

University of Hawai`i at Hilo Graduate Student Handbook

2017-2018

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The University of Hawai'i at Hilo is an equal opportunity institution of higher education and does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, sexual identity, age, disability, religious affiliation, or country of origin.

Students are expected to be familiar with and follow the guidelines and policies set forth in the [UH Hilo Catalog](#) and [Graduate Student Handbook](#). Students are ultimately responsible for selecting courses appropriate to the program degree objective.

Professional programs' policies may vary slightly from graduate program policies. Please check with your program chair for details.

Graduate Programs

Counseling Psychology, Specialization: Clinical Mental Health Counseling, M.A.

Doctorate of Nursing Practice, D.N.P.

Education, M.Ed.

Hawaiian Language and Literature, M.A.

Hawaiian and Indigenous Language and Culture Revitalization, Ph.D.

Heritage Management, M.A.

Indigenous Language and Culture Education, M.A.

Pharmacy, Pharm.D.

Pharmaceutical Sciences, Ph.D.

Tropical Conservation Biology and Environmental Science, M.S.

Graduate Certificate Programs

Healthcare Leadership (Pharm.D.)

Health Sciences Research (Pharm.D.)

Rural Health Graduate Certificate (Pharm.D.)

Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Graduate Certificate

Application Requirements

Note: The following requirements are the **minimum** requirements for any UH Hilo graduate program. Particular graduate programs' requirements may differ from the minimum. Therefore, prospective students must also check the requirements of their program of interest.

Applicants applying for admission to graduate programs must submit the following items directly to the **Graduate Division**:

1. A completed application form and appropriate fee. The application form and fee information are available online from the [Admissions Office](#). Application deadlines for graduate programs differ from deadlines posted for undergraduate programs. Priority deadlines for graduate programs are posted here: <https://hilo.hawaii.edu/academics/graduate/>
2. One official transcript from each post-secondary institution attended. These transcripts must be sent directly from the institution or submitted by the applicant in a sealed institutional envelope if accompanying the application. Official electronic transcripts are acceptable if sent to hilograd@hawaii.edu. Transcripts from within the UH system are not required.
3. Official Graduate Record Examination scores or other qualifying test scores as determined by the program (check admissions requirements in each program description). International applicants whose native language is not English, or who have not attained a baccalaureate or higher degree from an English-speaking institution, also must submit TOEFL or Cambridge IELTS scores.
4. A minimum of three letters of recommendation attesting to the academic ability or other qualifications of the applicant.
5. Statement of academic and/or long range goals.
6. Verification of financial status (for all international students).

International Applicants

In addition to the above requirements, international applicants and students who attended colleges outside of the U.S. and whose transcripts are in languages other than English must submit official academic records in the original language accompanied by certified English translations. These translations must bear the embossed seal or inked stamp of the issuing institution or government agency and the original signature of the translator. Translations must be complete and exact word-for-word translations of the original documents. International applicants with a Grade Point Average of less than a B (or equivalent) in their undergraduate work or less than a B in 12 or more credits of post-baccalaureate work are **not** eligible for admission.

Minimum Qualifications for Acceptance

Baccalaureate Degree

Each applicant must hold a baccalaureate degree or graduate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. college or university, or its equivalent from a recognized non-U.S. institution of higher learning. The standards of the degree in question must be equivalent in scholarship requirements to those maintained in the undergraduate program at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

Graduate Record Examination (GRE)

The GRE is required for most applicants for consideration of acceptance. Some programs may require a professional test specific to the program of study in lieu of the GRE for admission purposes. Minimum scores on the GRE or professional tests are set individually for each program. Applicants for master's degree programs who have completed a graduate program at a regionally-accredited U.S. institution or its equivalent from a recognized non-U.S. institution are not required to submit GRE scores. Applicants for doctoral programs should check with the specific program to see if submission of the GRE is required.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL or Cambridge IELTS)

In addition to above requirements, an applicant whose native language is not English must demonstrate English language proficiency as a partial admissions requirement. Evidence of proficiency in English is successful completion of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a minimum score of 550 (paper version), 213 (computer version), or 79 (internet version). The minimum Cambridge IELTS score is 6.0. Applicants who have baccalaureate degrees from English-speaking institutions are exempt from the TOEFL and Cambridge IELTS requirement.

