does not make expected academic progress or misses deadlines specified on the timeline, then the student's program will be terminated by the Graduate School.

Leave of Absence

Beginning in Fall semester 2022, graduate students needing to step out of their program for a defined period of time may apply for a leave of absence.

Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy

A Leave of Absence (LOA) is a temporary pause of graduate study that permits a graduate student in good academic standing to postpone their graduate program for a defined period of time. In the event of circumstances that interfere with continuation of a degree program, a graduate student may apply for a LOA. If approved, the LOA allows a student to stop the term clock on a degree program and then rejoin the program without reapplying to the university. A student may be granted a LOA for a minimum of one semester and up to one calendar year for reasons, including but not limited to, medical, family, financial, and work. A student may request a LOA a maximum of two times during their graduate program, and the total time of all approved LOAs may not exceed two (2) calendar years.

A graduate student who wishes to request a LOA shall initiate a conversation with their academic and/or research advisor to discuss how the LOA impacts their ability to complete the program (e.g., consequences of being out of sync with graduate cohort; missing required courses taught during their absence; loss of research resources; restricted access to laboratories or campus resources; and loss of assistantship or scholarship funding). If a student decides to request a LOA, they shall complete the electronic LOA Request Form, and affirm their understanding of the potential implications the LOA may have on their program completion. The student shall obtain approval(s) relevant to their program:

- Academic and/or research advisor
- Graduate program coordinator, department chair or school director
- Center for International Education (if the student indicates status as an international student)
- Director of Financial Aid (if the student indicates receiving Title IV funding or student loans)
- Graduate School Assistantships and Scholarships Specialist (if the student indicates holding a graduate/teaching assistantship, Graduate Dean's Scholarship, or other university scholarship award)
- Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs (if the student indicates any funding, including an assistantship, paid through a research grant)
- Graduate Dean (or designee)

After verifying that the student is in good academic standing, and terminating any scholarships or assistantships awarded through the Graduate School for the time of the LOA, the Graduate School shall forward the completed form to the Registrar's Office.

An official LOA begins only after the student receives a copy of the request form with the Graduate Dean's (or designee's) signature confirming final approval.

Application for a LOA must be received by the Graduate School before the last day of classes in the semester for which the LOA is requested. A LOA shall not be granted retroactively after the end of the semester.

An approved LOA stands in lieu of registering for the minimum of one (1) credit hour. It is also in lieu of paying the Continuous Registration fee.

A student on a LOA cannot:

- receive a graduate assistantship, fellowship, scholarship, or financial aid from the university;
- be employed as an hourly student worker;
- enroll in student health insurance;
- enroll in UNC courses;
- take comprehensive exams;
- convene a dissertation or thesis proposal hearing;

- convene a dissertation, thesis, or scholarly project defense; and/or
- graduate.

A student receiving funding or financial aid of any kind should be aware of consequences that non-enrollment may have on aid or loans. For a student receiving federal financial assistance, the U.S. Department of Education regulations require the University to report the student as non-enrolled when they take a LOA for one (1) semester or more. The “withdrawn” or “non-enrolled” status may trigger the beginning of the Federal Stafford Loan grace period and/or the starting of repayment of the Federal Supplemental Loan for Students. Upon returning to UNC, if a loan is requested, new loan applications must be submitted and an in-school deferment form must be filed.

For an international student, a LOA approved by the university does not mean that the student is in compliance with visa and immigration regulations. The student should consult with CIE for more information.

Student Instructions

- Confer with your academic and/or research advisor and relevant offices (e.g., Financial Aid, Graduate School, CIE) regarding the impact of a LOA on your financial, academic, and work-related circumstances.
- Confer with your academic and/or research advisor, or the department chair/school director about any changes that may affect your program.
- Confer with the Graduate School on the resources that will be available to the student during a LOA.
- If after the above review and consultation, you choose to request a LOA: work with your program advisor or research advisor to complete and submit the [LOA application in OnBase](#).

Administrative Actions

- Once the LOA Request Form has been submitted by the student, it is sent to the graduate program advisor and department chair/school director for their signatures.
- The Form then goes to the appropriate unit(s) for signature(s) as indicated by the student’s responses (CIE, Financial Aid, Graduate School, etc.).
- If the request is approved, a registration hold is placed on the student’s account. The student is not able to register for courses during the LOA period. A reinstatement form must be processed before the registration hold is removed.

Important Notes

- **When to submit the request:** The student should initiate the LOA form as early as possible when dealing with a potential interruption of graduate study. The form must be received before the last day of classes in the semester for which the

LOA is requested. **A leave of absence shall not be granted retroactively after the end of the semester.**

- **Cancelling registrations before the drop deadline:** An approved LOA does NOT automatically cancel any current course registration/enrollment. If the student is enrolled for the term(s) included in the approved LOA, they can cancel their registration(s) by the drop deadline and no tuition will be charged.
- **Cancelling registrations after the drop deadline:** If a student asks for an approved LOA after the drop deadline, they must withdraw from any registered courses; otherwise, grades will be posted for those courses. The student will need to file a tuition appeal to petition for elimination of tuition charges. Failure to do so will result in tuition charges for which the student is responsible. See the [Registrar's website](#) for relevant deadlines.
- **Financial support:** If a student receives financial aid and/or scholarships from the University, they should contact the office from which support was given (department, graduate assistantship, Financial Aid, faculty member, ORSP managing grant funding, etc.) to determine if a LOA affects the status of the funding.
- **External financial support (from private funding sources):** If a student receives funding from a source outside the University, they should contact the source to determine if a LOA affects the status of the funding.
- **International student:** The student must contact CIE to determine if the LOA affects their visa or immigration status.
- **Dual program student:** If a student is enrolled in a dual program, they must request a LOA from each program, and prior to their return, must request reinstatement from each program/department/school.
- **Reinstatement after LOA:** If a student obtains an approved LOA, they are eligible for reinstatement provided that they:
 - discuss reinstatement and progress in their degree program with their, academic and/or research advisor, or department chair/school director;
 - apply for reinstatement by completing the [Reinstatement Application Form](#);
 - apply for reinstatement to the same major and degree; and
 - do not request to be reinstated in the same semester covered by the approved LOA.
- **Missed reinstatement deadline:** If a student does not apply for reinstatement by their LOA end date, then:
 - the student will be notified by the Graduate School that their LOA has ended;
 - the student will be charged the Continuous Registration fee each semester for up to three semesters (including summer) of non-enrollment;
 - the student's term clock will restart; and

- after three (3) semesters of non-enrollment, the student's program becomes inactive and the student must reapply for admission to the degree program.
- **LOA limitations:** A student may apply for the LOA twice during the same degree program. The total time of all approved LOAs may not exceed two academic years.
- **Notification:** The student, and all who signed the LOA Request Form, are notified of the final decision by email.
- **Registration hold:** A registration hold is placed on the student's account for the approved LOA period. The student may not register for courses until they have applied, and been approved for, reinstatement.

Completing Your Program: Curriculum Requirements

The Graduate Catalog offers details of the curriculum requirements for each graduate program. Additionally, some programs have program handbooks that provide further information, timelines, expectations, professional competencies, and information for completing specific program requirements (such as internships). This section of the handbook provides information on program curriculum policies, such as the number of credits one must complete at UNC.

- Curriculum requirements
- Authorized university credits
- Program credits by degree
- Course credit
- Course numbering
- Course counted toward next higher degree
- Course load: full-time; part-time
- Courses with multiple numbers
- Research course requirement

Curriculum Requirements

Students are required to complete the curriculum requirements in place at the time of their enrollment in the degree or certificate program. For example, a student enrolling in Fall 2022 will be required to fulfill degree requirements as detailed in the 2022-23 Graduate School Catalog.

The requirements for a graduate student's program are built into the student's Degree Works page so that a student can easily track progress toward the degree.

Authorized University Credits

Graduate credit is granted for courses taught by a faculty member who has been appointed to the Graduate Faculty or appointed as a Graduate Lecturer. Graduate credit is not granted for any course taught by a teaching assistant who is pursuing an advanced degree at this institution, or a faculty member who has not been approved for Graduate Faculty or Graduate Lecturer status.

Program Credits

A Master's degree must be at least 30 hours of course credit successfully completed beyond the bachelor's level. A specialist degree must be at least 30 hours completed beyond the master's degree. A doctoral degree requires at least 64 hours beyond the master's degree or 90 hours for those with only bachelor's-level qualification.

UNC programs may require more than the minimum credit standards for degrees set by the State.

Master's degree. The university requires a minimum of 30 semester hours for a master's degree. This includes at least 24 semester hours of discipline content courses. Chemistry and Biological Sciences master's programs require a minimum of 20 semester hours of discipline content courses. Programs may have requirements that exceed the minimum standards established by the university.

A maximum of three semester credits of 513 (Professional Renewal) may be counted toward the master's degree.

