

**University of Colorado Denver (Downtown and AMC campuses)**

**Graduate School Rules and Policies (version 2.11 minor update 11/17/10)**

This document outlines uniform rules, standards, and procedures for all graduate programs that are under the auspices of the Graduate School. Individual graduate programs, departments, schools or colleges may adopt more, but not less, stringent policies and/or requirements to those outlined in this document and should inform the Graduate School of such requirements.

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## **ARTICLE I: ORGANIZATION**

### **Section 1. Role of the Graduate School**

Graduate education is a critical component of the Mission of the University of Colorado Denver (UC Denver). The Graduate School is one of several schools within UC Denver and its mission is to facilitate and enhance the educational experiences and opportunities for all graduate students and to encourage excellence in research, creative and scholarly work.

In accordance with its mission, the Graduate School Leadership, together with the Graduate Faculty, plans, develops, approves, evaluates and administers graduate programs (Ph.D. and Master's degree programs). The Graduate School also ensures that the graduate programs comply with the standards of excellence and sound academic administration established by the rules and policies of the Graduate School and adopted by the University Board of Regents and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. In particular the Graduate School is charged with maintaining high standards and quality of both the graduate programs and the faculty of the Graduate School. Other functions of the Graduate School include:

- a) Fostering multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and innovative programs and promoting collaboration that creates unique opportunities for student learning, research and discovery;
- b) Formulating and maintaining uniform standards for academic excellence in graduate-level courses and research experiences offered for credit;
- c) Promoting a supportive environment for the graduate student community;
- d) Providing a voice for graduate education in the planning processes of the University; and
- e) Publishing a current Graduate School Student Handbook on the Graduate School website.

### **Section 2. Graduate Programs within the UC Denver Graduate School**

Not all of the post-baccalaureate programs at UC Denver fall within the auspices of the Graduate School. Programs that offer "professional" degrees that are independently accredited are overseen by the respective School or College.

The constituent academic units of the UC Denver Graduate School currently include the following degree-granting programs:

#### **College of Architecture and Planning**

##### **Ph.D. Program**

Design and Planning

##### **Master's Program**

Historic Preservation (M.S.)

Urban Design (M.U.D.)

#### **College of Arts and Media**

##### **Master's Program**

Recording Arts (M.S.)

#### **School of Business**

##### **Ph.D. Programs**

Computer Science and Information Systems (offered jointly with the College of Engineering and Applied Science)

## **College of Engineering and Applied Science**

### **Ph.D. Programs**

Bioengineering

Civil Engineering

Computer Science and Information Systems (offered jointly with the School of Business)

### **Master's Programs**

Bioengineering (M.S.)

Civil Engineering (M.S.)

Computer Science (M.S.)

Electrical Engineering (M.S.)

Mechanical Engineering (M.S.)

Engineering (M.ENG.)

## **College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**

### **Ph.D. Programs**

Applied Mathematics

Health and Behavioral Sciences

Clinical Health Psychology

### **Master's Programs**

Anthropology (M.A.)

Communication (M.A.)

Economics (M.A.)

English (M.A.)

History (M.A.)

Political Science (M.A.)

Psychology: Clinical (M.A.)

Sociology (M.A.)

Spanish (M.A.)

Applied Mathematics (M.S.)

Biology (M.S.)

Chemistry (M.S.)

Environmental Sciences (M.S.)

Technical Communication (M.S.)

Integrated Sciences (M.I.S.)

Humanities (M.H.)

Social Sciences (M.S.S.)

## **School of Education and Human Development**

### **Ph.D. Program**

Educational Studies and Research

### **Ed.D. Program**

Leadership for Educational Equity

## **School of Medicine**

### **Ph.D. Programs**

Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics

Cancer Biology

Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development  
Clinical Science  
Computational Bioscience  
Human Medical Genetics  
Microbiology  
Immunology  
Molecular Biology  
Neuroscience  
Pharmacology  
Physiology and Biophysics  
Reproductive Sciences  
Structural Biology and Biophysics

**Master's Programs**

Clinical Science (M.S.C.S.)  
Genetic Counseling (M.S.)

**College of Nursing**

**Ph.D. Program**

Nursing

**Master's Program**

Nursing (M.S.)

**School of Pharmacy**

**Ph.D. Programs**

Pharmaceutical Sciences  
Toxicology

**School of Public Affairs**

**Ph.D. Program**

Public Affairs

**Master's Program**

Criminal Justice (M.C.J.)

**Colorado School of Public Health**

**Ph.D. Programs**

Biostatistics  
Computational Bioscience  
Epidemiology  
Health Services Research

**Master's Program**

Biostatistics (M.S.)  
Epidemiology (M.S.)

The Graduate School also admits students to two interdisciplinary enrollment tracks (Biomedical Sciences (Ph.D.) and the Medical Scientist Training Program (M.D./Ph.D.) that lead to admission into one of the Ph.D. programs in the biomedical basic science fields in the School of Medicine listed above.

### **Section 3. Governance and Administration of the Graduate School**

The Graduate School at UC Denver is jointly administered by the Dean of the Graduate School (hereafter referred to as the Dean), the Graduate Council, the Graduate Programs and faculty of the Graduate School.

#### **(i) Dean of the Graduate School**

The Dean is the chief academic and administrative officer of the Graduate School and is appointed by the Chancellor. The Dean reports directly to the Provost. The Dean is responsible for the administration of the rules and policies of the Graduate School and is also responsible for the overall coordination and effectiveness of Graduate School programs. Acting in conjunction with the Graduate Council, the Dean's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- a) Insuring compliance of all Graduate School programs with standards for graduate faculty appointment, student admission, and graduation requirements;
- b) Advancing, developing and promoting awareness of graduate education;
- c) Examining curricula and revision to the curricula of graduate programs, including new courses, course changes, and new degree programs to ensure that the contact hours and the workload are consistent with the credit hours assigned;
- d) Overseeing periodic review of established graduate programs as needed or requested and in conjunction with accreditation processes;
- e) Approving revisions to the rules that update information, resolve ambiguities, promote clarity, or ensure compliance with mandates from the State or the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. The Dean will inform the Graduate council of such actions;
- f) Promoting cooperative and beneficial relationships, such as interdisciplinary initiatives, among campus schools, departments, and programs;
- g) Working in collaboration with the Vice Chancellor of Research to ensure that graduate education at UC Denver is consistent with the goals of the institution for research, discovery and creative work;
- h) Enhancing and supporting a diverse campus through assistance in the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty and student body;
- i) Providing academic support to graduate program directors and advisors;
- j) Providing information on internal and external fellowships and grants available to support graduate students and providing training in the preparation of such applications;
- k) Planning and monitoring the Graduate School budget, the allocation of resources and fundraising for the Graduate School;
- l) Providing general oversight and supervision of all aspects of the Graduate School; and
- m) Carrying out other duties as may be assigned by the Provost.

*Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.* The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will be responsible for monitoring faculty appointments, assisting the Dean in activities such as program review (including overseeing academic assessment) and determining whether new courses meet the requirements of a course at the level at which it is to be offered based on recommendations from the Graduate executive Committee. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will also assist departments, schools or colleges seeking to establish a new graduate program, coordinating and conducting the honor code violation and academic appeals process, identifying fellowships and providing assistance to students applying for them, providing training of Teaching Assistants (on the downtown campus primarily), providing general teaching skills and technical/scientific writing workshops and/or courses, providing and overseeing career counseling, organizing career

days, organizing new student welcoming activities, representing the Graduate School on graduation planning committees, and coordinating outreach and pipeline activities with the Office(s) of Diversity.

