

**ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Graduate Education Admissions Policy and Program**  
**Guidelines**

## **Preamble**

This policy shall govern graduate education policy at Elizabeth City State University. The provisions of this policy shall not supersede the terms and conditions set forth in legally contracted matters. The vision of graduate education at Elizabeth City State University is to provide students with advanced knowledge and skills, utilizing innovative technologies that will secure the future intellectual leadership in the knowledge economy. These policies govern: application procedures, types of admission, mission, vision, program outcomes, program guidelines, residence, program of study, international students, special students(non-degree seeking), auditors, undergraduate enrollment for graduate level courses, course load, course substitutions and waivers, transfer credits, requirements for continuous enrollment, language requirements, admissions to candidacy, Thesis/Product of Learning, policy on completion of Thesis/Product of Learning, degree time limitations/stature of limitations, student conduct, academic sanctions, appeals procedures for admission, retention, exit, grade change, transfer credits decisions and scholarship dishonesty, registration procedures, schedule changes, withdrawal from classes, withdrawal from the University, class attendance requirements, grades and scholarships, definition of grades, change of grades, privacy of students educational records policy, tuition and fees, type of fee amount, fees prorated by credit hours, refund policy, payment policy, financial obligations, financial aid, application deadlines, graduation requirements, application for graduation, commencement exercises, counseling services, testing services, University withdrawals, disability services, career services, university archives, academic computing center and end-user support services, and graduate faculty policy.

## **1. Application Procedures**

Qualified graduates of accredited colleges and universities are eligible to seek admission to Graduate Education programs at Elizabeth City State University. Applications are received on the basis of qualifications, without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age or disabilities. Transcripts and other credentials become the property of the university and must remain on file in the appropriate offices.

Admission to pursue graduate study at Elizabeth City State University is accomplished in two steps as follows:

### **Step One: Admission to Elizabeth City State University**

Submit application forms, transcripts, and other credentials to the Office of Graduation Education

A non-refundable application processing fee may be required to accompany the application for admission. The Office of Graduate Education will create a file for the student and, when all required documents have been received, will forward a copy of the completed file to the designated Graduate Program Coordinator.

**Admission to Elizabeth City State University means only that the student will be permitted to enroll in courses at the graduate level, and does not necessarily imply that the student will be admitted to a program leading to an advanced degree. Admission to courses must be approved by the Graduate Program Coordinator. The non-degree seeking graduate student is further urged to seek advisement regarding any course enrollment in light of its relevance to intended degree matriculation, as well as from the standpoint of the advisability of enrollment in prerequisite courses.**

### **Step Two: Admission to a Selected Graduate Degree Program**

When the student's file is complete, it will be reviewed by the Departmental Admissions Committee, as initiated by the Graduate Program Coordinator. A decision will be made relative to the admission/non-admission of the student to the program. The Graduate Program Coordinator will inform the Director of Graduate Education, in writing, of the admissions decision. The Director of Graduate Education will inform the applicant, in writing, about the admissions decision.

*The student must assume full responsibility for being knowledgeable about regulations governing graduate work.*

## **2. Types of Admission**

### **A. Unconditional Admission**

A student must satisfy the following criteria for unconditional admission:

- i. An earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.
- ii. Minimum overall undergraduate GPA of 2.5 (on a 4.0 scale) or a 3.0 average for

the last four semesters (60 credit hours) of study for the bachelor's degree. Applicants may be admitted without reference to their baccalaureate record if they earned at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA in a master's degree program completed at an accredited college or university or if they earned at least a 3.3 cumulative GPA for at least 12 credit hours of a master's or doctoral degree program.

- iii. Graduate Programs in Education: (MSA & MEd) have accreditation cohort GPA requirements of 3.0. If the GPA from your most recent degree is under a 3.0 student may be admitted under provisional status or as a special student until the 3.0 GPA requirement is met.”
- iv. Interview Requirements: As part of the application process, MSA applicants are required to participate in a virtual interview with program coordinator. MEd applicants may be asked to interview if GPA is below 3.0 or candidate is new to the field of educator preparation.
- v. Completed and signed application for admission.
- vi. Pay the non-refundable application processing fee (if applicable) to accompany the application for admission. Certified checks or money orders should be made payable to Elizabeth City State University.
- vii. Provide two sets of official transcripts in sealed envelopes sent directly from each college and university previously attended and official transcripts from all other graduate study.
- viii. Provide three completed Graduate Recommendation Forms in sealed envelopes from persons qualified to evaluate the applicant's abilities to pursue graduate study in the proposed academic disciplines.
- ix. Provide a completed Health Form.
- x. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or Miller Analogies Test (MAT) recommended, but not required.