A minimum of 24 credits must be completed through UNC as part of a student's post-master's specialist degree. Thus, students can [transfer](#) up to six (6) credits from another accredited institution that offers graduate degrees into a 30 credit hour master's degree program.

Specialist degree. A student entering a specialist degree program who possesses a master's degree must earn a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate credit beyond the master's degree. A student entering a specialist degree program who possesses only a baccalaureate degree must earn a minimum of 60 semester hours of graduate credit beyond the baccalaureate degree. Programs may have requirements that exceed the minimum standards established by the university.

A minimum of 24 credits must be completed through UNC as part of a student's post-master's specialist degree. Thus, students can [transfer](#) up to six (6) credits from another accredited institution that offers graduate degrees into a 30 credit hour specialist degree program.

Doctoral degree. A student entering a doctoral program who possesses a master's degree must earn a minimum of 64 semester hours of graduate credit beyond the master's degree. This includes a minimum of 48 semester hours of graduate level discipline content courses and 16 semester hours of research credit.

A student who possesses only a baccalaureate degree must earn a minimum of 94 semester hours of graduate credit beyond the baccalaureate degree. This includes a minimum of 78 semester hours of graduate level discipline content courses and 16 semester hours of research credit.

A student who possesses a master's degree but who is attempting to obtain a second master's degree en route to a doctoral degree must meet the same credit hour requirements as the baccalaureate only student.

A student who possesses a specialist degree may count a maximum of 21 semester hours of specialist work in the doctoral program with the approval of the Graduate School and program advisor. Schools may have requirements that exceed the minimums established by the University.

Doctoral students must complete a minimum of 40 semester hours through UNC of the 64-minimum required for the post-master's doctoral degree. Doctoral students without a master's degree must complete at UNC 64 of the 94 hours required for the degree.

Course credit. For information on the system used to calculate course credit hours based on contact hours, please see the [course credit webpage](#).

Course numbers. Each course is assigned a subject code that identifies the discipline, field or program offering the course. For example, course numbers in Audiology and Speech-Language Sciences are preceded by ASLS; course numbers in Mathematics are preceded by MATH; and courses in Visual Arts are preceded by ART. While it may seem obvious that course numbers differentiate undergraduate and graduate-level courses, it is important to note the following:

- Graduate level - 500-699 are Master's courses and those numbered 700 or higher are Doctoral/Specialist courses.
- Juniors and seniors with a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher **are permitted** to take 500-level courses.
- Undergraduates may be permitted to take courses with numbers 600-699 if they have applied to and have been accepted into a Master's level program at UNC. 600-699 courses **may not be counted towards an undergraduate degree**.
- Undergraduates and master's students (unless they are enrolled in a master's en route program) are not permitted to take courses with numbers 700-799.

Graduate students **may not count courses numbered 100-499 toward graduate degree programs**; courses numbered 700-799 may be taken for specialist or doctoral credit only.

Course counted in next higher degree. While completing one degree, students may count a maximum of 12 graduate credits applicable to the next higher degree. Such dual enrollment is limited to two consecutive semesters. All credits applicable to graduate degrees must be earned within the time limits specified for each degree program. The initial date for the next higher degree will be the date of the first course credits counted toward that degree. Students will be accountable for the final examination in the courses taken for the next higher degree.

If students, including those admitted to 4+1 programs, desire to count work toward the next higher degree, they must have:

1. applied for and been admitted to the next higher degree program;

2. applied for graduation in the current degree program.
3. submitted a [Petition to Count Work Toward the Next Higher Degree](#) form to the Graduate School before starting any courses that are to count on the next higher degree.

Seniors registering for master's degree work according to this procedure will continue to be classified as undergraduates until they have been awarded their baccalaureate degrees. This includes undergraduate students in 4+1 programs.

Course load designations. Course load designation and limitations for graduate students apply to any combination of all courses taken on-campus, off-campus, or on-line while an individual is enrolled as a graduate student in a graduate degree program, a non-degree certification program, or any combination thereof. The course load designation and limitations have implications for those receiving assistantships with tuition waivers or recipients of federal financial aid.

Fall, Spring, and Summer:

- Full-time enrollment is considered 9 or more credit hours for graduate students.
- Half time enrollment is 5-8 credit hours.
- Less than half time enrollment is 4 credit hours or less.

An overload is more than:

- 17 credit hours for Fall and Spring terms
- 12 credit hours for the Summer term.

Overload limitations apply to work completed in both on-campus and off-campus programs.

The signed [Graduate Credit Overload](#) Permit must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar, 3002 Carter Hall or faxed to 970-351-1870. The Interim term has a 4-credit hour limit; no overload will be permitted. A graduate student with a GPA lower than 3.0 may not petition for an overload.

[Courses with multiple numbers.](#) Some courses may be numbered at both the 400 and 500 level to allow undergraduate and graduate students to enroll simultaneously. These courses may also be offered independently at either the graduate or undergraduate level.

At least **two-thirds** of a student's **master's degree** program must be in courses that are not double-numbered courses or in courses that are taught solely at the 500-level and above.

Research Course Requirement.

Graduate research course policy. Masters, Specialist, and Doctoral students must complete at least one course in research methodology designated as appropriate to the discipline and approved by the Graduate Council. Courses numbered XXX 622 (Directed Studies) **shall not** be used as a substitute for the research course. Program The Graduate School **will not waive this requirement** but can approve an appropriate substitute research methodology course. The program advisor must provide a written request to substitute an alternative course, a syllabus for the course, and rationale for the requested substitute to the Graduate Dean in the form of a Graduate Student Petition for Exception. If the student earned a graduate degree from an accredited institution within the last five years in which an equivalent research course was taken, the program advisor must provide a written request to waive the UNC research requirement based on the previous course work completed.

Progressing in Graduate Programs

In order to ensure the rigor and integrity of UNC graduate degrees, the Graduate School sets minimum grade requirements for course credit, continuation in graduate programs, and graduation. The Graduate School also complies with UNC's grading scale, policy on incomplete work, academic integrity standards, and academic appeals policy.

- Grading scale information
- Incomplete grades
- Minimum grade requirements for course credit
- Grade forgiveness (i.e., grade replacement)
- Minimum grade point average (GPA) policies
- Annual progress review for graduate students

Grading Scale

The University operates on a 4.00 [+/- grade point system](#), utilizing both letter grades and S/U grades.

Incompletes

At the discretion of the instructor, a temporary grade of Incomplete - "I" may be given to a student who demonstrates that he/she could not complete the requirements of the course due to circumstances beyond the student's control and not reasonably foreseeable. A student must be passing a course at the time that an Incomplete is requested unless the instructor determines that there are extenuating circumstances to assign an Incomplete to a student who is not passing the course. Credits not used to compute grade point average (GPA) and not counted toward graduation.

Students completing an *Incomplete* grade should not register for the course a second time. The instructor must submit to the department chair or school director, a written notice of the specific coursework to be completed before the final grade is determined as well as reasons for the Incomplete grade; a copy is kept in the school/department and one is provided to the student.

To change an Incomplete grade, the instructor must submit the grade change request form to the Office of the Registrar. Grade change requests submitted after the six-week period of the subsequent term the student originally enrolled in the course must be approved and signed by the instructor, the school director/department chair and the Dean of the College (or designee). Forms are available within URSA, under the Faculty tab. No grade change request forms delivered by students will be accepted. Additional information is available on the [Office of the Registrar Website](#).

If the course requirements are not completed and the grade change form received in the Office of the Registrar after a maximum of one year, the grade will be recorded on the academic record as a failing or unsatisfactory grade. Once the incomplete grade(s) have rolled to unsatisfactory/failing, a grade change(s) will not be permitted.

Minimum Grade Requirement

Courses for which "C-", "D+", "D", "D-", "F", "U", "W", "NR", or "I" grades are awarded **will not** count towards graduate degree program requirements. Students should be aware of program policies about minimum grade requirements. Some UNC graduate programs have a higher minimum than a "C" in order for a course to count toward the program's requirements.

Grade Replacement

Effective Fall 2022, the specifications of the Course Replacement Policy are as follows:

Courses repeated under this policy may not be eligible for financial aid. Veterans Benefits will not cover the cost of a repeated course in which the student previously received a passing grade. For more information, contact Financial Aid at (970) 351-4UNC (4862).

Graduate Dean's Scholarship, graduate assistantship tuition waiver funding, and/or other institutional scholarship funds will not be applied to the cost of retaking credits. Contact the Graduate School for more information about scholarship and assistantship funding.

The provisions below are not retroactive. They only apply to those courses taken no earlier than Fall semester 2022.