*Associate/Assistant Dean for Admissions and Student Progression.* The Associate/Assistant Dean for Admissions and Student Progression is responsible for coordinating (with the IT administrator) the access of graduate programs to the on-line applications system; for conducting the formal applications process for all students admitted to the Graduate School, including the collecting of official GRE reports and official transcripts, and verifying immunization records and background checks; authorizing student ID requests; recording the results of the preliminary examination (and where necessary, with providing administrative support for conducting the examination), maintaining records of all stages of student progress (in the Integrated Student Information System and in paper master files), including tracking mentors and/or primary advisors for Ph.D. students, monitoring time limits for completing exams, checking appropriate composition of examination committees, monitoring a students progress toward the dissertation defense following completion of the comprehensive exam, tracking individual time-to-degree to insure timely graduation of all students, and sharing this information with individual programs to aid in academic outcomes assessment; conducting degree audits; and coordinating with the Registrar's Office(s) and the International Scholars and Students Office (ISSO) on graduate student issues.

## **(ii) The Graduate Council and Related Committees**

The Graduate Council advises the Dean on matters relating to development, coordination, and evaluation of Graduate School programs. The Graduate Council is assisted by two committees: the Faculty Appointments Committee and the Conduct and Appeals Committee.

### **a. Graduate Council**

The Graduate Council consists of the Dean (who serves as chair) and Graduate Faculty from the constituent schools and colleges. The faculty member(s) who represents a particular School or College on the Graduate Council is appointed either by the Graduate Executive Committee of the School or College that they represent or by a process outlined in the bylaws of the School or College. The Graduate Executive Committees also recommends to the Dean how long the faculty member shall serve on the Graduate Council. Working in conjunction with the Dean, the Graduate Council develops its own rules of procedure consistent with the Laws of the Regents and the "Graduate School Rules". The Council convenes at least twice annually to conduct business related to the interests of the Graduate School and all programs.

The role of the Graduate Council is to assist the Graduate School in achieving its goals and includes:

- a) Reviewing proposals for new degrees (including joint degrees) and make recommendations to the Dean;
- b) Provide assistance when required for ongoing review of existing graduate programs;
- c) Assisting the Dean in academic and strategic planning for the Graduate School;
- d) Approving changes to the Graduate School rules with the exception of minor rules changes made by the Dean (as outlined above in Section 3 (i));
- e) Reviewing periodically the services provided by the Graduate School and make recommendations for changes;

- f) Making recommendations to the Provost on appeals of decisions made by the Dean (the Dean shall be excused during these discussions); and
- g) Carrying out other duties as are assigned to it by the Dean.

The Council consists of the Dean, and

- 9 faculty representatives from the programs at the Downtown Campus
- 9 faculty representatives from the programs at the Anschutz Medical Center Campus
- 1 student representative from the programs at the Downtown Campus
- 1 student representative from the programs at the Anschutz Medical Center Campus

**b. Graduate Faculty Appointments Committee**

The Graduate Council in collaboration with the Dean establishes a faculty committee known as the Graduate Faculty Appointments Committee (GFAC) that reviews all nominations (new as well as re-appointments) to the Graduate School Faculty. This committee, along with the Graduate Council, establishes and maintains minimum standards for both “regular” and “special” faculty appointments and re-appointments. The GFAC forwards its recommendations for each nomination it reviews directly to the Dean. The GFAC consists of at least one graduate faculty member from each School or College with a Graduate Program affiliated with the Graduate School. Appointments and re-appointments to the GFAC are made annually by the Dean with the concurrence of the Council. There is no term limit for the number of years that an individual faculty member can serve on the GFAC.

**c. Academic Conduct and Appeals Committee**

The Graduate Council in collaboration with the Dean establishes a faculty committee known as the Academic Conduct and Appeals Committee (ACAC). The ACAC is convened to review cases of honor code misconduct or student academic grievances that have not been resolved by the graduate program or the School or College in which the graduate program resides. The ACAC will consider appeals as they occur and forward its recommendations to the Dean. The ACAC consists of at least 3 graduate faculty members selected from multiple Schools or Colleges affiliated with the Graduate School. Cases investigating student conduct (including honor code violations) also include student representation on the ACAC. Appointments and re-appointments to the ACAC are made by the Dean on a case specific basis as the need arises.

**(iii) Graduate Executive Committees**

Each School or College with a graduate program within the Graduate School also has a Graduate Executive Committee (GEC). In general, these committees consist of the graduate program directors of all programs within the School or College that are affiliated with the Graduate School. Schools and Colleges are encouraged by the Graduate School to include student membership on GECs. The student members are excluded from discussions about individual faculty or students. The Chair of each GEC is either a member of that committee or is chosen from senior faculty outside of the committee (a Department Chair would be an example). These committees constitute the working groups that deal with graduate education issues.

The specific duties of the School/College-specific GEC include:

- a) Develop and maintain rules and policies specific to the graduate programs within their School or College. Any specific rules adopted by the School or College must be at least equivalent to, and cannot be less stringent, than the rules, policies and/or requirements of the UC Denver Graduate School. Any School/College-specific rules must be compiled within a

- document readily available to faculty, staff and students and MUST be forwarded to the Graduate School;
- b) Oversee and review issues related to curricula, for the programs housed within the School or College (unless the School or College has a different faculty committee that evaluates graduate curricula) ;
  - c) Aid in the development and review of proposals for new and existing graduate programs either within, or offered jointly by, their School/College. Such recommendations should be forwarded to the Dean and Graduate Council for approval;
  - d) When appropriate, to assist the GFAC by reviewing and making recommendations on the appointments of faculty to the graduate school. For example, the GFAC may solicit the GEC for input regarding the nomination of non-tenure track or part-time faculty.
  - e) In conjunction with their constituent graduate programs and in accordance with the rules and policies of the Graduate School, the GEC will establish admission standards; procedures for examinations; academic standards for their programs and requirements for these.

#### **Section 4. Appointment of Graduate Faculty**

Appointments to the Graduate Faculty of the Graduate School are based on standards developed by the GFAC, the Graduate Council and approved by the Dean. Appointment to the Graduate Faculty is a privilege extended to those who have a faculty appointment either at UC Denver, an affiliated institution (such as National Jewish Health; The Children's Hospital; University Hospital; Denver Health, and the Veterans Administration), an affiliated program, or an accredited college or university. Graduate Faculty appointments can also be offered to individuals who qualify either through their research and scholarship, mentoring or teaching ability, and who demonstrate a commitment to graduate education and students. An appointment to the faculty of the Graduate School is required to serve as either the mentor or primary advisor of a student, to serve on a thesis or examination committee or to serve as a program or course director. A graduate faculty appointment is required to designate the overall grade for a graduate level course. An appointment to the Graduate School faculty is NOT required in order to be a "guest lecturer" in a graduate level course.

Nominations for membership to the Graduate Faculty are initiated by the program directors (or departmental chairpersons) of the graduate programs in which the faculty member will serve as either the mentor or primary advisor, teach, and/or participate on examining committees. Any UC Denver faculty member may request to be nominated by a graduate program director (or departmental chairperson).

There are two categories of Graduate Faculty appointments: 1. Regular; and 2. Special. The privileges and the criteria for each of these two appointment categories are distinct and are outlined below. A list of Regular and Special Members of the Graduate Faculty is kept in the Office of the Dean and on the Graduate School website.

Individuals enrolled as students in a degree program are not eligible for Graduate Faculty membership in the same program.

Programs/schools/colleges (such as the College of Engineering and Applied Science) that have agreements covered by "memoranda of understanding" under which faculty from other institutions (for example UC Boulder) are considered Graduate Faculty at UC Denver, will have to nominate these faculty for appointments to the UC Denver Graduate School. The GFAC will

judge the credentials of such nominees by the same criteria as an applicant from the UC Denver faculty. Any applicant whose application is denied by the GFAC can appeal to the Graduate Council.