International Transcripts

Transcripts from international institutions where a bachelor's degree was awarded must be submitted to a transcript evaluation service. See list at:

<https://hilo.hawaii.edu/academics/graduate/intlgraduate.php>

Please plan ahead to allow adequate time for processing of the evaluation of international transcripts, which may take a month or longer.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

The applicant must have a GPA of 3.0 or the equivalent from the last 60 semester credits (or equivalent) in the undergraduate degree completed, or must hold a graduate degree with a GPA of 3.0 or better in his/her graduate program. **Please note: The meeting of minimum requirements does not assure acceptance into a UH Hilo graduate degree program. Acceptance into a graduate program is competitive and decided upon by each individual graduate program.**

An applicant whose GPA in the last 60 semester credits (or equivalent) falls between 2.75 and 2.99 on a 4.0 scale may be eligible for provisional acceptance. See section below under Classification of Students: Provisional Admission.

Admission Procedures

The Graduate Division is responsible for accepting application materials for all graduate programs not administered by the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy. The **College of Pharmacy** manages applications for programs it administers.

The Graduate Division screens each application for minimum qualifications and distributes completed applications to each respective program for decision of acceptance or rejection. The admissions committee within individual programs will make the final decision on applications that meet minimum university qualifications.

The priority application deadline for summer and fall semester admission is between December 1 and January 1 for most programs. The application deadline for spring semester admission, if appropriate, is November 1. Applications received after the priority deadlines will be considered on a space available basis. Each applicant will be notified of receipt of the application. Incomplete applications will be held in the Graduate Division until complete and ready for review by the graduate program. Applications that remain incomplete at the end of the selection process will be labeled as “incomplete,” and applicants will be denied admission. Applicants will be notified of this action.

Official notification of acceptance or rejection generally is mailed by the Graduate Division between January 15 and May 30 for summer and fall admission. For spring admission, notification is generally mailed between November 15 and December 15. Applicants should not make definite arrangements to attend the University until they receive formal notice of acceptance from the Graduate Division.

Evaluation of transcripts of international students and of non-traditional grading will be done at the program level if the applicant meets other minimum qualifications. The Graduate Division will help with interpreting unusual grading practices and other special cases.

Classification of Students

Regular Admission

Regular admission may be granted to applicants who hold a baccalaureate degree with a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better for the last 60 semester credits (or equivalent), or who hold a graduate degree with a GPA of 3.0 or better from an accredited institution. Determination of acceptance, however, is made by the admissions committees of individual programs. Students accepted by program admission committees are defined as “classified students.”

Provisional Admission

An applicant whose GPA in the last 60 credits (or equivalent) falls between 2.75 and 2.99 may be admitted under provisional status. To be accepted, the applicant must have program approval and otherwise meet program requirements. If accepted provisionally, these conditions apply:

The student must:

- 1) Sign and return a form acknowledging receipt and understanding of the conditions listed in the acceptance letter and agreeing to the conditions;

2) Attain B- grades or higher in all classes required by the graduate program in the first academic year;

3) Register for the same classes required of other students entering the same program. The program will monitor the student's academic progress at the end of the first semester to confirm that conditions have been successfully met.

4) Complete any additional required coursework as specified by the Program Director in the provisional acceptance letter. Coursework may be required to be completed prior to enrollment in the graduate program or during enrollment in the program.

A hold will be placed on the student's record to prevent registration for courses in the second and third semesters (the hold will be removed once the program reports satisfactory progress to the Graduate Division). Failure to meet the conditions will result in dismissal from the program.