- The Grade Replacement Policy only applies to UNC graduate courses that are letter-graded (A-F). The courses taken for grade replacement must be the same (prefix and number) and both courses must be taken at UNC. The course must not be designated repeatable for credit in the current graduate catalog. Pass/Fail (S/U) graded courses are excluded from this policy.
- Grade replacement can only be applied once per course for a maximum of three (3) courses and no more than nine (9) credit hours.
- To apply for grade replacement, the student must earn a grade of "B-" or lower in their first attempt. Applications for grade replacement will not be accepted for courses with an incomplete (I) grade.
- To use grade replacement, the student must submit a Grade Replacement Application to the Office of the Registrar no later than the drop deadline of courses being repeated. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted. Once the grade replacement application deadline has passed, a grade replacement application cannot be withdrawn.
- The most recent letter grade (A-F) attained for a course repeated under grade replacement will count toward the cumulative GPA, even if the most recent grade is lower than the grade being replaced.
- If a student applies for grade replacement and receives a "W" or "UW" in the second attempt of a course, that attempt does not count as the grade replacement opportunity and the original grade will stand.

- All occurrences of a course and all grades earned for the course are recorded on the transcript.
- Courses are counted one time only in the total credits towards graduation.
- Grades counted toward a completed degree are excluded from this policy (e.g., course double-counted in a 4+1 BA to MA program).

Students who plan to transfer to another academic institution or plan to apply for another graduate degree should be aware that other institutions may include all grades in the GPA calculation for admission.

Students receiving federal student loans should be aware that the Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy is separate from the Grade Replacement Policy. Changes in cumulative GPA and/or deficient hours due to grade replacement will not be considered in any financial suspension appeal until the course has been completed. For questions, please contact Financial Aid at (970) 351-4UNC (4862).

If the student has received a notice of academic probation because their graduate GPA is under 3.0, they will remain on academic probation until grades are posted at the end of the semester.

Grade Point Average

Graduate students must maintain at least a 3.00 grade point average in graduate level courses. If student's cumulative grade point average drops below 3.00 after taking at least 9 graduate level credit hours, a warning letter will be sent to the student. The degree program of a student who has been sent a warning letter will be terminated if the student's grade point average is below 3.00 after completing an additional 9 or more graduate level credit hours in which grades of "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" are earned. All grades earned during the semester which the 9th hour is earned are used in the calculation of the grade average. Please note that some graduate programs require students to maintain a higher minimum grade point average in order to remain in the program.

The 3.00 grade point average threshold is important in other ways:

- No student with a grade point average below a 3.00 will be allowed to graduate from any UNC graduate program.
- A Masters student wanting to drop one major of a double major before taking any comprehensive exams must have at least a 3.00 grade point average in the major being dropped.
- Doctoral students must have at least a 3.00 grade point average in order to take comprehensive exams
- Students holding Graduate Assistantships or Teaching Assistantships must maintain at least a 3.00 grade point average. Assistantships will be withdrawn from students whose GPA falls below the minimum standard.

Annual Progress Review for Doctoral Students

Schools/departments are to evaluate and provide an annual program progress report for each doctoral student until the student passes the oral comprehensive examination.

Doctoral student advisors will be responsible for obtaining the following information for each assigned advisee:

- Student's self-evaluations of his/her academic performance and professional development,
- Student's grades in all graduate courses during the evaluation period,
- Performance ratings from instructors for all graduate courses during the evaluation period,
- Assessment of the student's professional development from appropriate school/department faculty. Based on the data collected, each doctoral advisor will meet with each student's doctoral committee to develop and provide a summary of the student's strengths and area(s) for improvement. Emphasis should be placed on acknowledging accomplishments and professional growth where appropriate.

Recommendations for improvement should include:

- specific changes expected in the student's performance or behavior;
- means of assessing the changes;
- the time period by which the change is expected to occur;
- when the committee will next review the student's progress.

Improvements or lack of change in areas recommended from prior progress reports should be documented. Signatures of the advisor is required on the progress report. The progress report will include a clear recommendation to the school director/department chair of the Graduate Program Committee (GPC) of whether the student is to be continued each year without conditions, continued with conditions, or not supported for continuation. If conditions for improvement are stipulated, the student must be informed by the Graduate Program Committee (GPC), in writing, of the conditions and specific changes required to satisfy the conditions. If the school/department does not have a GPC, the report will be submitted directly to the school director or department chair.

Failure to meet expected progress goals can result in program termination. For more on the annual progress review, see the Graduate Catalog [here](#).

Academic Appeals

Graduate students may appeal any academic decision, specifically course grades and program termination, that they consider arbitrary or capricious, or contrary to University policy. The procedures for appealing an academic decision can be found in Part 2 2-1-201 of the [Board Policy Manual](#).

For other types of academic decisions students wish to appeal, including course grades and program termination, students should contact the Graduate School to initiate the appeal process by calling (970)351-1808.

Completing Exams: Comprehensive Exam Requirement

Comprehensive exams are an essential element of every graduate degree program. In this section, students will find general information about comprehensive exam requirements by degree program. Graduate programs determine the content, format, expectations for, and date of their specific examinations. Program faculty are responsible for advising students in preparation for comprehensives.

- Master's Degree Written Comprehensive Examinations
- Specialist Degree Written Comprehensive Examinations
- Doctoral Students Appointment of a Doctoral Committee
- Doctoral Degree Written Comprehensive Examinations
- Doctoral Degree Oral Comprehensive Examinations
- Attendance at Doctoral Examinations

Master's students.

Written comprehensive examinations. Each master's degree student must pass a written comprehensive examination or otherwise show competency in the discipline by successfully completing a specified equivalent that has been approved by the Graduate Council (thesis or project in lieu of comprehensive examinations). Defense of a project or thesis in lieu of comprehensive examinations is equivalent to administering the comprehensive examination.

School/department faculty are responsible for determining the student's eligibility for taking the examination as well as scheduling the time, date, and place of the examination. This examination or its approved equivalent may not be taken until the student has:

- been granted admission to the program
- fulfilled conditions or provisions (if any) of continuing in program in the timeframe specified upon admission to the program
- completed school/department-specified course requirements

- maintained a GPA of at least 3.0 in their program
- received approval from the program advisor.

Results. Once the examination has been evaluated or the project/thesis has been defended, the program advisor must return the signed report form to the Graduate School indicating a pass or failure of the examination. If the student plans to graduate, submitting the comprehensive exam result must be done on or before the published deadline to submit the results of the written comprehensive examination for that semester. **A retake may not be scheduled during the same semester during which the original examination was completed.** Failure of the retake of the examination or its equivalent will result in the termination of the student's degree program. Results must be reported to the Graduate School within one semester or be retaken.

Specialist students.

Supervising committee. A two-person specialist supervising committee, recommended by the program, will supervise a student's specialist degree program. The supervising committee will assist the student in preparing a plan of study, oversee comprehensive examinations where appropriate, and direct the student's practicum.

Written comprehensive exam. Each specialist student must pass a written comprehensive examination in the area of specialization and pass any other examination(s) the supervising committee may require. The written comprehensive examination may not be taken until the student has:

- been granted admission to the program
- fulfilled conditions or provisions (if any) of continuing in program in the timeframe specified upon admission to the program
- filed an approved plan of study
- completed at least 20 semester hours (50 semester hours if baccalaureate only student) of work applicable toward the degree, not including the practicum
- maintained a GPA of at least 3.0 in their program
- received approval from the program advisor

Results. Once the examination has been evaluated, the program advisor must return the signed report form to the Graduate School indicating a pass or failure of the examination. If the student plans to graduate, submitting the comprehensive exam result must be done on or before the published deadline to submit the results of the written comprehensive examination for that semester. **A retake may not be**

scheduled during the same semester during which the original examination was completed. Failure of the retake of the examination or its equivalent will result in the termination of the student's degree program. Results must be reported to the Graduate School within one semester or be retaken.

Doctoral students.

Appointment of a doctoral committee. Before starting comprehensive exams, a doctoral student must have a doctoral committee appointed and on record with the Graduate School. The doctoral committee consists of four people, as follows:

- 1 Research advisor from the student's doctoral program
- 1 committee member from the student's program
- 1 committee member either from the program or a related discipline
- 1 Faculty Representative external to the program/discipline

The doctoral research advisor must hold current Graduate Faculty status with Doctoral Research Endorsement (GF/DRE). All other members of the committee must hold current status as graduate faculty, emeritus graduate faculty, or graduate faculty equivalence (including honorary members). Those holding graduate lecturer status do not typically qualify to serve on doctoral committees. Information about the different types of graduate faculty status is available in the [Graduate Faculty Guidelines](#) document.

Once the student identifies and secures the agreement of Research Advisor (RA), together the student and RA consider other appropriate graduate faculty members to serve on the committee. The student should contact the potential committee members. Once they have agreed to serve, the student should complete a [Request to Appointment a Doctoral Committee form](#), obtain signatures from each committee member, and submit the form to the Graduate School.

The Graduate School will ensure that:

- Committee members hold appropriate Graduate Faculty status
- Committee has an RA and second committee member from the student's program
- Faculty representative is not from the program or department
- Committee members are not exceeding their doctoral committee limits
- Honorary members must hold Graduate Faculty Equivalence status and must be formally added to the committee by the Graduate School.