### **(i) Regular Appointments**

Appointment as a Regular member of the Graduate Faculty is a privilege extended to those who qualify through their research, teaching and mentoring/advising ability, and demonstrated commitment to graduate education. Regular membership generally shall be limited to full-time faculty members of UC Denver or its affiliated institutions who hold the rank of Assistant Professor and above.

Privileges of Faculty who hold Regular Appointments:

- a) Direct (teach and assign grades in) graduate courses;
- b) Serve on and chair comprehensive and final thesis or dissertation examination committees (Ph.D. and Master's level);
- c) Supervise thesis / dissertation research (Ph.D. and Master's level) as a mentor or as the primary advisor;
- d) Serve on academic and administrative Graduate School committees;
- e) Participate in program activities for the specific program(s) in which the faculty member was appointed;
- f) Vote on issues before the Graduate Faculty.

#### *Qualifications required*

Regular members of the Graduate Faculty shall hold a doctoral degree or other terminal degree appropriate to their discipline, or shall have demonstrated other attainments that qualify them for membership. It is possible that an applicant who has strong and well-documented performance in some, but not all, areas (teaching, research and other scholarly activity) may receive a favorable review from the GFAC.

#### *Term of Appointments*

Initial appointments are typically for four (4) years and should take into account the nominee's faculty appointment in their respective department, School or College. Subsequent appointments can be made for up to five (5) years. Upon leaving UC Denver or its affiliated institutions, the faculty member will retain their Regular appointment only until the graduate students who they are either supervising as the primary mentor, or are serving on their thesis/dissertation advisory and exam committee, complete the requirements for their degree. If a faculty member leaves UC Denver and their appointment expires prior to their students completing the requirements for their degree, they may be re-appointed only for a time period sufficient to enable the student to complete their thesis/dissertation.

### **(ii) Special Appointments**

Special Appointments to the UC Denver Graduate School may be granted to UC Denver faculty or to individuals who do not qualify for an appointment as a Regular faculty member, but who will participate in the education of graduate students at UC Denver either by serving on examination and thesis/dissertation committees, or as a major participant (e.g. course director) in teaching of a graduate course. Overall, a Special member of the faculty of the Graduate School is entitled (upon approval) to engage in most of the same activities as a Regular member, except that a Special faculty member cannot serve as the *chair* of a Ph.D. exam or dissertation

committee (although they can be a member of these committees) and cannot be the *primary* mentor or advisor of a Ph.D. student. Furthermore, a Special faculty member needs the approval of both the program director and Dean to chair an exam or a Master's thesis committee, or serve as the primary mentor, of a student enrolled in a Master's program. Under exceptional circumstances, a Special faculty member can petition the Dean for approval to mentor a Ph.D. student or serve as the chair of an examination or dissertation committee of a Ph.D. student. Special faculty cannot vote on issues requiring approval by the Graduate Faculty.

University of Colorado faculty members who have been appointed as Regular Graduate Faculty members at the UC Boulder or UC Colorado Springs are eligible to teach courses and sit on examination committees at the UC Denver campus as Special Graduate Faculty members when they are requested to serve by UC Denver program directors, pending appropriate intercampus approvals including that of the Dean and the UC Denver GFAC.

Privileges of Faculty who hold an Appointment as a Special Member:

- a. Direct (teach and assign grades in) graduate courses;
- b. With the approval of the program director, serve on final exam or thesis defense committees for students pursuing a Master's Degree;
- c. With approval of the program director, serve on comprehensive and dissertation exam committees for students in a Ph.D. program;
- d. With the approval of the dean, chair final exam or thesis defense committees for students pursuing a Master's Degree;
- e. With the approval of the program director and Dean, serve as a mentor or primary advisor for students pursuing a Master's Degree;
- f. Serve on academic and administrative Graduate School committees;
- g. Participate in program activities for the specific program(s) for which the faculty member was appointed.

#### *Qualifications required*

As with Regular members, Special members of the Graduate Faculty shall hold a doctoral degree or the terminal degree appropriate to their discipline, or shall have made other academic contributions that qualify them for membership. Nominees for special faculty appointments shall present evidence of their research and scholarly activity and/or teaching activities. The quality of the nominee's research and discovery or creative work, teaching at the graduate level, mentoring of graduate students and scholarship shall be central to receiving a graduate faculty appointment. Each program may elect to impose additional criteria that exceed Graduate School requirements.

#### *Term of Appointment*

The initial period of appointment normally will be for up to four (4) years and shorter time periods may be requested. Subsequent appointments are for periods up to five (5) years, especially for part-time teaching faculty with ongoing course assignments. Those nominated solely to serve as examination committee members will be appointed for the estimated length of time needed for the committee to complete its assignment, or a maximum of 4 years, whichever is shorter. If the appointment expires before the completion of the thesis, the faculty member must re-apply for renewal of their appointment.

### **(iii). Nomination and Approval of Graduate Faculty Appointments**

All appointments to either the Regular or Special Graduate Faculty must be reviewed by the GFAC. The material required for a new or a renewal appointment includes:

- a. A nomination form (provided by the Graduate School) that indicates whether the application is for a Regular or a Special appointment and that is signed by the nominating program director (or departmental chairperson);
- b. A letter of support from either the director of the graduate program or the departmental chairperson in which the nominee will participate, that specifies how the nominee meets the criteria for a Regular or Special appointment and why s/he needs an appointment;
- c. A current biosketch, in a format accepted by the GFAC;
- d. A summary of the nominee's previous experience, or a statement outlining their anticipated level of involvement, in activities associated with graduate education such as mentoring, teaching, and service on examination committees.

Nomination letters and accompanying credentials must be detailed enough to demonstrate the specific academic contributions, expertise, and/or skills (including, if appropriate, evidence of meeting certifications standards for clinical practice) that a prospective Special graduate faculty member will bring to the student's academic training and evaluation.

Although program directors and departmental chairpersons are able to submit nominations for graduate faculty appointments directly to the GFAC, in some instances it may be helpful to the GFAC if the nomination is "pre-reviewed" by the Graduate Executive Committee of the School or College that houses the graduate programs in which the nominee will participate. A letter of support from the Graduate Executive Committee may provide significant assistance to the GFAC in their evaluation of a particular nominee.

New applications must be submitted well in advance of anticipated participation in teaching, or research supervision or student examinations. Appointments will not be approved retroactively to cover those activities. The Dean will have the responsibility of ensuring that the reviews of applications for membership by the GFAC are performed in the timeliest manner possible. The Dean will consider appointments to the graduate faculty based on the recommendations of the GFAC. An applicant who is denied an appointment to the Graduate School may appeal to the GFAC for a re-assessment of their application if they believe that their credentials were inadequately evaluated. The status of a Regular or Special member may be revoked upon the recommendation of the program director that nominated the faculty member and the concurrence of the Dean.

## **ARTICLE II: GRADUATE EDUCATION**

The majority of programs that fall under the auspices of the UC Denver Graduate School are independent degree programs that are offered on either or both campuses (Downtown Campus and Anschutz Medical Campus) or an affiliated institution. In addition there are a number of dual degree programs in which students complete the majority of the course work for each degree (as outlined in Section 2 iii and 3 iii) and both degrees are awarded simultaneously.