Denied Admission

Students whose academic records do not meet the minimum requirements, whose applications are incomplete, and/or whose admission is not supported by the program and the Graduate Division, will be denied admission.

Visiting Graduate Student

Applicants who are pursuing an advanced degree at another institution and who wish to study at UH Hilo for a limited time may apply for admission as visiting graduate students. To be eligible, applicants must be enrolled in and actively pursuing a graduate degree at a regionally accredited institution of higher education or an equivalent degree at a recognized non-U.S. institution of higher learning, and be in good academic standing. Current transcripts from the home institution must be provided in order to determine academic standing and eligibility for specific classes at UH Hilo.

Visiting graduate students register on a space available basis and only in courses for which they are judged to be eligible by the instructor of the course and the chair of the individual graduate program. Generally, visiting graduate students are limited to two (2) semesters of study.

Visiting Graduate Students must provide the same application materials as applicants for regular admission: the application, the application fee, statement of research interest/goals in the program, resume, three letters of recommendation, and official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended. The exception is that Visiting Graduate Students do not need to provide official GRE scores. The program chair must approve their acceptance into the program. Visiting Graduate Students will be accepted as "classified graduate students."

Visiting international graduate students must comply with certain application and enrollment regulations in order to qualify for an I-20 certificate of eligibility, which permits them to request an F-1 student visa. Regulations include providing a copy of a current passport, providing proof of adequate financial support, and maintaining full time enrollment (6 credits per semester) while at UH Hilo. Please contact the UH Hilo Graduate Division for details.

Admission as a visiting graduate student does not guarantee subsequent admission as a regularly admitted graduate student. A visiting graduate student who decides to apply for admission as a regular graduate student must apply for acceptance via the standard admissions process as do all other applicants.

Visiting graduate students who later become admitted as regular students may request to have courses taken under the visiting student status credited toward the new degree objective. They should consult with their

graduate programs. The visiting student will submit the [form **Petition to Substitute and/or Waive Courses-Graduate**](#) to the Graduate Division. The form must be signed by the student, the primary advisor (if applicable), and the program chair and submitted to the Graduate Division for final approval by the Graduate Council Chair.

Unclassified Graduate Student

Students with documented baccalaureate degrees who do not meet the minimum requirements for admission to a program, or who for any other reason have not been formally accepted into a program, may attempt to register for selected courses. Such registration is done on a space-available basis, and is with the written consent of both the faculty teaching the course and the chair of the program. **Admission into a course as an unclassified graduate student does not guarantee admission as a regularly classified graduate student at a future date.** A **limit of 9 credit hours** at UH Hilo may be taken at the graduate level by unclassified graduate students in their academic career. Permission to enroll as an unclassified student may be granted with the permission of the instructor and the graduate program chair using the form [Permission to Enroll in Graduate Coursework as an Unclassified Student](#).

Applicants who are sponsored by an educational institution or governmental agency and who wish to undertake a special program of study, research, or training without a degree objective may apply as unclassified graduate students. These students also are limited to 9 credit hours at UH Hilo.

All applicants for unclassified graduate student status are required to submit the following:

1. A UH Hilo application;
2. Proof of baccalaureate degree;
3. A brief statement of objectives specific to each class in which the applicant hopes to enroll.

Unclassified graduate students are not required to submit the application fee, GRE scores, or letters of recommendation. If an unclassified graduate student later applies, and is accepted, into a graduate program, the student may petition for acceptance of credits taken while in unclassified status, **but acceptance of the petition by the graduate program is not assured.**

Undergraduate students with senior standing, and with a GPA of at least 2.5, before being granted a baccalaureate degree may petition to take graduate coursework for credit in the status of an Unclassified Graduate Student. Permission must be received from the student's undergraduate academic advisor, the graduate course instructor, and graduate program chair. This coursework must be in excess of the requirements for the baccalaureate degree. Submit the completed form [Permission to Enroll in Graduate Coursework as an Undergraduate Student](#) to the Graduate Division. Completion of graduate coursework does not guarantee future admission into a UH Hilo graduate program.