If the Graduate School finds no problems with the committee membership, then each committee member will receive a letter of appointment and the committee membership will be entered in the student's Degree Works worksheet. Once a committee is appointed, the signature pages for the doctoral proposal and dissertation/scholarly research project (or capstone) must match the committee on file with the Graduate School.

If the Graduate School finds any issues with the committee request, the student's research advisor will be notified.

Any subsequent changes to an appointed doctoral committee will require the student to submit a [Request to Change Doctoral Committee form](#), with signatures from the departing committee member and the new committee member.

Doctoral examinations. Doctoral students must pass a written comprehensive exam and an oral comprehensive examination prior to the dissertation. The format and timing of the examinations are determined by the program.

Comprehensive Examinations: Written. Each doctoral student must pass a written comprehensive examination that is designed, administered, and evaluated by the graduate faculty of the major school/department and by other qualified individuals as specified by the research advisor. The written comprehensive exam is not scheduled with through the Graduate School, but results are reported to the Graduate School for entry in the student's record. This examination may not be taken until the student has:

- been granted admission to the degree program;
- met conditions or provisions (if applicable) for remaining in the program by the deadline specified in the letter of admission;
- filed an approved plan of study;
- completed at least 36 semester hours (60 semester hours if baccalaureate only student) of work applicable toward the degree -- at least 24 semester hours must be UNC credit;
- maintained a grade point average of at least 3.00 in his/her graduate degree program;
- a doctoral committee appointed by the Graduate School;
- obtained approval from the research advisor to take the exam.

The major school/department is responsible for scheduling the date, time, and place of the written comprehensive examination(s). Each student must check the school/department requirements at the beginning of his/her program of study. Written comprehensive examinations (*timed) may not be performed on weekends or when University offices are closed for the holidays.

For comprehensive examinations that are timed*, once an exam session begins, it is considered a take of the examination. If the student leaves the examination session and does not return or does not complete the exam during the allotted time frame, the examination will be considered taken and the exam will be evaluated accordingly. For take-home examinations that are not strictly timed, the school/department should determine a starting time/date and ending time/date during which the student must complete the exam.

Once the examination has been evaluated, the program advisor must submit a signed report form to the Graduate School indicating a pass or failure of the examination by the deadline established for that semester by the Graduate School.

Results. The results of the written comprehensive examinations must be reported to the Graduate School no later than the semester following the examination or the Graduate School may require a repeat of the examination.

A retake may not be scheduled during the same semester that the original examination was completed. Failure of the retake of the examination or its equivalent will result in the termination of the student's degree program.

Comprehensive Exam: Oral. After passing the written comprehensive examination, most doctoral program require students must take and pass an oral comprehensive examination. The research advisor serves as chairperson of the oral comprehensive examination committee and directs the student to arrange the date, time and place of the oral examination with *all committee members*.

After all arrangements are made, the student or research advisor will notify the Graduate School by forwarding a signed and completed *Request to Schedule a Doctoral Examination* form **at least two weeks prior** to the date of the examination.

In order for the Graduate School to approve a request for the student to take the examination, the following conditions must be met:

- The committee members and faculty representative must be the same as those approved by the Graduate School.
- The written comprehensive examination results must have been received and recorded by the Graduate School prior to requesting to schedule the oral comprehensive examination.
- Annual progress review from program on file in the Graduate School for each year prior to student's scheduling their oral exam.
- The Request to Schedule a Doctoral Examination must be turned in to the Graduate School at least two weeks (14 calendar days) before the requested date of the examination to allow the Graduate School to

publicize the examination. Exceptions to this rule must be accompanied by an explanation of the late request from the Research Advisor and will be considered on a case by case basis. **No exam/defense will be allowed with less than one-week prior notice.**

The student is responsible for confirming the date and time of the examination with all of his/her committee members. The Graduate School will approve and publicize the examination date, time and place in UNC Today, the Graduate School calendar or in any other appropriate university publication and forward a *Results of the Oral Comprehensive Exam* form to the student's Research Advisor.

Any examination which is not scheduled in advance through the Graduate School will not be recognized as valid and must be rescheduled.

All committee members and the faculty representative must be present at the examination or a substitute assigned according to the guidelines for Doctoral Committees. The student's performances on the examination will be evaluated as:

1. **Pass;**
2. **May Pass:** when conditions are met (specific conditions and a timeline for completion must be recorded on the *Results of the Oral Comprehensive Examination* form before turning in to the Graduate School); or,
3. **Fail,** with the option of "retake permitted" or "retake not permitted" which should be specified on the *Results of the Oral Comprehensive Examination* form before submitting it to the Graduate School. A decision not to permit a retake will result in the student's termination from the degree program. If the student does not pass during the first attempt of the oral comprehensive examination, and a retake is permitted by the committee, the retake may not be scheduled during the same semester that the original examination was completed. Only one retake is allowed. Failure of the examination retake will result in termination of the student's degree program.

At least three-fourths of the committee members must agree on the final evaluation. All members of the UNC faculty are invited to attend and may ask questions of the student after the committee members finish their questioning. Other graduate students may also attend with permission from student's research advisor.

Results. The results of the oral comprehensive examinations must be reported to the Graduate School no later than the semester following the examination or defense or the Graduate School may require a repeat of the examination.

Attendance at Doctoral Examinations

Doctoral students' oral comprehensive, proposal and final dissertation/scholarly project defense examinations require the attendance of the student and all committee members, including the faculty representative, external and honorary members. Attendance, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as either a physical/in-person

presence on campus or an electronic presence (e.g. telephone/conference call, video conferencing).

- Electronic attendance by the student or committee members assumes the technology is viable and works continuously throughout the examination of the student.
- Should the technology fail or be disrupted in any committee meeting (orals, proposal, or final dissertation/capstone defense) in excess of 15 minutes the Research Advisor and/or Faculty Rep must contact the Graduate School and reschedule the examination for later date and are not subject to the two-week period required for public announcement of the examination. If the examination continues with failed technology for more than 15 minutes, the results will not be accepted by the Graduate School and the student will need to reschedule and will be subject to the two-week period for public announcement.

Academic and Research Integrity

Before this handbook moves on to discuss policies about theses and dissertations, it is important to highlight academic and research integrity. UNC takes academic integrity very seriously and takes measures against students who breach the university's Honor Code. Integrity extends to the conduct of graduate research, whether for graduate courses, research projects in which a student may be participating, thesis projects, and dissertations.

Honor code. In order to encourage and foster academic excellence, the University expects students to conduct themselves in accordance with certain generally accepted norms of scholarship and professional behaviors. Because of this expectation, the University does not tolerate any form of academic misconduct. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and knowingly or recklessly encouraging or making possible any act of plagiarism, cheating, or fabrication. Academic misconduct is an unacceptable activity in scholarship and is in conflict with academic and professional ethics and morals (UNC Student Code of Conduct, 8). For detailed information on the penalties for academic violations, see [here](#).

Ethical research standards. The use of human subjects in research at UNC is regulated by University Regulations 3-8-104, enacted by the Board of Trustees to ensure that all research involving human subjects carried out under the auspices of UNC conforms to ethical standards.

All research projects conducted under the auspices of the university (e.g. by faculty, students, or staff) involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the

university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Faculty, students and staff planning human research must submit requests for IRB approval prior to any data collection.

Those who use animals in research must comply with the [Public Health Service \(PHS\) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#). Additionally, UNC is registered with the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a Class R Research Facility, and as such, complies with the Animal Welfare Act and the [Animal Welfare Act Regulations](#). These principles apply to all research, research training, teaching and testing involving live vertebrate animals conducted by anyone on the premises of UNC or conducted by UNC personnel at other locations.

Every research, testing and teaching project involving the use of vertebrate animals must be reviewed and approved by the IACUC prior to initiations. The IACUC shares with the investigator the responsibility for the ethical decisions made regarding the care and use of animals (UNC IACUC website). More information, including the process for approval, can be found [here](#).

There are dire consequences for [research misconduct](#). In recent years, students who committed research misconduct, such as completing research involving interviews or surveys without IRB approval were required to discard their data and start again (if they had adequate time left in their program). Research misconduct is grounds for program termination.

Master's Thesis

This section has essential information for students who complete a thesis as part of their master's degree program. Program faculty should advise students on the content and structure of the thesis project.

- Master's thesis course credit requirement
- Master's thesis committee
- Master's thesis in addition to comprehensive exam
- Master's thesis in lieu of comprehensive exam
- Submission of the Master's thesis for review
- Final submission of Master's thesis

Master's Thesis Course Credit Requirement

If the student plans to complete a thesis, whether in lieu of the comprehensive examination or in addition, the student must register for a minimum of six (6) semester hours of 699-Thesis. No more than six hours of thesis may be applied to the minimum credit requirements of a student's program.

Master's Thesis Committee

A Master's thesis committee is comprised of at least two members from the student's school/department who hold current Graduate Lecturer, Graduate Faculty or Graduate Faculty with the Doctoral Research Endorsement status.