### **Section 1. Review and Approval of Programs and Courses**

As outlined in Article I (Section #1) the Graduate School, together with the Faculty, approves and evaluates graduate programs (Ph.D. and Master's degree programs) to ensure that the graduate programs are effective and that they maintain high standards. In this capacity the Dean,

in conjunction with the Graduate Council, is responsible for conducting periodic reviews of all existing graduate programs. To avoid duplication of effort and where appropriate, such program reviews are performed as an adjunct to the review of the program for accreditation, or during a review of the department, School or College. In addition all new graduate programs (Ph.D. and Master's) must be reviewed and approved by the Graduate School as outlined below.

**(i) Procedures and Criteria for Reviewing and Revising Existing Graduate Programs.**

The Dean notifies the director of a graduate program, as well as the Dean of the School/College, of an upcoming review of the program at least 6 months in advance of the review date and also provides instruction to the program director of the material required and the format of the review process. The Graduate School reviews all of the material submitted by the program and the School/College in a timely manner. The Dean may also request that the Graduate Executive Committee of the School or College in which the graduate program is housed also review the report submitted by the graduate program and prepare a summary report with its recommendations. The review pays particular attention to compliance with standards outlined by accrediting organizations, overall academic excellence, the quality of administration of the program as well as the impact and overlap of the program with other graduate programs at UC Denver. At the conclusion of their review, the Graduate School sends a written report with any recommendations to the program director as well as the Dean of the School/College. In addition, any major issues arising from the review of a particular program are brought to the attention of the Graduate Council for further consideration.

**(ii) Procedures and Criteria for Developing and Approving New Degree Granting Graduate Programs.** *(see also Regent Policy 4J)*

Recommendations for new degree granting graduate programs are initiated within an appropriate School/College or department/program/division and are forwarded to the Dean. In many instances an accompanying report on the proposal by the GEC of the School/College can provide assistance to the Dean and Graduate School in their review. The proposal should address in part:

- That the proposed program fulfills all the requirements of the UC Denver Graduate School and the School/College in which it will be housed;
- If the proposal is for a dual degree, it must outline the requirements of both schools and both degrees and describe how the proposal satisfies both sets of requirements;
- The employment market for students who will graduate from the new program;
- Any overlap or potential conflict of the proposed program with an existing graduate program at UC Denver;
- That the department and School/College are willing to commit sufficient resources (faculty, administrative and financial) to develop and sustain the proposed program;
- The ability of the program faculty to mentor student research in the discipline or program area.

Upon receiving a proposal for a new graduate program, the Dean shall convene a review panel consisting of members of the Graduate Council, representatives from the School or College preparing the proposal, and representatives from Schools or Colleges that may be affected by the proposal. At the conclusion of their review, the panel sends a written report together with its recommendations to the Graduate School Dean, the faculty member(s) who initiated the proposal and the Dean of the School/College. The Dean will then present the proposal to the Graduate Council for their review and formal vote for approval/disapproval. Proposals that are favorably

reviewed are then routed through the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for implementation in accordance with policies established by the Regents of the University of Colorado (Regent Policy 4J).

The development of new tracks within existing programs requires review and approval by the Graduate Council and approval by the Dean.

**(iii) Procedures and Criteria for Developing and Approving New Graduate Courses**

Proposals for new courses are reviewed by the GEC of the School or College and then forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval. The Graduate Program offering the course shall provide to the Graduate School such information as may be required to meet the School's goals of ensuring that the proposed number of credit hours is commensurate with the level of student effort, that the offering program has sufficient resources to support the course, and that unnecessary overlap with courses already offered is avoided to the extent possible.

If the Dean considers that these issues aren't adequately addressed in the course proposal form, he/she will contact the program director and the Dean of the School/College, for further clarification. Any remaining concerns that the Dean may have will be referred to the Graduate Council for further review.

**(iv) Procedure for Eliminating Courses that are Not Being Offered**

The Graduate School will periodically review the status of all courses in the Graduate School to determine whether they are still being offered. Graduate programs that list courses that have not been taught for several years must justify to the Graduate School why such courses should continue to be listed.

**Section 2. Admissions**

A student may be admitted to the Graduate School as either a regular degree student (if they meet the requirements/criteria of the Graduate School, and the graduate program in which they will enroll) or as a provisional degree student (if they do not meet the requirements/criteria of the Graduate School and the graduate program in which they will enroll).

The individual graduate programs evaluate, interview and select the students they want to accept including any who will be admitted provisionally. A letter of offer from the graduate program to an applicant must include a statement indicating that admission to the University and the program is pending final approval by the Graduate School. The Graduate School confirms the credentials of the applicant, including authenticating the transcript and verifying the GPA calculation, and also determining whether the student meets the criteria for the individual graduate program and the Graduate School. The Graduate School also performs the background check and collects the immunization records (where required).

Application materials to all graduate programs shall include the Part 1 Admissions Application; letters of recommendation (in English) as required by the program, copies of all degree-bearing transcripts and transcripts from all colleges, schools and universities in which the student has ever enrolled.

### **(i) Admission to Regular Degree Status**

Students are admitted by the Graduate School as Regular Degree students provided they meet the following criteria:

- Hold a baccalaureate or Master's degree from an accredited college or university, or demonstrate completion of work equivalent to the baccalaureate or Master's degree given at UC Denver. Applicants whose credentials include studies or coursework at an institution outside the U.S. must include a validated translation into English and an evaluation of the transcript by a professional accrediting service (such as World Education Services);
- Usually have an undergraduate grade point average of 3.00 or better ("A" is equal to 4.0) and/or a 3.00 or better GPA in a completed or partially completed (at least 1/3) Master's degree program. Applications from individuals who attended a college or university that does not issue grades or a GPA will be evaluated by the Graduate School on a case-by-case basis;
- Have adequate preparation to enter graduate study in the chosen program as demonstrated by their performance in the GRE or an appropriate substitute, or an earned M.S./M.A. or Ph.D. from a School in the U.S.A., or completion of at least 12 credit hours of transferable graduate-level coursework. Although the Graduate School recommends that applicants take the GRE or other standardized test, it is not a requirement for admission as a regular degree student if one of the other two indicators of preparedness is present. Some graduate programs however may require that all applicants take the GRE or an equivalent;
- Meet any additional requirements (such as particular undergraduate course work) for admission as established by the program.

International students must meet ALL of these requirements and also must provide:

- Documentation in English (or a certified English translation) of the completion of a Bachelor's degree, Master's degree or the equivalent at the time of matriculation as evaluated by the International Admissions Office;
- Applicants whose native language is not English must take either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam and must score above 525 (paper) or 192 (computer) or 71 (internet based) on the TOEFL or 6.0 on the IELTS. Schools or Colleges, or individual graduate programs may require higher standards on these tests;
- Applicants whose native language is not English are not required to take the TOEFL test if they have completed a baccalaureate or graduate-level degree program at an English-speaking college or university or have completed at least 2 semesters at a college or university in the United States as a full-time student and obtained a "B" average (3.0 GPA) or higher;
- Financial and other documents required by the International Scholars and Students Office to process Immigration Documents;
- A certified English translation of all records and references not in English.

Additional requirements and documentation may also be required.

### **(ii) Admission to Provisional Degree Status**

A graduate program that wishes to admit an applicant who does not meet the criteria for admission as a Regular Degree student can petition the Graduate School to admit the applicant as either a Regular or Provisional Degree student. The petition must include a letter from the graduate program director to the Dean that outlines the rationale to support such an admission. If

the student is to be admitted as a provisional student, then the petition must include a description of the conditions that the student must meet in order to become a Regular Degree student. The admission of the applicant as a Provisional Degree student requires the approval of the Dean. Based on the requirements of the graduate program and the recommendations of the graduate program director, the Dean will determine and advise the program director and the student of the conditions that the student must satisfy to be transferred from provisional to regular status. The Dean, in consultation with the program director, will also determine the time period (1 or 2 semesters for full-time students and a maximum of 4 semesters for part time students) in which these conditions be met. Provisional students are subject to the same standards of performance required of regular degree students, plus any other requirements imposed by program faculty as conditions of admission. At the end of the specified probationary period, the Dean, in consultation with the program director will review the performance of the provisional student. The student must either have satisfied the requirements for conversion and be admitted to regular degree status or be dismissed from the graduate program to which they were provisionally admitted. The Graduate School will notify both the program director and the student whether the provisional student has satisfied the requirements and that their status has been transferred to that of a regular student, or has failed to meet the requirements and has been dismissed.