A student must satisfy the following additional criteria if applicable:

- i. Provide Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).
- ii. International English Language Testing System (IELTS).
- iii. Applicants may be requested to submit a statement of purpose or a research prospectus for respective graduate programs.
- iv. Completed Financial Guarantee Form, if applicable.
- v. Completed NC Residency Form

## **B. Admission with Conditions**

With the approval of the Office of Graduate Education, the Graduate Program Coordinator of his/her proposed program and the chairperson, a student may be admitted

with conditions. The student must satisfy the same criteria for the Unconditional Admission, but upon review of the student's application, his/her acceptance may have specific conditions rendered by the respective department. These conditions may require the student to maintain a certain GPA or take additional courses that may better prepare them for their program of study. If these conditions are not met within the designated timeframe established by the Graduate Program Coordinator, the student may be dismissed from the program.

A student must satisfy the following criteria for admission with conditions:

- i. An earned Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.
- ii. A minimum overall undergraduate GPA of 2.5 (on a 4.0 scale) or a 3.0 average for the last four semesters (60 credit hours) of study for the bachelor's degree. Applicants may be admitted without reference to their baccalaureate record if they earned at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA in a master's degree program completed at an accredited college or university or if they earned at least a 3.3 cumulative GPA for at least 12 credit hours of a master's or doctoral degree program
- iii. Graduate Programs in Education (MSA & MEd) have accreditation cohort GPA requirements of 3.0. If the GPA from your most recent degree is under a 3.0 you may be admitted under conditional status or as a special student until the 3.0 GPA requirement is met.
- iv. Interview Requirements: As part of the application process, MSA applicants are required to participate in a virtual interview with program coordinator. MEd applicants may be asked to interview if GPA is below 3.0 or candidate is new to the field of educator preparation.
- v. Completed and signed application for admission.
- vi. Pay the non-refundable application processing fee (If Applicable) to accompany the application for admission. Certified checks or money orders should be made payable to Elizabeth City State University.
- vii. Provide official transcripts in sent directly from each college or university previously attended and official transcripts from all other graduate study.
- viii. Provide three completed Graduate Recommendation Forms from persons qualified to evaluate the applicant's abilities to pursue graduate study in the proposed academic disciplines.
- ix. Provide a completed Health Form.
- x. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or Miller Analogies Test (MAT) recommended, but not required.

A student must satisfy the following additional criteria if applicable:

- i. Provide Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).
- ii. International English Language Testing System (IELTS).
- iii. Applicants may be requested to submit a statement of purpose or a research prospectus for respective graduate programs
- iv. Completed Financial Guarantee Form, if applicable.
- v. Completed NC Residency Form.

### **C. Special Student Admission**

ECSU recognizes the admission classification of special students. This designation is a temporary classification for persons who wish to take licensure renewal, transfer of credits to another institution, take courses for personal satisfaction, or for those with incomplete Graduate Application Packets. This classification terminates on the date of the student's completion of successful application (not later than the end of the second semester of enrollment) or admission to a Graduate Program. Persons admitted as special students are not candidates for a degree. *They may take up to nine (9) credits before being admitted to a program leading to a Master's degree.* Credits earned while a student is designated as a special graduate student may later be applied toward the fulfillment of the requirements of a graduate degree program provided:

- i. The action is recommended by the Graduate Program Coordinator of the student's intended major and approved by the chairperson.
- ii. The credit was earned within the past two years.
- iii. The amount of credit does not exceed nine semester hours.
- iv. The work is "B" level or better, and
- v. The work has not been taken to remove deficiencies. (Deficiencies are defined as qualifications needed in order to meet Graduate Education admission standards).

### **3. Mission Statement**

Graduate Education is committed to the mission of Elizabeth City State University. Quality graduate degree programs are designed to meet the needs of the citizens of Northeastern North Carolina, the State, the Nation and the Global Community. Dedicated faculty and staff prepare students in a challenging, supportive, highly technical environment to compete and excel in a technologically advanced society for the Twenty- First Century Global Economy.

#### **4. Vision Statement**

The vision of Graduate Education at Elizabeth City State University is to provide students with the advanced knowledge and skills, utilizing innovative technologies that will secure the future intellectual leadership in the knowledge economy. Our students will serve as leaders in Northeastern North Carolina, the State, the Nation and the Global Community.