Master's Thesis in Addition To Comprehensive Exam

If the master's thesis is required in addition to the comprehensive examination, the student needs to submit the thesis signed by two graduate faculty members to the Graduate School upon completion for an editorial review of document formatting. The Graduate Dean will be the final approval signature on the thesis.

Master's thesis in lieu of comprehensive exam

If the thesis is in lieu of the written comprehensive examination, school/department procedures for determining eligibility are used prior to conducting the thesis research. Thesis committee members must sign the final document indicating successful completion of the thesis. The student then submits the thesis to the Graduate School for an editorial review of document formatting. The Graduate Dean will be the final approval signature on the thesis.

Thesis research. Students planning to conduct research with human subjects (including interviews, surveys, etc.) should consult the policies on Research Ethics and [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) approval noted in the section on Academic and [Research Integrity and the Office of Sponsored Programs website](#).

A copy of the IRB Approval letter must be included in the appendix of your thesis.

Students planning to conduct research with animal subjects are required to apply to the Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC), signed by their Research Advisor, and receive approval prior to beginning research involving animal subjects. If you are doing animal-related research, refer to the website for Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC) [here](#).

Include official documentation of an approved IACUC application in an Appendix of your thesis.

Reporting results. Once the thesis (or project) has been defended, the program advisor must report the results to the Graduate School indicating a pass or failure. If the student plans to graduate, submitting the thesis result must be done on or before the [published deadline](#) to submit the results of the written comprehensive examination for that semester.

Submission of the Master's thesis for review. All students must follow the program and Graduate School guidelines for writing the [master's thesis](#).

After committee members sign off on the thesis, an electronic copy of the thesis and six (6) original signature pages should be submitted to the Graduate School for an editorial review and dean's approval at least 4 weeks, (28 calendar days) prior to the requested graduation date. The Graduate School website has a table of submission dates and [deadlines for graduation](#). The Graduate School will give the student all changes and corrections that must be made before the student turns in the final thesis. The Graduate School will confer the student's degree once we have received the final version and the specific forms for binding and billing, mailing and publication (optional). More detail about the final submission procedures can be found [here](#).

Students also have the option of uploading their thesis to UNC's digital repository, Digital Commons, curated by the University Library. Since it is searchable online through a normal browser search, student scholarship may be available to a wide audience of other students and scholars. There is no charge for this service.

Filing a Master's Thesis

Submit the [graduation application](#) by the deadline of the expected term of graduation.

- Thesis format check: You may schedule an appointment with the Graduate School's Thesis and Dissertation Specialist, Carol Steward (carol.steward@unco.edu) prior to the filing deadline. Please allow 15-30 minutes.
- Confirm that your committee chair has reported results of comps and/or defense of thesis in lieu of comps or equivalent to the Graduate School by the published deadline.

- Final review: Prior to the deadline, email the following to Carol.Steward@unco.edu at the Graduate School for review and Dean's approval at least 4 weeks, (28 calendar days) prior to the requested graduation date:
 - A digital copy of the approved thesis
 - Signed signature page (Turn in the original 6 signed pages to the Graduate School.)
 - IRB or IACUC letter of approval (if applicable)
 - [Verification of Research Subject or Participant form](#)
 - [Review Submission form](#). The Graduate School website has a table of submission dates and [deadlines for graduation](#). The Graduate School will give the student all changes and corrections that must be made before the student turns in the final thesis.

- After Graduate School approval, deliver four copies of your thesis to the Graduate School:
 - One copy on 25% or higher cotton, 20 lb. paper;
 - three copies on plain 20 lb. paper, for you, your chair, and the library circulation.

The Graduate School will bill your student account for binding (\$25 per copy bound) and a flat rate \$85 publishing fee.

- The Graduate School will confer the student's degree once we have received the final version and the specific forms for binding, billing, and publication (optional).

- More detail about the final submission procedures can be found on the [Graduate School website](#).

Doctoral Proposal and Dissertation/ Scholarly Research Project

The process of researching and writing a doctoral dissertation/scholarly project distinguishes a doctoral program from other graduate degrees. The level of research, communication with the research advisor and doctoral committee, creativity, and contribution to scholarship or practice in a discipline sets doctoral students apart. Upon the successful completion and final approval of a doctoral dissertation/scholarly project, one moves from being a student to becoming a member of the community of scholars and scholarly practitioners. Completing the final stages of a doctoral degree program can have moments of sheer frustration. It is important to understand the details of the process so that students do not cause or encounter unnecessary delays because of failure to follow the process and policies correctly.

- Doctoral proposal (xxx797) credit requirement (except DNP program)
- Doctoral dissertation credit requirement
- Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Defense
- Proposal Submission
- Receiving Course Grades for 797
- Moving into Doctoral Candidacy
- Receiving course completion grades for 799
- Request for an Alternate Format
- Dissertation Defense

Doctoral Proposal (Xxx797) Credit Requirement

For students in programs requiring a dissertation (i.e., D.A., Ed.D., Ph.D.) minimum credit for the dissertation proposal (797) is 4 semester hours. No more than 4 hours of dissertation proposal may be applied to the minimum credit requirements of a student's program.

Doctoral Dissertation Credit Requirement

The minimum required credit for the final dissertation (xxx799) is 12 hours. No more than 12 hours of dissertation may be applied to the minimum credit requirements of a student's program (e.g., if a student is enrolled in a 64-hour Ph.D. program, only 12 of the 64 hours may be dissertation credits). Students enrolled in a program requiring a

doctoral scholarly research project (formerly capstone project) are not required to register for 797 or 799 (e.g., Aud.D. or D.N.P.).

Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Defense

For a detailed description of the proposal hearing process, see the [Graduate Catalog](#).

The dissertation proposal or scholarly project proposal must be presented to the student's doctoral committee for approval prior to engaging in final data collection. Please note that students must have an approved IRB application or an approved IACUC (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee) application if using human participants or animal subjects, respectively, prior to data collection.

The dissertation or scholarly project proposal is crucial in the dissertation process as it prepares students for the future defense of their research and provides an opportunity for the committee members to provide feedback and require changes.

The student will provide the proposal document to the entire committee in a timely manner (typically at least two weeks prior to the proposal hearing). Students coordinate with their research advisor and doctoral committee to schedule the date, time and location of the proposal hearing. The proposal hearing is *not* scheduled with the Graduate School. The full committee, including the faculty representative (for dissertation committees), must be present at the proposal hearing.

After the proposal hearing, it will be the student's responsibility, in consultation with the research advisor, to address those concerns in a revised proposal. It is recommended that the student summarize the changes that have been incorporated into the revised proposal to assist the committee in identifying and locating the changes.

The revised proposal should then be circulated with a [signature page](#) to the committee for review and signature if they approve of the revisions. A second committee meeting is optional but could be required by the committee due to the extensive nature of the expected changes or to expedite the approval process. All committee members' signatures are required.

Students are advised to schedule their proposal hearing well before the [deadline](#) to submit the dissertation proposal. Proposals often require significant revision. IRB and IACUC approval often take several weeks. If the proposal and accompanying documents are not submitted by the deadline, students will not be moved into candidacy until the next semester.

Students are not permitted to defend their dissertation proposal and their dissertation in the same semester.

Proposal Submission. The approved dissertation proposal must be filed electronically with the Graduate School by the published deadlines. Students should submit:

- A digital copy of the approved proposal
- Signed signature page
- IRB or IACUC letter of approval (if applicable)
- [Verification of Research Subject or Participant form](#)

Incomplete submissions will not be recorded as completed. Students will not be moved into candidacy until all of the above documents are in.

Receiving Course Grades for 797. All 797 (proposal) hours will be evaluated by the Research Advisor and graded as "S" or "U". The evaluation should be based on the student's progress. The Graduate School strongly discourages students from taking 797 credits before they are working on their dissertation proposal. Students must receive "S" for 4 hours of 797 and submit their proposal and accompanying documentation before being admitted to candidacy.

Moving into Doctoral Candidacy. Requirements for doctoral students to advance to candidacy:

- results of passing the written comprehensive examination on file with the Graduate School
- results of passing the oral comprehensive examination on file with the Graduate School
- filing an approved dissertation proposal with the Graduate School
- submitting all the required paperwork for the dissertation proposal to the Graduate School.

Because the term Doctoral Candidate has a specific institutional connotation, doctoral students may not use the term 'Doctoral Candidate' until this status is documented by the Graduate School.

The Graduate School will consider the dissertation proposal as accepted unless the Graduate School Dean objects to the proposal. If the Dean objects, the proposal will be sent to the student and research advisor with specific written request for revisions.

Receiving course completion grades for 799

All 799 (dissertation) hours are evaluated by the student's Research Advisor and graded as "S" or "U". The evaluation should be based on objective goals and progress

on the dissertation. Students must pass at least 12 credits of 799, submit their dissertation, and have it cleared by the Graduate School.