### **(iii) Admission to Dual Master's Degree Programs**

Qualified students may be recommended for admission to an approved dual degree program upon meeting the qualifications of admission to the Graduate School and both graduate programs.

### **(iv) Admission to the Concurrent Bachelor's/Master's Degree Programs**

There are several graduate programs that offer undergraduate students the opportunity to begin graduate work while they are completing their undergraduate degree in that discipline. Highly qualified undergraduate students may be recommended for admission to a concurrent or articulated Bachelor's/Master's degree program usually at the end of their sophomore or the beginning of their junior year. Such students are not formally admitted to the Graduate School. Standards for admission as well as eligibility to remain in the program are specified in each department's approved program guide.

Students participating in a Bachelor's-Master's option must:

- Fulfill all of the normal credit requirements of both the graduate and undergraduate programs;
- Petition to the graduate program allowing this option before taking any graduate level courses, and be advised by both undergraduate and graduate advisors;
- Apply and be admitted to the graduate program in the next regular semester (fall or spring) following the completion of the undergraduate degree;

### **(v) Readmission of Former Students**

Students who were previously admitted to a graduate program but who did not complete that degree and who have not registered for more than one year at UC Denver must meet the following requirements before being readmitted:

- Clarify their status with the graduate program to determine their eligibility to return and pursue the same degree
- Submit an application and fee to the graduate program for approval before enrollment levels are met or deadlines passed for the term in which they expect to return to UCD.

### **(vi) Changing Programs**

Students who are currently enrolled and in good standing and want to change programs or major departments must complete the appropriate application forms and be accepted by the new program. The Graduate School maintains a current form for such transfers.

## **Section 3. Course Requirements**

### **(i) Master's Degree (minimum requirement)**

The minimum requirement is 30 (semester) credits. While it is expected that most of this course work will be at the Graduate (5000 and above) level, some Graduate Programs may allow particular undergraduate courses that are outside the discipline of their program to count towards the Graduate degree. The proportion of undergraduate credit hours cannot exceed 20% of the course requirement of the graduate program and must be approved by the program director on a case by case basis. Undergraduate courses within the same discipline as the graduate program cannot be credited towards a graduate degree. If the program has a thesis option, the thesis must count for 3-6 credits. Independent study course work cannot exceed 25 percent (7.5 credits) of the 30 credits of course work required for the Master's degree.

### **(ii) Ph.D. Degree (minimum requirement)**

The minimum requirement is 30 (semester) credits of coursework, all of which must be at the Graduate level (5000 and above) and 30 (semester) dissertation credits. In the School of Education and Human Development the 12 hours of credits for the Doctoral Research Lab are included in the dissertation credits. Graduate level course work taken for a Master's degree may be applied toward a doctoral degree, however course work taken for a completed doctoral degree cannot be applied toward a subsequent Master's degree.

All courses that count toward the minimum requirements for a Ph.D. and at least 80% of the courses for a Master's degree, must be graduate level. Graduate-level courses are:

- a) Directed by a Regular or Special member of the graduate faculty (although individuals without graduate faculty membership can be "guest lecturers");
- b) Graded on the A-F system (not pass/fail); and
- c) Offered within the degree program at the 5000 level or above.

Students enrolled in Graduate Programs at UC Denver can undertake graduate level classes at other campuses within the University of Colorado system and these will be considered resident and not subject to the rules of transfer credits.

### **(iii) Dual Master's Degree Programs**

For existing approved dual degree programs a student may obtain two Master's degrees under the following conditions:

- The dual degree option shall require a minimum of 1/2 of the course work in both of the two programs (note some individual dual Master's programs may require more than 1/2 the course work of either or both of the Master's programs to be completed). The additional credits required to earn a Master's may be applied to both degrees with the concurrence of each program, subject to the limitations given below;
- The student must satisfy the core requirements of both Master's programs. In cases where both Master's programs require the same course in the core, the common course shall not count toward the core requirements of both degrees. The directors of the component

programs will determine appropriate substitutes so that a student takes enough courses to satisfy the quantity of core courses for each program; and

- The student must satisfy all completion requirements in both programs, unless specifically waived for dual degree students;
- Dual Master's degrees must be awarded simultaneously.

#### **(iv) Combining Two Master's Degrees**

Students wishing to earn two Master's degrees that are not part of an approved dual degree program must a) be accepted into both programs, and b) satisfy all requirements of both degree programs. In some cases, individual courses may be used to satisfy requirements in both programs. However, no more than 15 credit hours of courses may be applied to both degrees.

#### **Section 4. Transfer Credits**

Transfer credit is defined as any credit earned at another accredited institution either in the United States or abroad, or credits earned as a non-degree student within the UC system. Graduate courses taken while the student was enrolled in a graduate program anywhere in the UC system, or an institution with established Memoranda of Understanding with UC Denver are considered resident, not transfer, and therefore fall outside the limits on transfer credits. For students who obtained graduate course credits while they were enrolled in a graduate program at a University in the U.S., or students who earned credits within the UC system as a non-degree student, the number of course credits that they can transfer to UC Denver will be determined by the graduate program director on a case by case basis (subject to the limits described at the bottom of this paragraph). In the case of students who performed course work at institutions outside the U.S., the graduate program director shall provide a recommendation to the Graduate School listing the courses that they accept for transfer and will also provide documentation including an independent evaluation by an agency such as WES to support the recommendation. The Graduate School Dean will evaluate the recommendation of the program director regarding the transfer of credits from foreign institutions and make a determination on a case by case basis. The maximum amount of transfer work that may be applied toward a graduate degree at UC Denver is 12 hours (or 40% if the program requires more than 30 hours) of course work for Master's degree programs and 30 hours (or 100%) of course work for Ph.D. degree programs (individual programs may have more restrictive limits).

All courses accepted for transfer must:

- a) Be graduate level (5000 or above);
- b) Have a "letter" grade, courses in which the grading is either satisfactory/unsatisfactory or pass/fail are not accepted;
- c) Have a grade of "B minus" or better (individual programs may require a "B" or better for transfer credit and/or may require a B or better in the core classes of the particular discipline);
- d) Be validated by the program director to ensure that the courses were taken within a time frame such that their content is considered "current";
- e) Be transferred prior to the semester in which the comprehensive or final examination is taken.

Credit cannot be transferred until the student has established a satisfactory record of at least one term of enrollment at the UC Denver and a minimum 3.00 GPA. Transferred courses do not

reduce the residency requirement but may reduce the amount of work required at UC Denver for the degree.

## **Section 5. Enrollment Requirements**

### **(i) Doctoral Degree Enrollment Requirements**

"The minimum enrollment requirement at UC Denver for doctoral students is six (6) semesters of full time scholarly work beyond the attainment of a bachelor's degree. Two (2) semesters of enrollment credit may be allowed for an earned Master's degree from another institution however, at least four (4) semesters of credit must be earned for work performed while enrolled at UC Denver.