#### **5. Program Outcomes**

The goals of the Graduate Education Program at Elizabeth City State University are:

- A.** To develop an understanding of research methodology and the application of research findings to advance knowledge.
- B.** To develop the ability to master and utilize discipline-appropriate skills in a problem solving environment.
- C.** To develop skills, knowledge and experience necessary for professional employment, professional growth, and/or further graduate study.
- D.** To develop the ability to communicate effectively in ways that are appropriate to a given discipline or field.

#### **6. Program Guidelines**

##### **A. Academic Structure**

Elizabeth City State University operates on the semester system. The fall and spring semesters are approximately fifteen weeks each. The summer school consists of two five- week sessions or one ten-week session. The university is in session six days a week. Classes usually meet for one hour three times a week, 1.5 hours twice per week and some meet for three hours in one evening or on Saturdays. Online courses are also available.

##### **B. Residence Requirements**

Based on individual departmental requirements, you must complete between 24 to 30 semester hours required for the master's degree must be earned in residence study at the university. No more than six (6) credit hours may be transferred from other institutions provided that these credits were completed within 6 years at the time of the transfer request. Courses numbered 500 or higher can be counted toward completion of the graduate degree. Graduate students who seek and obtain permission to take courses at other institutions for subsequent transfer to the degree program at Elizabeth City State University may obtain credit only with permission from the student's advisor, Graduate Program Coordinator of the major school/department.

### **C. Residence Status for Tuition Purposes**

**Effective February 20, 2017, the State Education Assistance Authority (SEAA) will manage and process all residency determinations, reclassification requests, and appeals for new and continuing undergraduate and non-degree seeking students. After this date, any new or readmitting undergraduate or non-degree seeking student who would like to apply for in-state residency consideration for tuition purposes will need to apply for reclassification through the North Carolina Residency Determination Service controlled by SEAA.**

#### **Residency Determination Service (RDS)**

**The purpose and mission of RDS is to provide leadership and administration of residency determinations in accordance with North Carolina residency laws and applicable federal statutes. The RDS goal is to provide students access to transparent information and the opportunity to claim NC residency in a simple, accurate and straightforward manner. For more information on residency for tuition purposes, contact RDS at:**

**NCresidency.org  
844-319-3640 (toll free phone)  
919-835-2290 (local phone)  
919-835-2427 (fax)  
[rdsinfo@ncresidency.org](mailto:rdsinfo@ncresidency.org)**

#### **Program of Study**

Each student's program of study is planned by the department or area advisor in consultation with the student. All students must have a program of study, and it is the student's responsibility to follow the program of study. The advisor should forward a copy of each student's approved program of study and the completed Program of Study Approval Form to the Graduate Program Coordinator and Office of Graduate Education.

#### **International Students**

**English Proficiency:** If English is not your native language and you have not completed at least one year of education at a United States school, you are required to take a standardized English language exam. The University accepts either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and scores must be forwarded to the University by the testing service. An IBT TOEFL score of

20 on each section for a total minimum score of 80, 550 (paper-based), or 213 (computer-based), or IELTS score of 6.5 is recommended to meet the language exam requirement. Official reports of standardized admissions test results must be sent directly to the University by the testing service (GRE or MAT). Check for specific program requirements.

### **Undergraduate Enrollment for Graduate Level Courses**

Undergraduate students at ECSU who plan to undertake graduate study at ECSU and who have no more than 12 semester hours of work to fulfill all requirements for the bachelor's degree may enroll in graduate classes at the University. Students must have a grade point average of 3.0 (4.0 Scale) and be accepted for admission as a special student before requesting dual registration. For graduate credit to be applied to an ECSU graduate degree the students must have received written permission from the undergraduate advisor, Graduate Program Coordinator, course instructor and Department Chairperson. Students should be advised that approval for dual registration neither guarantees nor constitutes acceptance into any specific graduate program.

### **Transfer of Graduate Credits While Enrolled in Undergraduate Program at ECSU**

A course that was completed while a student was enrolled as an undergraduate at ECSU may be considered for transfer to a master's program provided that (1) it is at the 500 level or higher; (2) the grade is B or better; (3) it was not counted to fulfill undergraduate requirements; and (4) it is recommended by the Coordinator of the Department's Graduate Program and the Department Chair at the time of the student's enrollment in the Graduate School. Students admitted to the Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's (ABM) program may use up to 15 hours of graduate credit to satisfy requirements for both the bachelors and the master's degrees. No graduate credit will be allowed for a course completed in an undergraduate classification at another institution, except for those enrolled in and successfully completing an approved ABM program.