Additional Considerations

Concurrent Degrees

An applicant may apply to more than one graduate program but may enroll in only one program initially. Concurrent enrollment in more than one program is strongly discouraged. The individual programs applied for, however, will determine individually what constitutes the minimum course load, and the student (with the approval of both program chairs) may decide to attempt both programs.

Reapplication

Applicants who have been denied admission to a graduate program at UH Hilo because of failure to meet academic standards may reapply for admission after completing additional credits of post-baccalaureate course work and attaining a GPA of at least 2.75 in the last 60 credits. If subsequently accepted with a recalculated GPA of between 2.75-2.99 in the last 60 credits, the student will begin the program under provisional acceptance policies.

Completion of additional course work does not guarantee admission. To be reconsidered for admission, applicants must follow the standard application process and will be considered along with all other applicants.

If Admitted, But Not Enrolled

Admission may not be postponed or deferred. Newly-admitted students who do not register during the semester for which they are admitted or who withdraw from all courses before the last day to drop are considered no-shows. Their admission status will be rendered invalid. To reapply for admission, they must contact the Graduate Division for instructions.

Returning Student

If a student has not registered continuously, that student must reapply for admission. Readmission is not guaranteed. Please see the policies on Continuous Registration and on Leave of Absence in this Handbook.

International Student Documents

International student documents are processed by the Graduate Division in consultation with the International Admissions Officer. Visa questions will be handled by International Student Services office.

Appealing an Admission Decision

Individual graduate programs have processes in place for instances when students believe they have been unfairly denied acceptance to the program. Please consult your program's chair.

Registration

Entering graduate students register during the official registration period posted under the "Registration Timetable" in [UH Hilo Student Links](#) for the relevant semester. Registration for classes is done by clicking on the tab "STAR GPS Registration" on the UH Hilo Student Links page. Students may also register in the period just prior to the start of fall classes, or in the case of programs that begin in the spring or summer, prior to the beginning of the semester. Continuing graduate students are encouraged to participate in early registration whenever possible. Graduate students must meet general guidelines for [tuition and fee payments](#) set by the university.

Full-Time Registration Requirements for Students

Graduate students must register for six or more credits during the Fall or Spring semesters and, when applicable, three credits during the summer to be considered full time. International students must be

enrolled for at least 6 credits in each regular semester of the graduate program. Please check with the [International Student Services Office](#) for details.

Academic Standards

A cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 (on a scale where A = 4.0) in courses required by the graduate program is required in order to maintain satisfactory academic standing and graduate degree certification. When the cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, the student will be placed on academic probation. Once a student is placed on probation, the student has two semesters to attain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher, or the student will be dismissed.

Students admitted under Provisional status must earn a grade of B- or better in all courses taken in the first year. Failure to meet this requirement will result in dismissal from the program.

No credit is granted for graduate courses in which a grade lower than a B- has been received, or in the case where courses are evaluated as either Credit/No Credit, where no credit is given. Grades lower than a B-, however, will appear on the student's transcript and will be computed into the student's GPA, although the student may **not** use the course for degree requirements.

Graduate students who do not meet other academic/program standards will be dismissed from their graduate program. This process entails a warning letter from the chair of the graduate program to the student. If the necessary academic standards are not attained within a period specified by the graduate program, the graduate program's chair informs the appropriate Dean that the student be dismissed from the program. Students will be notified of the intended action. Appeals of such action may be made in writing to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA) or designee within ten business days. The VCAA's decision on the appeal will be final.

Graduate Committees and Primary Academic Advisors

With the exception of certain professional programs, most graduate programs utilize a graduate committee system for advising and evaluating graduate students. At the Master's level, the committee is comprised of a minimum of three faculty members. One member will chair the committee and serve as the student's primary academic advisor. At least two members of a student's graduate committee must be full time tenured or tenure track faculty at UH Hilo.