### **(ii) Leave of Absence**

Students who need to leave UC Denver graduate programs for a period of time should determine with their program directors if a petition for leave is required for an absence of up to one year. If approved by the program director, a copy of the petition is forwarded to the Graduate School Office for the student's file. Approved leaves of absence do not automatically extend the time limits for earning a degree, but they may be cited as supporting documentation to request an extension if needed. Leaves of absence that exceed one year will not be approved unless the program director provides the Dean with a compelling justification why such action should be approved. Students who are absent for longer than one year will be considered to have withdrawn from the program and will be required to reapply for admission and be considered with all other applicants.

## **Section 6. Grades and Quality of Graduate Work**

To maintain satisfactory academic progress, advance to candidacy, and earn a graduate degree, students are required to maintain at least a "B" (3.00) average in all work attempted while enrolled in the Graduate School. Courses in which grades below "B minus" (2.7) are received may not be applied toward fulfillment of the requirements for any graduate (Ph.D. or Master's) degree. All grades received will appear on the student's transcript and will be included in the GPA calculation.

Grades received in transferred courses and grades earned while a student was classified as a non-degree student are not included in calculations of the grade point average.

An in-progress (IP) grade is given for thesis or dissertation hours until the final approved thesis/dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School office. Once a grade has been received, it will be calculated into the student's cumulative grade point average.

For other courses, the course director will assign a letter grade, or an Incomplete (I), or IP (for thesis or multi-semester graduate level course) grade. IP grades are changed to final letter grades when the student completes the required work. An I grade is automatically change to an F after one year unless a grade change is initiated by the course director. In addition, letter grades may be changed due to clerical or administrative error. However, no other grade changes are allowed by the Graduate School; i.e., students are not allowed to perform additional work for a course already completed in order to have their grades improved. Should a student enter military service before completing a course and an "I" is reported, this grade may be carried on the records for the duration of the student's service provided arrangements have been made with the graduate program and the Dean.

Credit by examination is not allowed for graduate students. Programs may allow a student to challenge and test out of a given course, but the student does not register or receive credit for it. If a student successfully challenges a course, the program can require the student to take a different course or an elective. In all cases, the student must meet the minimum credit requirements for the degree.

Any course work taken at UC Denver, that was taken more than five years prior to applying for candidacy for either a Master's or Ph.D. degree, or course credits transferred from another institution (as described in Section 4 above), must be validated by a process determined by the director of the graduate program in which the student is enrolled. The director of the graduate program must maintain a file summarizing the decisions for each student to ensure that the validation process is applied consistently. The director will advise the Graduate School in writing that such courses have been validated for a particular student prior to the student's advancement to candidacy.

Each UC Denver graduate degree program will make available (either on-line or hard copy) a handbook containing specific guidelines for measuring satisfactory academic progress. These may differ from the Graduate School-wide standards *if, and only if, they are more stringent than these minimum standards*. In this case, the program-specific standards will supercede the Graduate School standards. In addition, the handbook will contain guidelines for measuring satisfactory academic progress in all activities not covered by the Graduate School grading, examination, and probation policies. Such activities might include (but are not limited to) preliminary examinations, clinical competencies, and research activities or skills not reflected in course grades, and vacation and leave of absence policies and procedures. Students may be directed to a web site where an electronic version of the current handbook is published, in lieu of receiving a printed version of the handbook. Changes to the rules and policies of a graduate program that are not a consequence or a requirement of an external entity (such as an accrediting body) and that specifically affect academic progression or academic requirements, only apply to students who enter the program after the change has been made.

### **Section 7. Academic Probation and Dismissal**

When a student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below 3.00 (some graduate programs may require that a higher GPA be maintained), the Graduate School will notify the student and the program director that the student has been placed on academic probation. The student must obtain a GPA of at least 3.00, or greater if required by the program, (the GPA is calculated using only Graduate Level courses that are approved by the graduate program director) during each semester they are on probation. In addition, the student will have two semesters if they are enrolled as a full time student or four (4) semesters if part time, in which to raise their cumulative GPA (calculated using Graduate Level courses only) to at least 3.00 (or greater if required by the particular graduate program). The graduate program also may impose special conditions on a probationary student in addition to the raising their GPA. The program director must forward these conditions in writing to both the student and the Dean.

If the student on probation does not obtain a GPA of at least 3.00 (or greater if required by the program) during each semester while on probation, or if they do not raise their cumulative graduate level GPA to at least 3.00 (or greater if required by the program) within two semesters (four semesters if part time) of being placed on probation, s/he will be subject to immediate dismissal upon the recommendation of the program director and concurrence of the Dean. The

student may also be subject to immediate dismissal if they do not meet any special conditions imposed by the program for moving back from probationary to regular status. If there are extenuating circumstances, however, the program director may petition the Dean for an extension of the probationary time period. The Dean will make the final decision on dismissal. Students who are placed on probation and subsequently dismissed from a graduate degree program by the Graduate School will be notified officially by the Dean. Such notifications will include the reasons for dismissal and the right of appeal.

Some programs may have additional requirements not related to the GPA. If the student fails to meet the standards established by the graduate program, the student will be placed on academic probation. These criteria will be monitored by the specific graduate program and if the program places a student on academic probation they must notify the student and the Graduate School of the requirements for the student to return from probationary to regular status. In such cases the program will be responsible for monitoring the performance of the student until they are either returned to regular status or dismissed from the program. At the end of the probationary period, if not before, the Graduate Program must advise the Graduate School of the outcome of the student's probationary period and can recommend to the Dean whether or not the student should be dismissed. It is the responsibility of the Graduate School to dismiss a student.

Any student who is dismissed from the Graduate School following unsuccessful academic probation or failure to meet his or her program's guidelines for satisfactory academic progress may reapply for admission to the same or a different graduate program after one year. The student should consult with the program director before applying.

## **Section 8. Student Academic Honor and Conduct Code, Academic Grievances, Misconduct and Appeals**

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of personal integrity and professional ethics and to the UC Denver honor code. Students who not meeting these standards of integrity or ethics and/or who violate the honor code may be placed on disciplinary probation by the Dean upon the recommendation of the Academic Conduct and Appeals Committee (ACAC). Generally, procedures for matters involving academic misconduct should emphasize due process, which should include, at a minimum, notification to the student of the alleged violation; an opportunity of the student to gather information in order to properly respond to the allegation; and an impartial hearing to be conducted by the ACAC. The honor code, committee guidelines, and appeal process are on file in the Graduate School office and available in the Graduate School Student Handbook. The schools or colleges in which graduate programs are housed, or individual graduate programs themselves, may have additional policies and/or requirements for student conduct.

### **(i) Academic Grievances**

Students who feel they have been treated unfairly or outside of normal departmental policies, may file a grievance with the Graduate School in accordance with grievance procedures outlined in the student handbook. If a School, College or graduate program has established its own procedures to consider academic grievances, then the student must follow these procedures before they can submit a Grievance to the Graduate School.

The designation *academic grievance* covers those problems related to academic issues. Such issues are distinguished from academic ethics cases and disciplinary cases for which separate

procedures exist. Included within academic grievance cases are faculty, program, departmental, college or school (including Graduate School) policies affecting individual student prerogatives, deviations from stated grading procedures (excluding individual grade challenges), unfair treatment and related issues. Policies and procedures governing the filing of an academic grievance are published in a separate policy document available in the Graduate School.