### **Course Load**

Students enrolled for nine (9) or more credit hours during a regular semester and six (6) or more credit hours during each summer session are classified as full-time students. No more than twelve (12) credit hours of work may be taken in one regular semester or six (6) credit hours of work during a summer session unless approval is granted by the student's Advisor, Department Chairperson, Graduate Program Coordinator, and the Director of Graduate Education.

### **Course Substitutions and Waivers**

Only under special circumstances, will substitution for or exemption from the prescribed curriculum be permitted. To substitute or waive a course, students must submit a request on



the appropriate form to their advisor. The form must be approved by the Advisor, Graduate Program Coordinator, Department Chairperson in the discipline in which students are seeking a degree (if applicable), the Director of Graduate Education, and the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

### **Transfer Credits**

A maximum of six (6) semester hours of transfer credits for graduate courses with a grade of 3.0 or higher (4.0 scale) may be accepted toward completion of a master's degree at Elizabeth City State University. The remaining hours must be earned in residence. Only courses that counted toward a degree at an accredited institution will be considered for transfer credit. Credits gained in correspondence courses at any institution will not be accepted. Students wishing to transfer credits must submit official transcripts and other appropriate course identification information to their advisor for initial approval. The recommendation of the advisor is forwarded to the Graduate Program Coordinator, Department Chair, and the Director of Graduate Education for final approval. Course work may be transferred upon the student's admission into a graduate education program. Course work transferred must not be older than six (6) years at the time the degree is awarded.

### **Requirements for Continuous Enrollment**

A student enrolled in any graduate program must maintain satisfactory progress toward the degree. The student is expected to achieve a satisfactory grade ("A" or "B") in all course work attempted for graduate credit. A student who receives in excess of two "C" grades within six hours of study or one "F" grade in any three-credit course can be withdrawn from the university. When special circumstances warrant, students may appeal withdrawal by petitioning the Graduate Council. The petition must be supported by the Graduate Program Coordinator, Department Chair of the student's School, and forwarded to the Director of Graduate Education. The petition will be forwarded to the Graduate Council for a decision.

### **Language Requirements**

Students should contact the major department for specific language requirements.

### **Admission to Candidacy**

Admission to Elizabeth City State University in a degree program does not carry with it admission to candidacy for the graduate degree. Approval of degree candidacy by the Office of Graduate Education certifies that the student's academic performance has been reviewed and that permission to pursue the program of study to completion has been granted. Admission to candidacy, granted by the Director of Graduate Education when students have completed a minimum of twelve (12) – fifteen (15) credit hours, requires the following:

1. Admission to a degree-seeking program.
2. Completion of a minimum of twelve (12) – fifteen (15) and not more than Eighteen (18) credit hours of graduate study at Elizabeth City State University, with a GPA of 3.0 or higher at the time of application for admission to candidacy.
3. Departmental assignment of an advisor.
4. Departmental approval of the program of study.
5. Satisfaction of other conditions affecting admission.

The following is the procedure for requesting admission to degree candidacy:

1. The Graduate Program Coordinator submits an Admission to Candidacy Form to the office of Graduate Education after the student completes twelve (12) to fifteen (15) hours of graduate study at Elizabeth City State University.
2. The Office of Graduate Education processes the form and distributes copies to the student advisor, Graduate Program Coordinator department chair.

### **Thesis/Product of Learning**

A written Thesis or Product of Learning is required for all master's candidates. The purpose of the Thesis/Product of Learning is to provide an experience in scholarship and research, which will be of value to the student in understanding how new knowledge is developed. The Thesis/Product of Learning provides tangible evidence of the student's development as a scholar and especially his or her capacity to discover and effectively communicate research findings. The Thesis/Product of Learning should expand the body of knowledge in the student's chosen field.

The Thesis/Product of Learning should represent an original investigation into a subject, which has been approved by the student's Thesis/Product of Learning Graduate Advisement Committee and the Department Chair. The Director of Graduate Education will ensure that Graduate Education guidelines and policies are adhered to and will signify completion of requirements for the Thesis/Product of Learning. The student must choose a Thesis/Product of Learning Committee in consultation with the major advisor.