Request for an Alternate Format. The Graduate School strongly recommends that students pay close attention to the formatting and citation style used in their discipline (APA, Turabian, MLA, etc.) and the [Graduate School Dissertation and Doctoral Capstone Format Manual](#).

Students should work closely with their research advisor on the appropriate format for the dissertation. The Graduate School accepts dissertations in a traditional 5-chapter format and a journal manuscript format, both of which are detailed in the [Graduate School Dissertation and Doctoral Capstone Format Manual](#).

Some students prefer to organize and present their work in formats that are unique to their discipline or that more effectively communicate their research. In such cases, the research advisor must email a request for an alternate format to the Thesis and Dissertation Specialist in the Graduate School before the writing begins. The request should explain the need for an alternate style, provide a rationale, and include an outline or relevant examples (e.g., articles, book chapters, books, or other works in the discipline). Alternate format requests must be reviewed and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School or the Dean's designee.

Dissertation Defense

The dissertation defense or capstone/scholarly research project defense is an important moment in a doctoral program. It would be difficult to over-emphasize how important it is for a student to work closely with the Research Advisor and other members of the committee in completing the dissertation. The Graduate School suggests (but does not require) that Research Advisors negotiate an agreement with their students stating expectations, a schedule for meetings (face-to-face or via video conferencing software), schedule for submission of chapters, the length of time it normally takes before the RA can respond with changes/corrections, and any other matters relevant to the dissertation process.

Students and their research advisors must ensure that they communicate with each other and all committee members when arranging the defense. Any examination which is not scheduled in advance through the Graduate School will not be recognized as valid and must be retaken.

Steps to follow:

Step 1: Student completes dissertation or capstone/scholarly research project in close communication with Research Advisor and committee members.

Step 2: Student [applies for graduation](#) by the published deadline for the expected commencement ceremony.

Step 3: Research advisor directs student to contact all committee members to arrange the date, time, and place of the dissertation or capstone/scholarly research project defense.

Step 4: Either the student or the research advisor notifies the Graduate School of the defense date by sending a completed and signed [Request to Schedule a Doctoral Examination](#) form to the Graduate School at least two weeks in advance of the defense date.

Step 5: The Graduate School approves the request only if the following conditions have been met:

- The committee members and faculty representative (for dissertation committees) must be the same as those approved by the Graduate School.
- The student's plan of study, written and oral comprehensive examination results must have been received and recorded by the Graduate School.
- The student must have been admitted into candidacy at least **one semester prior** to requesting to defend the dissertation.
- The Request to Schedule a Doctoral examination must be turned in to the Graduate School at least two weeks (14 calendar days) before the requested date of the defense to allow for the dissertation or capstone/scholarly research project defense to be publicized. *The defense may not be schedule for weekends or when University offices are closed for holidays as the defense is considered a public hearing.*
- The defense of the dissertation or capstone/scholarly research project must be scheduled at least five weeks (35 calendar days) prior to the anticipated [graduation date](#). If it is not, the student may not graduate until the following semester.

Step 6: The student and committee meet for the dissertation defense:

All committee members including the faculty representative (for dissertation committees) must be present (in-person or via electronic meeting platform, e.g., Zoom) through the entire defense or a substitute assigned according to the guidelines for Doctoral Committee. All members of the graduate faculty may attend the defense and may ask questions of the student after the committee members finish their questioning. Other graduate students may attend with permission from the research advisor. The committee is free to ask any questions pertaining to the dissertation or capstone/scholarly research project. The student is expected to understand and demonstrate expertise on all aspects of the study including the data analyses and theoretical or practical implications and should avoid being unaware of the procedure or logic followed in the data analyses.

There are [three possible outcomes](#) of a dissertation defense. These outcomes are explained in detail in the Graduate Catalog and are only highlighted in brief format here:

- **Pass:** If the student passes the defense, the research advisor shall obtain the signatures of the research committee members on the results form (which the research advisor will bring to the defense) and submit the form to the Graduate School.
- **May Pass:** If the research committee requires the student to meet stated conditions, the research advisor shall: list the conditions on the results form along with a timeline for completion, the amount of additional time allowed by the committee, and the number of additional defense meetings, obtain the signatures of the committee members on the results form, and submit the form to the Graduate School.

The student must make any corrections required by the research committee and submit the corrected dissertation to the committee members for their signatures.

The Graduate School retains the results form until the conditions are met **or** the committee deems the student has not met the conditions. After the student submits the corrected dissertation or capstone/scholarly research project to the committee, or otherwise attempts to meet the required conditions, the research advisor obtains the original results form from the Graduate School and returns it to the Graduate School with the results noted.

If the student does not meet the stated conditions, the Graduate School then notifies the student that the degree program is terminated.

- **Fail:** If a student fails the defense, the research advisor shall obtain the signatures of the research committee members on the results form and submit the form to the Graduate School. The Graduate School shall then notify the student that the student's degree program is terminated.

The committee must reach a **unanimous** decision on the final evaluation of the candidate's dissertation defense. If the committee cannot reach consensus, then committee members may initiate the [Dissertation Objection](#) process.

Thesis, Dissertation, and Scholarly Project Submission Process

Successfully completing a thesis project or passing a dissertation defense may prompt a student to feel as if the journey to the degree is finally over. **Hold on!** The end is in sight, but **there is still more to do!** Before UNC can confer the degree, the thesis, dissertation, or capstone/scholarly research project must be approved by the Graduate School and signed by the Graduate Dean.

The Graduate School staff members are aware that students feel a strong sense of ownership over their work. Completing a large piece of research and writing is very challenging and stressful. Anything that delays the movement toward graduation can be frustrating. At the same time, the theses, dissertations, and capstone/scholarly research projects that students complete represent the degree programs and research profile of the University of Northern Colorado. The Graduate School requires that all theses, dissertations, and capstones/scholarly research projects follow the formatting guidelines published in the Thesis Manual and the Dissertation/Capstone Manual. This applies even to those theses or dissertations that contain articles for publication; the articles must be reformatted according to the UNC style.

After the committee approves the thesis, dissertation, or capstone/scholarly research project, a student must submit a [properly formatted](#) electronic copy to the Graduate School's Thesis and Dissertation Specialist for review (carol.steward@unco.edu). Pay particular attention to the [deadlines](#) for filing the thesis or dissertation for the expected semester of graduation. Please be aware that the Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Specialist receives a high volume of materials each semester. It may take two to three weeks before students receive the results of their review and the list necessary corrections.

The Graduate School strongly recommends that students consult the [Thesis Manual](#) or [Dissertation/Capstone Manual](#) from the start of the writing process so that there are fewer revisions to make in the end. Students may also consider working with an editor or typist familiar with the university formatting guidelines.

Filing a Doctoral Dissertation or Scholarly Project

When filing a dissertation for Graduate School review and approval, here's what students need to do:

- Students may wish to schedule appointment for a format check with the Graduate School's Thesis and Dissertation Specialist, Carol Steward. Please allow 15-30 minutes for the consultation (recommended but not required; dependent upon the Specialist's availability). Distance students may turn in their thesis or dissertation/capstone prior to the "filing deadline" for a *preliminary review* of the format.
- Make any corrections required by your committee and receive committee approval for your revised document.

- Consider working with an [editor or typist](#) who is familiar with UNC formatting style. Information on typists is available on the Graduate School website.
- Ensure that the signed signature pages for your dissertation with the original signatures of each committee member are delivered to the Graduate School.
- Fill out and submit the [Review Submission Form](#) to trigger the review and approval process along with one electronic copy of the dissertation to the Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Specialist, Carol Steward (carol.steward@unco.edu). Please name the document in the following format: Last Name.First Initial.Date sent to Graduate School (e.g.: Smith.W.C.10.08.18).
- Don't wait until the last minute to submit your document for review. If you do not pay attention to the [deadlines](#) and leave yourself ample time for the review and correction process, you may be moved to the next semester for graduation/degree conferral.
- Be patient. It may take up to two to three weeks before the initial review of your document is complete. In any given semester, there may be as many as 70 dissertations, and dozens of master's theses, to review. The Graduate School limits the number of reviews to three per student per semester. If you do not make the necessary changes, you may not graduate until the next semester.
- Expect to make changes. You will receive a detailed review with lists of corrections and some examples of how the formatting should look. These are not suggestions but changes you must make before the document receives Graduate School approval. So, make the changes.
- If you're certain you've made all of the changes required, resubmit the document for a second review. You will either receive news that your dissertation is now in final form or you will receive additional corrections.
- Be sure you have everything corrected before the third time you submit the document; otherwise, you will be moved to the next semester for graduation so that you have additional time to perfect your document.
- Required fees are charged to your UNC bill and must be paid before your diploma and final transcript may be mailed to you.
 - Handling Fees for ALL students doing a Thesis, Scholarly Project or Dissertation: \$85 (flat fee)

- Upload your dissertation to the Digital UNC, the University Library's electronic repository of scholarly research by the UNC community. The repository is searchable from outside of UNC by Google and other browsers.