For students utilizing a thesis option, the committee serves as the thesis committee. Acceptance or rejection of a student's work as fulfilling degree requirements is determined by a majority of the graduate committee.

Some professional programs may not utilize a graduate committee system. In these cases, a designated faculty member serves as the student's primary academic advisor. Acceptance or rejection of a student's work as fulfilling degree requirements is determined by a majority vote of the graduate program's faculty.

Minimum Residency for Degree Certification

Regardless of any previous graduate experience, a minimum of 24 credit hours must be taken at UH Hilo before a degree can be granted. This is known as the "residence requirement," and applies to all graduate degree programs at UH Hilo. At the graduate level, a maximum of six credit hours earned under courses designated as "thesis" may be counted toward the Graduate Division's minimum residence requirement. Students continuing their studies for a doctoral degree in the same UH Hilo program from which they earned their masters' degree need not fulfill a second residence requirement.

Minimum Credits in Graduate Level Courses

Students are required to complete a minimum of 24 credits in courses at the graduate level before a degree may be granted. Specific graduate programs may require additional credits at the graduate level. Students are advised to read program requirements and discuss them with their primary academic advisor.

Use of Undergraduate Courses for Graduate Credit

Graduate students may take up to six credits in 400-level courses toward their graduate degree requirements with the prior approval of the primary academic advisor, graduate program chair and the Graduate Division. Courses numbered 499 may not be used for graduate credit. Credits used to meet requirements for an undergraduate degree may not be used to meet graduate program requirements. To register for 400-level courses, complete the [Petition to Substitute, and/or Waive Courses](#) form and submit it to the Graduate Division.

Dual Level Courses

Some courses are dually listed at the 400- and 600-level. Courses identified by graduate programs as core courses are not eligible as dual level offerings. For dual level courses, credit in the graduate course is not available to students who have received credit in the corresponding undergraduate course.

Dual level courses must be evaluated as a unit based upon their specific content, including specification of differences in expectations for undergraduate and graduate students. Courses that have changing content from semester to semester, such as those ending in the numbers -94, -97 and -98, are not eligible for use in dual level offerings.

Overload Policy

Students may register for up to 15 credits without the approval of the graduate program chair. Any course load above 15 credits requires approval by both the graduate program chair and the Graduate Council Chair as indicated on the [Student Overload Approval Form Graduate Program](#). After obtaining the primary advisor's and graduate program chair's signatures, the form is submitted to the Graduate Division for the Graduate Council Chair's signature; the form is then submitted to the Office of the Registrar by the Graduate Division. The Overload Form must be approved before the end of the add deadline, and will be retained in the student's file in the Graduate Division.

Incomplete Grades

An instructor may assign an Incomplete (I) grade when a student has done most of the course work satisfactorily, but because of unforeseen circumstances has not completed all course requirements. The Incomplete is not for the purpose of converting a failing grade, or unsatisfactory work, to a passing grade. The student must request the Incomplete option from the instructor, but it is the instructor's decision as to whether it is appropriate or not.

Graduate students who are given a grade of "I" must complete the coursework before the due date listed in the [University Academic Calendar](#). "I" grades that are not completed by this due date automatically are converted into "NC" grades. The instructor may set a deadline sooner than that listed in the University Academic Calendar, reflecting the instructor's availability to extend his/her commitment beyond the course. The instructor, however, cannot extend the due date unless granted a specific waiver by the college Dean.

Some departments and programs may have more restrictive policies regarding incomplete grades. Students should confer with their academic advisors concerning departmental rules and expectations.

The incomplete policy has specific implications for students receiving tuition scholarships and other kinds of financial aid and for international students holding visas. Graduate students who receive federal or state aid may lose their eligibility if they receive Incompletes. See the [Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy](#).