The Committee will consist of a minimum of three (3) –five (5) full-time graduate faculty members, one of whom must be Chair of the Thesis/Product of Learning Graduate Advisement Committee and one from outside the student's major department. The Committee must be approved by the Graduate Program Coordinator, the Department Chair, and the Director of Graduate Education. Each student must submit a proposal to do a Thesis/Product of Learning. The proposal must be approved by the Thesis/Product of

Learning Graduate Advisement Committee. The Director of Graduate Education will ensure that Graduate Education guidelines and policies are adhered to and will signify completion of the proposal.

Once the Thesis/Product of Learning is completed, an application for its oral defense must be filed with the Director of Graduate Education by the Chairman of the Thesis/Product of Learning Graduate Advisement Committee. The application must be filed at least one (1) week prior to the date that the presentation is to be held and must be accompanied by certification that the Thesis/Product of Learning is complete except for revisions, which may be necessary as a result of the oral presentation. A written notice of the time and place of the oral presentation of the Thesis/Product of Learning will be sent by the Chair of the Committee to the candidate and each member of the Committee. The oral presentation is an academic evaluation of the Thesis/Product of Learning by the Committee, and is open to committee members, university faculty, and approved guests. During the oral presentation, the Thesis/Product of Learning Graduate Advisement Committee may ask the candidate questions regarding subject matter in the student's major field. The oral presentation must be at least four (4) weeks before graduation, and the results must be sent within three (3) days of the defense to the Director of Graduate Education. A student may present the Thesis/Product of Learning a maximum of two times. The maximum credit allowed for the Thesis is three (3) semester hours, Three (3) copies of the Thesis/Product of Learning and an electronic copy in final form must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Education prior to graduation.

#### **Policy on Completion of Thesis/Product of Learning**

Students who have completed their course work and the number of Thesis/Product of Learning hours for credit required in their graduate degree program must take one of two actions as follows:

1. Students who will continue to use university resources in completing their degrees must enroll in and pay tuition and fees for the culminating Thesis/Product of Learning Capstone Courses as appropriate for all degree programs. The hours will not count toward the degree.
2. A student must be enrolled in a Thesis/Product of Learning Capstone Course for credit during the semester in which they complete their graduate work or are scheduled to receive their degree.

#### **Degree Time Limit/Statute of Limitations**

All graduate degrees, including the Thesis/Product of Learning, must be completed within six (6) calendar years from the date the first course carrying graduate degree credits

applicable to the student's program are begun.

### **Student Conduct**

Students enrolled at Elizabeth City State University are expected to maintain high standards of honor, scholastically and morally. Self-discipline should be the primary goal of each student. Registration at the university implies the student's acceptance of the published rules and regulations as stated in the Student Handbook and other university publications. The integrity and behavior of students will reflect upon themselves, their families, and Elizabeth City State University. Students are also expected to respect the rights and privileges of others, and abide by the laws of the city, state, and nation, and by all of the rules and regulations of Elizabeth City State University.

Students should avoid all forms of *Scholastic Dishonesty*, such as the following:

- A. Plagiarism.** Copied work, word for word, or in substance, from the writings of others and presented as one's written work for credit. It is always assumed that the written work offered for credit is the student's own unless proper credit is given the original author.
- B. Collusion.** Working with another person in the preparation of notes, themes, reports, or other written work offered for credit unless collaboration is specifically approved in advance by the instructor.
- C. Cheating on Examination or Quiz.** Giving or receiving, offering or soliciting information, or using prepared material in an examination or a quiz. When taking an examination or quiz, students are expected to refrain from talking, bringing notes and books, and remain in the room until the examination is finished unless the instructor approves of the student's leaving after finishing the examination or quiz.
- D. Impersonation.** Allowing another person to attend classes, take examinations, or do grade assignments for an enrolled student under his or her name is strictly forbidden. Incidents of academic dishonesty, which are reported to and affirmed by the Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee, will result in punitive measures ranging from issuing a grade of failure to expulsion from the university. The action taken will be in accordance with the severity of the act as adjudicated by the parties, which are responsible for administering this policy, namely the Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee, the Director of Graduate Education and the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

**Academic Sanctions**

Students with a cumulative grade point average below the required standard (3.00) or those that attain a letter grade of “C” in 3+ credit hours of study must limit their course load to six (6) semester hours and are subject to an academic warning for the first occurrence, and/or suspension on the second occurrence. Students that attain a letter grade of “F” in any three-credit course will be withdrawn from the university. Students have the right to appeal academic suspensions and dismissals and apply for readmission if they are of the conviction that failure to maintain the minimum cumulative grade point average for continued enrollment was due to extenuating circumstances. Students may appeal academic suspension and apply for readmission to the university by adhering to the following procedure:

**Step I.**

Students seeking readmission must write a letter, with appropriate documentation, to the Chairperson of the Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee at least four (4) working days before the official late registration period ends. The letter should be addressed to:

Chairperson of the Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee  
Elizabeth City State University  
1704 Weeksville Road, Campus Box 943  
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

**Step II.**

Students must secure a letter containing an approved schedule of classes (not to exceed six (6) semester hours) from their academic advisor and endorsed by the Graduate Program Coordinator and Department Chair.

**Step III.**

The Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee will convene two (2) working days before the official late registration period ends each semester.

**Step IV.**

The decisions of the Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee will be forwarded to the Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and the Office of the University Registrar for implementation. Students returning after suspension will have a limited class load of not more than six (6) semester hours during the first semester of readmission and must maintain a 3.0 grade point average until they have satisfied the minimum scholastic average requirement. Students who have been suspended a second time for academic reasons may not apply for readmission within a minimum of one semester year from the date of suspension. Students who have been suspended a third

time for academic reasons are permanently dismissed unless special permission is granted for readmission by the Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee.

### **Appeals Procedure for Admission, Retention, Exit, Grade Change, Transfer Credits Decisions and Scholarship Dishonesty**

The appeals procedure provides each graduate student the opportunity to formally appeal an admission, retention, exit, grade change, or scholarship dishonesty decision in the graduate program according to due process. When such disputes arise, students should immediately contact their advisor. Each appeal submitted according to this procedure must be an individual action by an individual student. Class action appeals by one student on behalf of several students are not permitted.

#### **Step I.**

If a student wishes to appeal a decision, she or he must notify his or her advisor. The concern(s) should be put in writing, with a copy to the graduate coordinator, within five (5) working days after the student has received written notice of the action. The student's written request should include a brief summary of the facts of the case and reasons for making the appeal. With the aid of the graduate coordinator in scheduling an appointment, the student will meet as soon as possible with the advisor, Graduate Program Coordinator, and department head to privately discuss the disputed decision.

#### **Step II.**

If the dispute is not resolved in Step I to the student's satisfaction and if the student still believes that the appeal has merit based on the facts of the case, she or he has the right to file a formal written appeal with the Chairperson who will forward it immediately to the Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee. Guidelines for filing a formal admission, retention or exit decision appeal are as follows:

- A.** An appeal must be based on evidence that the program area in question has been in making its decision. The written appeal must describe specifically the challenged action of the program area. The students also should present all other evidence or documentation in support of his or her appeal;
- B.** An appeal must be kept on file in the Graduate Program Coordinator's office fifteen (15) working days after the meeting described in Step I has taken place. Within ten (10) working days after receipt of the written appeal, the Graduate Program Coordinator must schedule a hearing before the Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee. The committee shall be composed of three faculty members,

one graduate student, and the graduate Program Coordinator serving as an ex-officio member. The faculty members shall be members of the Graduate Council, with alternates serving when there is a conflict of interest. The two graduate students on the committee shall be selected by the Graduate Program Coordinator. The student appellant may, however, request in advance in writing that the two students be excused and that his or her appeal be heard only by the three faculty members. The committee shall conduct a hearing according to the following guidelines:

- i. At least 48 hours prior to the hearing, the Graduate Program Coordinator will distribute to committee members any written information in support for either the student or the program area involved.
- ii. A detailed record shall be kept of the hearing, preferably a taped or video recording. The transcribed record will be signed by members of the Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee asserting that the transcript is a true record of the hearing proceedings. Records of any Step II appeal shall be kept on file in the graduate program coordinator's office and copies shall be provided, upon request, to the student who has initiated the appeal or the program area which is involved in the appeal. Usual and customary costs associated with duplicating appeals records shall be borne by the graduate program area requesting copies.
- iii. The hearing shall be closed.
- iv. Both the student and representative(s), and the Graduate Program Coordinator of the involved graduate program area, shall be permitted an advisor. Advisors may be members of the university community, i.e. students or full- time faculty or staff members.
- v. The Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee chairperson shall begin the hearing by starting the tape recorder or video camera, announcing the name of the person who will be taking minutes, and reviewing the guidelines and procedures under which the hearing will be conducted. The Committee Chair will then announce, "This Appeals hearing is being held on (date). (Name of student) is appealing the (program area) decision on (admissions, retention, exit, grade change or scholarship dishonesty requirements. The following committee members are in attendance today: (members give their names).