**(ii) Academic Misconduct**

The Academic Conduct and Appeals Committee (ACAC) has responsibility for reviewing and resolving cases of honor code misconduct or student academic grievances unless the School or College in which the graduate program resides has established their own policy (see Article I Section 3 (ii c)). Some schools and colleges have their own academic misconduct policies and procedures that meet the standards of due process and such committees have the original jurisdiction in cases involving honor code misconduct or student academic grievances. For such schools and colleges the ACAC may act as an appellate review board for the final action taken by the School or College and will forward their recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

**Section 9. Admission to Candidacy**

**(i) Master's Degree**

Students who wish to receive the Master's degree must first become candidates. After completing or registering for all program-required coursework, students must file an "Application for Graduation" with the Graduate School no later than the posted candidacy/graduation deadline during the semester in which they plan to have their degrees conferred. This form is included in the Master's degree graduation packet available on the Graduate School website.

The student's advisor and program director must approve the completed application before being submitted to the Graduate School for final approval and filing. An approved form certifies that a student's work is satisfactory and that the program curriculum described in the Application for Graduation meets all of the requirements of both the Graduate School as well as the particular graduate program, and that the student is a candidate for the degree. Students cannot take the final examination if they have a GPA less than 3.00.

**(ii) Ph.D. Degree**

Students must apply for admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree at least two weeks before taking the comprehensive examination. The Candidacy Form is included in the Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination packet available on the Graduate School website. The student's advisor and program director must approve the completed application form before submission to the Graduate School for final approval and filing. The student cannot take the comprehensive examination with less than a 3.00 G.P.A. and before they have completed or registered for all non-thesis coursework required by the program and before this application is submitted to and approved by the Graduate School.

Before being admitted to candidacy, doctoral students must complete at least two semesters of enrollment at UC Denver, complete or register for all program-required, non-thesis coursework, and pass the comprehensive examination. (See policy on required enrollment above, Section 5.)

## **Section 10. Examinations**

All Master's degree students must successfully complete a final examination or a cumulative scholarly or professional project in which proficiency in the knowledge and skills comprising the degree program must be demonstrated. All Ph.D. students must successfully complete both a comprehensive exam and a dissertation defense. Graduate programs may require additional examinations for students to meet the requirements for the degree. Such requirements will be monitored by the graduate program. Students must be registered at the time they undergo either the comprehensive or final examinations or their dissertation defense. Students who choose to perform these examinations or defend their thesis in the time period between semesters, (between Fall and Spring; Spring and Summer, or between Summer and Fall) must register for the semester immediately prior to their exam/defense and have completed all necessary requirements except the exam/defense.

All students who have advanced to candidacy must meet with their advisory committee at least once every year. The advisory committee shall evaluate the student's progress to ensure that he/she has made satisfactory progress since the previous meeting. If the committee feels that the progress is unsatisfactory, they will forward a written report to the student and the program director suggesting the steps to be taken to rectify the situation.

### **(i) Master's Degree Final Examination / Thesis Defense**

After completing or registering for all requirements for the degree and after advancement to candidacy, all candidates for the Master's degree are required to take a final examination, a cumulative professional project, or a thesis defense. The final examination / thesis defense is conducted by a committee consisting of at least three members of the Graduate Faculty. Graduate programs with a limited number of graduate faculty can petition the Dean for an exception to this requirement so that only two members of the Graduate Faculty are required for examinations of Master's students in their program(s).

The student's final examination/defense committee and the examination schedule must be approved by the program director. The Graduate School must be notified on the appropriate forms at least two weeks before the exam. These forms are included in the Master's degree graduation packet. Specific Graduate Programs may have additional requirements for registering/scheduling the exam.

The examinations may be oral, written, or both, or it may consist of an evaluation of a cumulative professional project. Unless the examination format is only a written proposal, all members of the committee must be present for the oral examination, although a minority of members, but not the chairperson or the student, may participate by interactive video. In the event of an *emergency* that prevents *one* faculty committee member from attending the exam, the exam can proceed with the faculty who can attend and the student will schedule a separate meeting with the faculty member at an alternate time. A majority of the examination committee members must vote for one of the following examination outcomes:

- i) Pass;
- ii) Conditional Pass;
- iii) Fail.

If a student receives a Conditional Pass, the examining committee will clearly define the requirements for the student to receive an unconditional passing grade and these requirements

must be completed to the satisfaction of the examination committee within four months. Failure to satisfy these conditions will result in failure of the examination.

A student who fails the examination is subject to immediate dismissal from the program on the recommendation of the graduate program and concurrence of the Dean. At the program's discretion, a student who fails the examination may be allowed to retake the exam. The retake must be completed by the end of the next academic semester. The original examination form noting the failure is signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School office. New examination forms will be generated when the examination is rescheduled. Students will be required to meet registration requirements and be registered during the semester in which the repeated exam is taken.

## **(ii) Doctoral Degree Examinations**

### **a. Preliminary Examination**

Each program is responsible for ensuring that students are qualified for doctoral study by successfully passing a preliminary examination. Graduate programs that require students have a Master's degree before they enter their Ph.D. program may exempt the student from taking a preliminary examination. The preliminary examination must occur within three semesters of completing the required courses as defined by the particular graduate program. The content and format of the preliminary examination are determined by the individual graduate program. The results (Pass/Fail) of the preliminary examination must be reported to the Graduate School. A student who fails the examination is subject to immediate dismissal from the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the program and concurrence of the Dean. At the program's discretion, a student who fails the examination may retake it.

### **b. Comprehensive Exam**

After completing or registering for all program-required, non-thesis coursework, and concurrently with applying for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D., students must take a comprehensive examination in their respective discipline. This examination will test a student's mastery of a broad field of knowledge, not merely the formal coursework that s/he has completed. The oral part of the comprehensive examination is open to all members of the Graduate Faculty. This examination must be completed no later than the end of the third year for full time students (fourth year for students enrolled in the Ph.D. programs in Applied Mathematics and Computer Science and Information Systems). Individual programs may establish an earlier deadline.

The student's comprehensive examination committee and the examination schedule must be approved by the program director. The Graduate School must be notified on the appropriate forms at least two weeks before the exam. These forms are included in the Ph.D. comprehensive examination packet.

The examination committee shall consist of a minimum of three Graduate Faculty members. The chair of the committee must be a member of the degree-granting program. The student's dissertation advisor, if already identified, may not chair the examination committee.

All members of the committee must be present for the examination although a minority of members, but not the chairperson nor the student, may participate by interactive video. In the event of an *emergency* that prevents *one* faculty committee member from attending the exam, the

exam can proceed with the faculty who can attend and the student will schedule a separate meeting with the faculty member who was absent at an alternate time. The examination form must be signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School Office. The student must receive votes from the majority of the examination committee for one of the following outcomes:

- i) Pass;
- ii) Conditional Pass;
- iii) Fail.

If a student receives a Conditional Pass, the examining committee will clearly define the requirements for the student to receive an unconditional passing grade and these requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the examination committee within four months. The committee chair is responsible for monitoring the conditions and reporting their outcome to the Graduate School. Failure to satisfy these conditions will result in failure of the examination.

A student who fails the examination is subject to immediate dismissal from the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the program and concurrence of the Dean. At the program's discretion, a student who fails the examination may retake it. The retake will be in the form designated by the committee and must be completed within twelve months. The original examination form noting the failure is signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School office. New examination forms will be generated when the examination is rescheduled. Students will be required to meet registration requirements and be registered during the term in which the repeated exam is taken.

### **c. Final / Dissertation Examination**

After the dissertation has been completed, a final examination on the dissertation and related topics is conducted in two parts, an oral presentation of the dissertation research that is open to the public, and a closed examination conducted by the examining committee.

The program director will approve the student's final examination / defense committee and the examination schedule. The Graduate School must be notified on the appropriate forms at least two weeks before the exam. Forms are included in the Ph.D. graduation packet. The Graduate School will send announcements of the examination to appropriate faculty members, and the signature form will be sent to the program office to be placed in the student's file for use at the examination.