All courses taken by graduate students are subject to the above policy. **Incomplete grades must be resolved before students can receive a graduate degree.**

Repeating Courses for Credit

A few graduate courses (numbered 600 and above) are repeatable for credit. Examples include thesis research and courses that are approved via the curriculum review process as "repeatable for credit" (e.g. Special Topics classes).

Retaking Courses for a New Grade

With the exception of courses that are explicitly repeatable for credit (see above), graduate courses cannot be retaken unless approved by the primary advisor, program chair and Graduate Council Chair **prior to registration**. With the permission of the primary advisor and the graduate program chair, courses may be retaken, but not for additional credits. No more than two courses may be retaken, and no graduate level course may be retaken more than once during the student's graduate career. The grade received will be averaged with the previous grade in that course in computing the UH Hilo cumulative grade point average (GPA). For graduation purposes, however, a program grade point average may be computed which includes only the grades earned in the courses that are part of the student's graduate program. A statement which specifies the recomputed program GPA will be reflected on the student's academic records and transcript. Submit the completed [Graduate Repeat Course Notification](#) form to the Graduate Division, where the final signature will be obtained.

Continuous Registration

All students admitted to a degree-granting program must maintain continuous registration each semester for at least one credit hour. Even students pursuing research or work opportunities off campus must register if they intend on completing their degrees. The purpose of the continuous registration policy is to ensure that students and programs remain in contact and that steady progress is made each semester towards completion of the degree.

Students who do not register and who have not been granted a leave of absence (see below) will be removed from their graduate programs. In order to return to their programs, students must reapply for admission and include in their application an explanation for the absence from the program. Readmission is not guaranteed and students may be subject to changes in the degree or additional requirements deemed necessary by the program and graduate council. In addition, if students are readmitted, they will be required to pay an additional one credit of tuition for each semester not continuously registered for up to three semesters.

Students do NOT need to be enrolled during the summer session unless final degree requirements are to be completed during this period. Students must be registered during the semester when the degree is granted.

Leave of Absence

Under exceptional situations, students may apply for a **Leave of Absence**. Students on leave are excused from the registration requirement during the period of the leave and thus are not required to pay tuition and fees. Leaves are normally granted for six months with a possible extension of 6 months for a total of up to one year. A Leave of Absence is granted only in exceptional circumstances, such as illness or other unusual personal hardship, and requires detailed justification. Students must submit a **Returning Student Application** to the Graduate Division prior to return. Leaves of Absence are not granted to students who wish to absent themselves to undertake thesis or dissertation research elsewhere.

Requests for Leaves of Absence should be submitted one month prior to the semester for which the leave is requested. Students may NOT apply retroactively for a Leave of Absence because they have failed to register for a current semester. Students not submitting Leaves of Absences or requests to extend their Leaves of Absence must comply with the Continuous Registration policy.

In order to request a Leave of Absence, or an extension to a Leave of Absence, students must submit the Petition for Leave of Absence with the signed approval of the chair of their program for his or her signature. Additional signatures must be obtained from the Financial Aid Office, and if the student is an international student, from the Director of International Student Services. The completed Leave of Absence form is submitted to the Graduate Division Office for approval by the Graduate Council Chair and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Withdrawal from Graduate Program

Students who withdraw from courses for which they are registered at the University must follow a formal withdrawal procedure by submitting the **Complete Withdrawal Form** if they wish their record to indicate good standing. *Absence from class does not constitute due notice of withdrawal.* No grades are recorded for students who formally withdraw by the listed withdrawal date that is noted in the Academic Calendar. Withdrawal from all classes after the listed withdrawal date may be granted, but only in exceptional circumstances, such as illness or other unusual personal hardship, and requires detailed justification. Withdrawal from classes may affect financial aid eligibility. See the **Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy** in the **UH Hilo Guide to Financial Aid**. **Withdrawal may also negatively impact the Continuous Enrollment policy (page 11).**

For international students, student visas require that students be registered full time (6 credits in Fall and Spring; 3 credits in Summer, if the student chooses to attend classes in the summer), Withdrawal from courses may result in a failure to meet visa requirements. Please consult with **the International Student Services** director for more information prior to withdrawing from any courses.

