Section 1. Purpose
This procedure is established to govern and define the procedures under which the university ensures high-quality, consistent and supportive graduate study experiences for students who pursue post-baccalaureate study, graduate certificate, and graduate degrees.

Section 2. Definitions
- Graduate Program: a course of study whose completion results in the award of a graduate certificate, or graduate degree (Master’s or Doctoral degrees) as defined by Minnesota State Board Policy and System Procedures
- Graduate Director or Coordinator: a faculty member who oversees and acts on behalf of a graduate program

Section 3. Procedure
A. Handbooks.
Where policy or procedure requires programs to create and maintain requirements, processes, or practices, the program shall do so by updating its handbook annually. The Program Director or Coordinator will lead the development and revision of the program handbook, in consultation with faculty in the program, the registrar, financial aid, and the dean.

Handbooks will be submitted to the provost/designee by July 1. Any revisions to the handbook will be completed by August 1 for approval for the upcoming academic year. The provost’s office shall maintain a record of all current and past handbooks and their approval status.

Handbooks shall minimally contain the following contents. Programs may include additional content in their handbooks.
- Program goals and objectives; and/or mission, vision, and values
- Admissions requirements
- Program requirements
- Minimum grade requirements
- Curriculum
- Transfer credit rules and appeals processes
- Advisor assignment and changing advisors
- Academic Standing requirements and appeals processes
- Continuous registration, leave of absence, and time limit extensions
- Dismissal grounds and appeals
B. Transfer Credits

Upon admission to the university, students shall be given information about the number of credits accepted in transfer and applicable to their Graduate Program. The Graduate Director or Coordinator shall evaluate graduate-level college or university course credits completed, as submitted on an official transcript, and course description or syllabus to determine what credits to accept in transfer. Once the credits are accepted in transfer, each program shall determine how the course credits will apply to program and graduation requirements. Such determinations and the outcomes of any student appeals shall be recorded and repeated for future students transferring in identical credits.

C. Satisfactory Academic Standing

Academic standing and the requirements and processes for monitoring student progression are determined and defined by each graduate program.

Following posting of grades after each fall, spring, and summer semester, the director/designee will review the academic standing of each student admitted to a graduate degree program and registered for that semester. Continuation in the program of study may be denied at any time during the program as a result of not maintaining satisfactory academic progress.

Each program will maintain due processes for considering students appealing an academic suspension, requesting reinstatement from academic suspension, or applying for readmission to a graduate program after academic suspension.

Students shall be notified of any changes in their academic standing. Each program director/designee shall ensure effective communication with affected students.

D. S/NC Grading

To adapt University Policy 2080 to the grading policy for graduate programs, when students choose the S/NC grading, satisfactorily completed work equivalent to a grade of B- or higher (instead of C- or higher for undergraduates) will be recorded as “S.”

E. Graduation Clearance

It is the responsibility of the director/designee to certify that a student has met all requirements for the degree sought consistent with Minnesota State Policy 3.36 and Procedure 3.36.1, and earn a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better.

F. Awards and Transcripts

Diplomas for doctoral, specialist and master’s degree programs shall be mailed to the student approximately eight weeks after the close of the semester. The satisfactory completion of a certificate program is verified by an appropriate statement on the transcript.
A transcript with the award posted on it shall be available approximately three weeks after the end of the semester in which the student graduated. At the request of the student, the director/designee will send a letter verifying graduation to appropriate officials as soon as all requirements are met.

G. Leave of Absence

Students may request a leave of absence from a graduate program for up to four (4) semesters. For graduate students who have completed all required coursework, approval of this request will eliminate the need to maintain continuous registration during the approved leave period.

Approval of a leave of absence does not extend the time limit for degree completion. International students should consult with the University’s International Student Services office regarding the effects of requesting a leave of absence on visa status.

It is the student’s responsibility to initiate contact with the Graduate Director or Coordinator to extend a leave of absence or to begin the return process. Students not re-enrolling after the expiration of the leave of absence shall be lose their admitted student status and may need to reapply for admission.

Student shall have the right to request a leave of absence and/or extensions of these time limits, including the right to appeal a negative decision.

H. Dismissal of Graduate Student Status

Programs shall establish a due process for dismissal of graduate students. Programs may establish specific grounds based on program-specific professional standards, dispositions or required competencies. Failure to meet academic requirements or violation of academic integrity shall be considered grounds for dismissal of a graduate student in any program. Students shall have the right to appeal their dismissal in the following sequence: director/designee, dean/designee, and provost/designee. Determinations shall be provided in writing.

I. English Language Proficiency

If a program requires test scores, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TEOFIL) exam, such scores must be submitted officially by the testing agency. Student copies shall not be acceptable. Program shall describe their proficiency requirements, if any, in their program handbooks. Students shall have a right to appeal negative determinations and/or seek alternative means of demonstrating proficiency.

Section 4. Authority

This university procedure is established in accordance with Minnesota State Board Policies and System Procedures.
Section 5. Effective Date

This university procedure shall become effective upon signature by the president, and shall remain in effect until modified or expressly revoked.

Section 6. Responsibility

The responsibility for implementation and revision of this university policy is assigned to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Section 7. Review

This procedure shall be reviewed on a biennial basis or as needed.

Section 8. Signature

Issued on this date: March 01, 2024

Virginia "Ginny" Arthur
Virginia “Ginny” Arthur, JD
President

Date of Implementation: 03/01/2024
Date of Last Review: 03/01/2024
Date and Subject of Amendments: none
Additional History and/or Revision Dates: none