- vi. In order, the student and the program area representative(s) will present their cases. Both the student and program area representatives may call witnesses, and the student, program area representatives, advisor(s), and committee members all have the right to question any witnesses who are called. The student and program area representative(s) should be asked for brief closing statements.
- vii. The chair will then close the hearing with, “This Appeals Hearing is now concluded.” The committee will meet in executive session and will present its findings, in writing, to the Graduate Program Coordinator within five (5) working days. The written decision and recommendations will contain a numerical report of the vote and will be signed by the members of the committee. The Graduate Program Coordinator will notify the student and the graduate program area representative(s) of this committee’s decision and recommendations. The Graduate Program Coordinator should forward a written copy of all proceedings to the Office of Graduate Education for inclusion in the student’s file.

### **Registration Procedures**

Students admitted to a degree program will receive a letter from the Director of Graduate Education specifying their admissions status and advisor. Students are expected to contact their advisor to pre-register and complete the registration process (including the payment of required fees), in accordance with the university calendar.

### **Schedule Changes**

Students may add/drop courses according to university guidelines. Students must contact their advisor and pay particular attention to printed procedures. No course is officially dropped or added until the required procedure is completed.

### **Withdrawal from Classes**

Any student who officially registers for a course must attend or drop the course by use of the Change of Schedule Form secured from the University Registrar’s Office and execute the proper procedures within the designated time. A student who does not officially withdraw from a course receives an “FA” grade for the course at the end of the session and/or semester. Students may administratively withdraw from a course or courses with written approval from the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

### **Withdrawal from the University**

All students who are officially registered for classes and who wish to withdraw from the



university must complete the withdrawal procedure at least two weeks prior to final exam week. Students should contact the office of the Registrar. Students receive exit counseling and are advised of the procedures to follow for any financial obligations. A grade of “WD” will be posted to the student’s transcript once the withdrawal process is complete. A student who is registered for classes and does not officially withdraw from the university will receive a grade of “FA”. Students may administratively withdraw from the university with written approval from the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

### **Class Attendance Regulations**

Students are expected to attend all classes. The maximum number of absences permitted shall not exceed twice the number of times the course meets per week. No additional absences shall be allowed except in the most severe and unusual circumstances. If class sessions are missed, students are expected to complete required course work.

Should a student exceed the allowable number of absences, the professor has the option of informing the student (in writing) that a grade of “FA” will be turned in at the end of the semester. At this point, the student may wish to officially withdraw from the class.

When the instructor informs a student of an intention to turn in a grade of “FA” because of excess absences, the student may appeal. The appeal process begins with the professor. Next, appeal may be made to the Graduate Program Coordinator, the professor’s Department Chair and finally, the Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee. All such appeals must be initiated within five (5) working days of the time the student is sent notification of the professor’s intention to turn in an “FA” grade. No appeal will be allowed after course grades have been submitted to the registrar. Records of the appeals hearing must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Education.

### **Grades and Scholarship**

Course requirements including methods of evaluation shall be given at the first class meeting. Grades consist of “A, B, C, I, IP, F, FA, W”. A “B” (3.0 on 4.0 Grading Scale) average is required for graduation. Graduate courses with a final grade of “C” may be credited toward completion of any part of the degree program. However, no more than two (2) “C” grades may be credited for graduation. A student who receives a final grade of “C” in excess of 6 credit hours may be suspended from his/her program and are subject to academic sanctions as letter grades of “C” are attained throughout course of study Under certain provisions, a “P” grade designates work as satisfactory. P grades will be assigned to a student to indicate successful completion of the course. P grade will be given for an A, B, C, grades at the graduate level.

### **Definition of Grades**

A –

Excellent

B – Good

C – Low Pass

I – Incomplete – The grade of “I” is given for a deficiency of work done in a course. Requirements for removal of an incomplete must be submitted to the instructor who will then forward the change of grade to the registrar. No student will be allowed to graduate with an “I” grade.

P - A “P” grade designates work as satisfactory. P grades will be assigned to a student to indicate successful completion of the course. P grade will be given for an A, B, C grade. P grades do not carry any quality points and do not factor into a student’s GPA.

IP – In Progress – The grade of “IP” indicates that the student has not completed the Thesis/Product of Learning.