Graduating from the Degree Program

Each December and May, the Graduate School and UNC community celebrate with those who have successfully completed the requirements of their master's, specialist, or doctoral degrees. Graduation has two key components. The first is participation in the commencement ceremony. This is quite a joyous time for all of the graduates. The second part of graduating is the actual conferral of the degree by the university. As with all things in the university, there is a policy and process to follow when the time for graduation approaches.

- Application for Graduation
- Graduation Check
- Participation in Commencement Ceremony
- Degree Conferral

Application for Graduation

All graduate students must apply for graduation before the [published deadlines](#). Students are responsible for determining that the application has been filed with the Graduate School. Students must meet all continuous registration requirements. Applications for graduation require the signature of the program advisor. Notification will be sent to the doctoral student's research advisor that the student has applied for graduation and hooding. The graduation application is electronic and available in OnBase.

All graduation requirements must be completed and documentation submitted to the Office of the Registrar and the Graduate School by the Wednesday prior to the date of the commencement ceremony.

Graduation Check

Graduation requirements are checked in accordance with the UNC Graduate Catalog and Degree Works. The student must specify the Catalog under which he/she wishes to be evaluated and must meet all requirements in that Catalog. The Catalog used to meet graduation requirements is normally the one published for the academic year during which the student first enrolls after admission to the university.

The student may select any subsequent Catalog up to and including the current one, provided the student attended the university during that academic year. However, a student may not choose to meet partial requirements in one version of the Catalog and other requirements in another version of the Catalog.

Participating in the Commencement Ceremony

To participate in a Fall or Spring commencement ceremony, doctoral students must be admitted to candidacy and all students must be on the tentative graduation list prior to the date of the respective commencement ceremony. If students have not applied for graduation they will not appear on any graduation list. Students will not receive their degree diploma until they apply for graduation.

There is no summer commencement ceremony; all summer graduates are invited to participate in the spring or fall ceremony.

Degree Conferral

All graduation requirements must be completed, with relevant documentation submitted to the Office of the Registrar and Graduate School, as necessary, by the [published deadline](#) prior to degree conferral for the semester.

If a student has completed all degree requirements but has not applied for graduation, the student's degree will not be conferred. If, at a later time, the student applies for graduation, the conferral of the degree will not be backdated (e.g., if a student completed degree requirements in 2018 but does not file the graduation application until 2019, then the date of the degree conferral will be 2019).

Academic records are final upon degree conferral. Once degrees are conferred, a report is sent to the State of Colorado Department of Education. Under no circumstances will changes be made to academic record after degree conferral.

Program Closure and Program Termination

When students are admitted to graduate programs, the program faculty and Graduate School staff have every hope for the students' success. Unfortunately, it is sometimes necessary to close or terminate a student's graduate program.

- Program closure
- Petition to reopen program
- Program termination
- Remediation
- Egregious actions
- Notations on transcript
- Right to Appeal
- Readmission to UNC

Program Closure

A student's degree program may be closed when:

- the student fails to comply with the [Continuous Registration policy](#). If a student is not continuously registered for course credit for three consecutive semesters, the student will receive a warning letter. At the beginning of the fourth semester of non-enrollment, the student's program will be closed and moved to inactive status, even if the student's degree term limit has not expired.
- The student requests closure of the degree program.

Petition to Reopen Program

If, in either of the cases described above, an individual wants to the degree program reopened, the individual must reapply for the program and be readmitted.

Program Termination

A student's degree program may be terminated for one or more of the following reasons:

- The major school/department recommends that the student's program be terminated based on an overall evaluation of the student (see the process outlined in the next section)

- The graduate student has not maintained a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 in graduate level courses. A graduate student may not graduate with a cumulative grade point average below 3.00. If student's cumulative grade point average drops below 3.00 after taking at least 9 graduate level credit hours, a warning letter will be sent to the student. The degree program of a student who has been sent a warning letter will be terminated if the student's grade point average is below 3.00 after completing an additional 9 or more graduate level credit hours in which grades of "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" are earned. All grades earned during the semester in which the 9th hour is earned are used in the calculation of the grade average;
- The student fails the retake of the written comprehensive examination or its approved equivalent as reported to the Graduate School by the student's program;
- The student fails the retake of the oral comprehensive examination as reported to the Graduate School by the student's program;
- The student fails to meet the "may pass" conditions stipulated after the dissertation defense or oral comprehensive exam;
- A doctoral committee reports to the Graduate School the grade of "F" on a student's dissertation proposal (the failing grade should come with a recommendation from the committee to terminate the student's program).
- The student submits an unsatisfactory thesis or dissertation as determined by the student's program and the Graduate School;
- The student has engaged in research misconduct.
- The student has engaged in egregious academic misconduct or a documented pattern of academic misconduct.
- The student is expelled from the university through Community Standards disciplinary processes.

Remediation

The following procedures must be followed prior to submitting a recommendation to discontinue a graduate student's program for causes other than poor academic performance or academic/research misconduct. This process is typically used when students are not meeting (or resist meeting) the required elements of a program or when they exhibit behavior contrary to the professional standards outlined in the program expectations:

- The student must be informed of the pattern of behavior or incident(s) that has given rise to concern among the school/department faculty members and that led to the recommendation for program discontinuation. These concerns should be documented or, in the case of doctoral students, noted in the student's annual progress review.
- A master's student must be given an opportunity to meet with and address the observed behavior or incident with the student's advisor or program coordinator.
- A doctoral student must be given an opportunity to meet with the school/departments Graduate Program Committee (GPC) or equivalent, or with the student's doctoral committee for school/departments with no graduate program committee (programs have different names for this committee). Following the meeting, the GPC or doctoral committee must either reassert the concerns or withdraw the concerns in writing to the department chair or school director.

If the complaint arises from an unprofessional behavior or other behavioral concerns, the student will be given a clearly defined probationary period during which clear behavioral objectives are provided to either rectify the concerns or change the behavior. Clear means of assessing improvement will be provided.

Egregious Actions

If the complaint against a student result from an egregious violation of laws or published university or school/department policy, research ethics, rules or professional ethics, clear documented evidence of the incident(s) must be provided with the recommendation.

Notations on Transcript

If a student's program is terminated for any of the reasons noted in the previous sections, a notation of the termination will appear on the student's permanent UNC transcript.

If a student's program is terminated because of documented academic/research misconduct, the form of misconduct will also be noted permanently on the student's UNC transcript.

Right to Appeal

Students who believe that the decision to terminate their program was arbitrary, capricious, or in violation of university policy may have recourse to appeal the decision. Students should consult the [Academic Appeals](#) policy before making an appointment with the Associate Dean in the Graduate School.

Readmission

If a student's program has been terminated, the student may not apply or be considered for readmission to the same program.

The student may be considered for admission to a different degree program. The following policies apply:

- The student must apply for admission to a different degree program.
- If admitted, the student must complete all standard requirements of the program to which he/she has been admitted.
- A maximum of 9 semester hours from the terminated program may be counted in the new program if approved by the new program advisor and the Graduate School.

If the student's former program was terminated due to failure of the retake of the comprehensive examination or its equivalent, the student will be allowed only one opportunity to pass the comprehensive examination or approved equivalent in the new program.

Graduate School Resources and Opportunities

The Graduate School is beside you all the way through your program. This section hints at the variety of resources offered by the Graduate School staff.

Graduate Student Association

The [Graduate Student Association](#) is a student-run organization that advocates for the interests and contributes to the well-being of over 3,300 UNC graduate students. The GSA supports activities central to graduate education.

The GSA organizes the distribution of the largest pool of research and conference [grant funding](#) available to graduate students at UNC, coordinates a program of social and professional development events, and ensures graduate student representation on campus committees.

Graduate Student Professional Development

The [Graduate School's Student Engagement and Professional Development](#) staff members offer a program of professional development workshops and events throughout the academic year, usually in cooperation with campus partners including the University Library, Career Services, the UNC cultural centers, and graduate programs. The staff also organize the annual Graduate Teaching Assistant Conference and offer other sessions aimed at the pedagogical development and support of TAs. See the Graduate School website for an updated calendar of these opportunities. For access to a growing set of on-demand modules, see the Graduate School Professional Development page on Canvas.

Research and Research Awards

Research and creative works are an essential component of graduate education at UNC. Those faculty who receives Graduate Faculty status are active in research projects or creative works and serve as mentors to students in graduate programs. UNC places an emphasis on the ethical conduct of research and offers opportunities for students to present their work. Each year, several students receive the Hutchinson-Lahman Travel Award to offset the cost of travel to conferences where they present the results of their research projects.

Research Evenings. In the years since Dr. Susan Hutchinson and Dr. Maria Lahman hosted evenings for their Applied Statistics and Research Methods classes to present research posters in the basement rooms of Candelaria Hall, Research Evening at UNC has grown into a major event capping the fall and spring semesters. Almost 200 hundred students now present research project posters and make oral presentations each semester. The projects represent nearly every graduate program at UNC.