The dissertation defense committee shall consist of a minimum of four Graduate Faculty members. The chair of the committee must be a member of the degree-granting program. The student's dissertation advisor may not chair the examination committee. The student must submit finalized draft copies of the thesis to the defense committee at least two weeks before the examination date. Programs may require an earlier deadline.

All members of the committee must be present for the examination although a minority of members, but not the chairperson or the student, may participate by interactive video. In the event of an *emergency* that prevents *one* faculty committee member from attending the exam, the exam can proceed with the faculty who can attend and the student will schedule a separate meeting with the faculty member who was absent at an alternate time. The examination form must be signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate School office. The student must

receive votes from a strict majority of the examination committee for one of the following outcomes:

- i) Pass;
- ii) Conditional Pass;
- iii) Fail.

If a student receives a Conditional Pass, the examining committee will clearly define the requirements for the student to receive an unconditional passing grade and these requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the examination committee within 60 days of the defense. Under extenuating circumstances, the graduate program director may petition the Graduate School for additional time. If a student fails the examination, s/he may not continue in the program.

## **Section 11. Thesis / Dissertation Requirements**

### **(i) Master's Thesis**

Students who are enrolled in a program that requires a thesis must undertake their thesis work under the supervision of a thesis advisor and in some instances, an advisory committee. All research conducted for a Master's degree must meet all appropriate regulatory standards specified by federal, state, and local agencies regarding ethical research, animal use, human subjects, HIPAA and environmental safety. Each thesis is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's degree and must meet the formatting criteria outlined in the UC Denver Thesis Specifications available on the Graduate School website.

Master's students who are enrolled in a program or track that requires a thesis, must also register for a minimum of three and a maximum of six hours of thesis work. If the student has already completed six semester hours of thesis work and all other course work, then they must register for one credit in the appropriate Candidate for Degree course (e.g., CAND 6940 or NURS 6940) for the semester in which they will defend their thesis. These courses may have only pass/fail grading.

A grade of In Progress (IP) will be assigned for thesis hours in all semesters until the final approved thesis/dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School office. The Graduate School will then obtain the final thesis grade, and all IP grades will be changed to this new grade. Two formally approved copies of the thesis must be filed in the Graduate School office within 60 days of thesis defense. In addition, thesis fees must be paid to the Graduate School.

### **(ii) Doctoral Dissertation**

A dissertation based upon original investigation and showing mature scholarship and critical judgment, as well as familiarity with the tools and methods of research, must be written on a subject approved by the student's dissertation advisor and the Dissertation Advisory Committee. All research conducted for the Ph.D. degree must meet all regulatory standards specified by federal, state, and local agencies regarding ethical research, animal use, human subjects, HIPAA and environmental safety.

After selecting a dissertation advisor, the student, in collaboration with his/her dissertation advisor, will choose a Dissertation Advisory Committee, subject to approval of the Graduate Program Director. Although it is recommended that the Dissertation Advisory Committee be the

same as the Dissertation Examination Committee, the two committees need not be identical. The Dissertation Advisory Committee will serve an advisory function to the student and dissertation advisor, and will also monitor the student's progress towards completing the dissertation. The Dissertation Advisory Committee will determine when the student has made sufficient progress to begin writing his/her dissertation. The Dissertation Advisory Committee will meet at least once each year. Individual Programs may require – and the Graduate School encourages – a greater frequency of meetings. Written records of the meetings and of the student's progress will be kept in the student's file in the Graduate Program office and notice that a student is not in compliance with this rule will be sent by the Program to the Graduate School office three weeks before the end of the Fall academic term. Students who have not had a Dissertation Advisory Committee meeting in the preceding 12 months will not be permitted to register for subsequent semesters. Once the student is in compliance with this rule, s/he will be permitted to register.

A formally approved dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School, with the appropriate supporting documentation, within 60 days of thesis defense. The Graduate School conducts the final review of dissertations for format.

#### **a. Ph.D. Thesis Registration**

Ph.D. students must register for a total of at least 30 (semester) dissertation credit hours (in the School of Education and Human Development this includes the 12 hours of Doctoral Research labs) to complete the requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

Students may register for a maximum of 10 hours of dissertation credit in any one semester. Students must register for a minimum of 5 hours of dissertation credit in each Fall and Spring semester following successful completion of the comprehensive examination. Once a student has completed 30 dissertation credits they need to enroll for only one credit in each Fall and Spring semester until a successful defense of their thesis. As outlined in Section 10 above, a student must be registered for the semester in which they undertake an examination or a dissertation defense, therefore if students elect to defend their thesis in the summer semester they must register for that semester. Some students who receive a stipend may have to continue to register for 5 credit hours to ensure their status as full time students and ensure that retirement contributions are not withheld from their stipend. Foreign students who register for only one credit in a semester and who need to maintain their status on an F-1 or J-1 visa may have to have their academic advisor complete a "Less Than Full-Time Enrollment" form that allows foreign students to be less than full time and still in valid status. Students who are unable to register for these minimum credits because of extenuating personal circumstances should apply for a leave of absence as explained in Section 5 above.

A student (who is not on a leave of absence) who fails to register continuously in a given academic year (fall and spring semesters) for dissertation credit hours after passing the comprehensive examination may, at the discretion of the program director, be required to retake and pass the examination in order to regain status as a student in "good standing" in the Graduate School.

A grade of "In Progress" (IP) will be assigned in all semesters until the final approved thesis/dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School office. The Graduate School will then obtain the dissertation grade, and all IPs then will be changed to this final grade.

### **b. Off-Campus Status for Ph.D. Students**

If, in the course of his/her dissertation research, a student plans to perform their thesis work or study out-of-state and will not be utilizing campus facilities or faculty time, s/he may request off-campus status for purposes of registering for three units of thesis credit. Written requests must be received in the Graduate School office at least one week before the semester begins. The request must be co-signed by the program director prior to submission for approval to the Graduate School. Off-campus status cannot be extended to the (last) term in which the final examination is to be taken and during which the student must register for at least five hours of dissertation research unless the student has already registered for 30 dissertation credits.

## **Section 12. Time Limits for Completion of Degrees**

### **(i) Master's Degree Time Limit**

Master's students, whether enrolled full time or part time, have five years from matriculation (the start of course work) to complete all degree requirements, including the filing of the thesis with the Graduate School if the program requires a thesis. Students who fail to complete the degree in this five-year period are subject to termination from the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the program director and concurrence of the Dean. For a student to continue beyond the time limit, the program director must petition the Dean for an extension and include 1) reasons why the program faculty believes the student should be allowed to continue in the program and 2) an anticipated timeline for completion of the degree.

### **(ii) Ph.D. Degree Time Limit**

Doctoral students, whether enrolled full time or part time, must complete all degree requirements within eight years of matriculation. Students who fail to complete the degree in this eight-year period are subject to termination from the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the program director and concurrence of the Dean. For a student to continue beyond the time limit, the program director must petition the Dean for an extension and include 1) reasons why the program faculty believes the student should be allowed to continue in the program and 2) an anticipated timeline for completion of the degree.

Approved leaves of absence, as described in Article II, Section 5, do not automatically extend the time limits for earning a degree, but they may be used as a reason to request an extension if needed.

## **ARTICLE III: AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES**

Amendments to these standing rules may be initiated by petition to the Dean from at least ten members of the UC Denver Graduate Faculty and may be adopted upon majority consent of the Graduate Council and approval by the Dean. Upon consultation with the Graduate Council, the Dean may approve revisions to the standing rules that update information, resolve ambiguities, promote clarity, or ensure compliance with State or Colorado Department of Higher Education regulations.