F – Failure

FC - A “FC” grade designates work as unsatisfactory. FC will be assigned to a student to indicate unsuccessful completion of the course and no credit is awarded. This grade is not calculated into a student’s GPA

FA – Excess Absences W – Withdraw

### **Emergency Grading Accommodation and Academic Record Notations**

The following emergency grading guidelines are effective on November 20, 2020 and will be restricted to Fall 2020 semester. The option to choose credit only pass/fail courses are restricted to graduate students who are registered in the Fall 2020 semester.

1. Credit Only Pass/Fail Option
  - a. Graduate students will have the option to elect their courses as Pass/Fail credit only.
  - b. Students must elect to take their courses pass/fail after grades are posted at the end of the fall 2020 semester.
  - c. A student’s performance in a credit-only course will be reported as Pass (P) when course work is equivalent to A, B, or C and credit for the course will be given.
    - i. The Pass grade will have no effect on a student’s grade point average.
    - ii. The Pass grade will count towards all graduation requirements.
  - d. A student’s performance in a credit-only course will be reported as Fail (FC) when course work is equivalent to a grade of F, and no credit for the course will be given.
    - i. The Fail grade will have no effect on a student’s grade point average.

- ii. The Fail grade will not count towards graduation requirements.
- e. Once a student selects the pass/fail course option the decision is final.
- f. ECSU will include a transcript note on all academic records, regardless of grading basis, notating the global public health emergency during Fall 2020.

### **Change of Grade**

A change of grade, other than “I”, for any reason, must be made within one year from the date the original grade was received. An “I” grade earned in any given term (Fall, Spring, Summer) must be removed by the end of the eight weeks of classes during the next regular semester (see Academic Calendar). If not removed, the grade of “I” will be automatically changed to a grade of “IF”.

### **Privacy of Student Educational Records Policy**

The university policy for the administration of student educational records is in accordance with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, also known as the Buckley Amendment or FERPA. Identifiable personal information contained in student educational records will not be disclosed to persons outside the university without prior written consent of the student. Under this policy, the student also has a right to access his/her student educational records maintained by the university or any department or unit, within the university.

### **The Graduate Council**

The Graduate Council is an advisory committee whose purpose is to make policy recommendations to the Director of Graduate Education for the guidance of department chairs and program coordinators in the development and implementation of their program curricula.

Policies must be consistent with overall institutional policies and accreditation standards of state, regional and national associations with which the institution or school holds membership. Policy recommendations requiring curricular changes must follow the university process. The Graduate Council is chaired by the Director of Graduate Education and is composed of the following:

1. Department chairs from each department that has a graduate degree and/or planning to Establish a graduate degree program;
2. One faculty representative from each department that has a graduate degree program (Graduate Program Coordinator);

3. One student from each school that has a graduate degree;
4. One representative from university support areas (Registrar's Office, Financial Aid, Business and Finance);
5. Administrative Librarian;
6. One Alumnus (Rotate from each School);
7. Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs – Ex-officio;
8. Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs – Ex-officio.

Members are appointed by the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, based on recommendations by the Director of Graduate Education and The Graduate Council. The Graduate Council structure and membership will be reviewed every two years to determine whether changes in its composition would improve its functioning.

The role of the Graduate Council is to serve in an advisory capacity to the Director of Graduate Education to ensure that graduate education maintains high standards of excellence. The Council will meet a minimum of twice per semester to:

1. Monitor program accreditation standards and program implementation;
2. Encourage professional growth and scholarly productivity of the faculty;
3. Make an active role in recruiting well-qualified students from diverse economic, racial, and cultural backgrounds;
4. Recommend policies governing criteria for admission to graduate programs;
5. Review applications for admission to candidacy, giving attention to both the design and content of the proposed research;
6. Make recommendations regarding requests from students to transfer in courses and to receive a time to complete a program;
7. Review student progress annually;
8. Monitor and upgrade library holdings in the subject areas;

9. Promote active student involvement in the Graduate School;
10. Review and Certify Graduate Faculty for Full, Associate or Temporary Status;
11. Oversee the follow-up of graduates for the expressed purpose of program improvement.

### **Standing Committees**

The following standing committees are organized to advise the Council on matters relative to operational efficiency of the Graduate Education Program, namely:

1. Executive Committee;
2. Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee;
3. Marketing and Publications Committee;
4. Enrollment Management, Retention and Graduation Committee; and
5. Graduate Faculty Review Committee.