Research Day. The Center for Honors, Scholars and Leadership, partners with the Graduate School every spring semester to host Research Day. Undergraduate and graduate students present their research in a daylong conference-like atmosphere that allows the university community a glimpse of the variety of student research across campus. Prizes (usually in the form of gift cards) for best poster and oral presentations are awarded in a number of disciplines.

Hutchinson-Lahman Travel Award. Graduate students who present their projects at Research Evening are eligible for the Hutchinson-Lahman Research Award. The purpose of the award is to support graduate students' dissemination of their research at a national or regional conference. Winners receive travel funding to present at a professional conference.

Dean's Citation for Excellence

The Graduate Dean's Citation for Excellence is awarded each semester to students nominated by faculty members in recognition of superior achievement in their graduate studies. Each school/department may recommend graduate students completing their programs during the fall or spring term provided they meet these minimum criteria:

- A cumulative graduate grade point average of at least 3.75, and documented evidence of superior accomplishment while a graduate student at UNC.
- Documented evidence of superior accomplishment while a graduate student at UNC.

Students graduating in the summer may be nominated in either the spring or fall term of the year they graduate. The nomination is to be supported by:

- Written recommendations from graduate faculty of the academic program outlining the student's accomplishments and/or,
- Special recognition by an agency or organization (outside UNC) for scholarly accomplishment, academic achievement or contributions to society, and a student resume or vita.

Awardees are reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Graduate Council or their designee. Recommendations for awards are forwarded to the Graduate Dean for final selection. The total number of awards will not exceed 3 percent of the graduating class.

Graduate Dean's Citation for Outstanding Thesis, Scholarly Project and Dissertation

The Graduate Dean's Citation for Outstanding Thesis, Capstone and Dissertation may have six awards each semester with two in each category. Faculty members nominate a thesis, capstone or dissertation by submitting a letter of nomination that specifies contributions of the study to the discipline.

Knowing Rights and Obligations: University Policies

Name Changes

Application for admission to the University requires students to use their legal name. The legal name must be the name that is recorded with the Social Security Administration. The same is true for a student to change their name; the University will require proof of that legal name by evidence of the social security card. The legal name is imperative at both the state and federal level reporting (i.e. financial aid, College Opportunity Fund, employment). Name changes are made through the Registrar's Office, not through the Graduate School.

Preferred Name

A preferred name is the first name by which an individual wants to be identified that is other than the individual's legal name is a "preferred name". UNC will provide a process for any student to include a preferred first name in UNC's information systems. While UNC will work toward primary use of the preferred name, students should be aware that the use of the legal name will continue to be necessary in multiple communications (on your thesis or dissertation) and processed due to UNC business or legal requirements and/or system limitations.

UNC reserves the right to deny a request to include a preferred name in its information systems if the request is fraudulent, carries connotations offensive to good taste and decency, or violates the Board Policy Manual, University Regulations and/or Student Code of Conduct. Issues relating to such matters may be referred to the VP of Campus Community and Climate and the Dean of Students Office for consideration and resolution.

UNC will investigate reports of misuse and abuse of the preferred name process/policy statement. Depending on the circumstances, those involved in such investigations may include Human Resources, Dean of Students, Provost, University Counsel, and/or appropriate law enforcement agencies.

The university also reserves the right to remove preferred names that are deemed misrepresentative and suspend the individual's privilege to update their preferred name. To initiate the process to include a preferred first name in a student record, the [Individual Data Change Request Form](#) must be completed and submitted to the Registrar's Office.

Students with Disabilities

Students are encouraged to contact [Disability Support Services](#) at (970) 351-2289 before the start of the semester to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. Any student requesting disability accommodation must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice

and providing documentation. Faculty are not permitted to provide accommodation without notice and documentation from the student.

Honor Code

All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

Academic Misconduct

UNC's policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed by UNC faculty. The penalties for academic misconduct range from failure of an assignment to program termination. Academic misconduct includes research misconduct and failure to secure proper research approval from IRB or IACUC. For additional information, please see the Dean of Student's website, Student Handbook link and current catalog.

Discrimination

It is a violation of University Policy to discriminate in the provision of education or employment opportunities, benefits, or privileges, to create discriminatory work or academic conditions, or to use discriminatory evaluative standards in employment or education settings if the basis of that discriminatory treatment is, in whole or part, the person's race, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or political affiliation. Concerns about discrimination at UNC can be submitted through [here](#).

Sexual Harassment (Title IX)

For detailed information on UNC's sexual misconduct policies and information about Title IX, please see the Title IX Coordinator's [webpages](#). Sexual misconduct is a violation of UNC policy and federal law. The University of Northern Colorado prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct or discrimination that violates federal or state law, or the University's antidiscrimination policy and grievance procedure. Reports of sexual misconduct will be investigated thoroughly by the Title IX Coordinator's staff. Concerns or reports of sexual misconduct may be made through the website noted above.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. The Registrar's [website](#) maintains a page of FAQs for instructors about FERPA.

Student Bill of Rights (State of Colorado)

The Student Bill of Rights passed by the Colorado legislature ensures that students in public educational institutions have certain rights.

Connecting with University Resources

The University of Northern Colorado offers all graduate students many forms of support and opportunities to assist with their education, professional develop, and general well-being. To access any of the resources listed below, simply click the resource to go directly to the office or organizational website.

Academic and Career:

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Career Services](#)
- [Center for International Education](#)
- [Disability Support Services](#)
- [Registrars' Office](#)
- [Research Consulting Lab](#)
- [UNC Bookstore](#)
- [UNC Card](#)
- [UNC Library](#)
- [Writing Center](#)

Financial:

- [Bursar's Office](#)
- [Financial Aid Office](#)
- [Veteran Services](#)

Legal and Safety:

- [Campus Safety Office](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Dean of Students Office](#)
- [UNC Police \(police escort and patrol service\)](#)
- [Student Legal Services](#)

Housing and Transport:

- [Housing and Residential Education](#)
- [Dining Services](#)
- [Off Campus Life Office](#)
- [Parking](#)
- [Alternative Transportation](#)

Student Activities:

- [Graduate Student Association](#)
- [Athletics](#)

[The Mirror– Campus Newspaper](#)
[Office of Student Life](#)
[Recreation Center](#)
[Alumni Association](#)

Professional Development:

[Graduate Student Professional Development](#)
[Center for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning](#)
[Teaching Portfolio\(pdf\)](#)
[Professional Academic Portfolio \(pdf\)](#)
[Teaching Philosophy Example](#) by Deborah Romero, Ph.D.
[Teaching Philosophy Example](#) by Linda L. Black, Ed.D.
[Teaching Philosophy Template](#)
[Teaching Philosophy Guidebook](#) by Karron Lewis

Financial:

[Bursar's Office](#)
[Financial Aid Office](#)
[Veteran Services](#)
[Bear Pantry](#)

Gender and Sexuality:

[Gender and Sexuality Resource Center](#)

Student Health:

[Student Health Center](#)
[Counseling Center](#)
[Sexual Assault Resources](#)

International Students:

[International Admissions](#)
[Center for International Education](#)
[Intensive English Program](#)

Cultural Centers:

[Marcus Garvey Cultural Center](#)
[Cesar Chavez Cultural Center](#)
[Asian/Pacific American Student Services](#)
[Native American Student Services](#)

Graduate School Staff – Who to Contact

The staff of the Graduate School and International Admissions are here to help. Whether you have questions about admissions, change of major, thesis or dissertations, academic appeals, or graduation, our knowledgeable team will assist you in finding the answers.

Support and Resources

Jeri-Anne Lyons

Associate Vice-President for Research and Dean

Jeri.lyons@unco.edu

- Enrollment planning
- Academic Portfolio
- Graduate Policy
- Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Cindy Wesley

Associate Dean of Academics

Cindy.wesley@unco.edu

- Academic Appeals
- Student concerns
- Graduate Faculty status
- Academic policy
- Graduate student professional development & TA training

Brendan Price

Degree Compliance Specialist

Brendan.price@unco.edu

- Transfer Credit
- Degree Works
- Petitions for Exception
- Compliance
- Graduation – auditing applications for graduation and awarding degrees

Susan Pryor

Assistantship and Scholarship Specialist

Susan.pryor@unco.edu

- Processing assistantship agreements
- Posting scholarship awards
- Troubleshooting issues regarding assistantships and scholarships

Carol Steward

Thesis and Dissertation Specialist

Carol.steward@unco.edu

- Graduate Faculty Applications
- Doctoral Research Committees
- Doctoral Examination Scheduling
- Thesis, Scholarly Project and Dissertations

Graduate Student Association

To be elected

Director, UNC Graduate Student Association

- GSA newsletter (biweekly, goes out on Mondays)
- GSA grant process: create applications, review, distribute awards
- GSA events and workshops
- GSA website and social media