Transfer of Graduate Credits

Students matriculated in advanced degree programs must petition to have previously earned graduate credits from other institutions transferred toward their University of Hawai'i at Hilo graduate degrees within their first semester at UH Hilo. Using the Graduate Division's **Petition to Substitute, and/or Waive Courses-Graduate** form, students submit this petition to their graduate program. A copy of the official transcript from the other institution must be on file with the Graduate Division, and a course description or syllabus should be provided by the student.

Credits petitioned for transfer must be relevant to the student's UH Hilo degree program, must have been earned at a regionally accredited university, must not have been used to satisfy the requirements of another degree, and must have been earned in graduate-level courses for which the student earned at least a B. In

cases where the transferring institution awards Credit or No Credit instead of a letter grade, the course may be eligible for transfer if the transferring institution awards Credit when the student has earned the equivalent of at least a B grade had a letter grade been used. In cases where a graduate student wishes to take graduate coursework elsewhere for transfer credit during their tenure at UH Hilo, the course work must be **pre-approved**, using the [Petition to Substitute, and/or Waive Courses-Graduate](#), by the student's primary academic advisor and graduate program chair. Petition for transfer of these credits must be completed within a semester of completion of the course work, and will otherwise be subject to the same regulations as credits petitioned for transfer from before the student's acceptance to UH Hilo.

Credits earned through correspondence courses or through courses or experiences offered under the auspices of proprietary schools, business or industrial training programs, or schools conducted by federal agencies such as the Department of Defense normally are not considered for transfer.

Courses taken more than five years prior to matriculation in the Graduate Division are accepted only when the graduate program chair attaches a statement justifying the transfer.

The graduate chair in the student's program forwards all approved petitions to the Graduate Division for final approval. Approved transfer credits will be included on the student's official Graduate School transcript as a single entry of total credits accepted in transfer. Letter grades from transfer credits are not considered in the determination of grade-point average.

Limitations on the number of credits acceptable in transfer are set in the first instance by the minimum residence requirement of 24 credit hours for any advanced degree; transfer credits cannot be applied toward the residence requirement. For example, for a master's program requiring a minimum of 30 credit hours, no more than six transfer credits may be applied toward the degree. When graduate programs require more than 30 credit hours, the Graduate Division may accept a correspondingly larger number of transfer credits.

Policy Prohibiting the Awarding of a Second Degree in the Same Field

The UH Hilo policy is that a second degree at the same level (master's or doctoral) can be awarded only when a significant amount of additional coursework in a different field is completed. Normally students who have already earned a master's or doctoral degree in a given discipline at either a foreign or U.S. institution may not earn a second degree in a similar field at the same level from UH Hilo.

Transcript Notations of Approved Concentrations within a Major Program

For each advanced-degree recipient, approved concentrations, or specializations, may be listed on the official graduate transcript, along with the graduate major. Such listings are limited to two concentrations. In addition to the titles of approved and satisfactorily completed majors and concentrations, official graduate transcripts show the titles of doctoral dissertations and master's theses. All such special transcript listings are made only at the time of completion of final degree requirements.

Courses Taken in Other Graduate Programs at UH Hilo

Graduate students may take courses offered by other graduate programs at the University with the consent of the course's instructor. These other courses may count toward the student's degree program only with the

authorization of the student's graduate program, and this authorization must be obtained before the student registers for the course using the form [Petition to Substitute and/or Waive Courses-Graduate](#).

Waiver of Regulations and Requirements

Some Graduate Division regulations and/or program requirements may be waived by the VCAA or designee in exceptional individual instances. A petition for waiver must be endorsed by the student's graduate program committee or graduate chair, who appends their reasons for believing that the waiver request would not breach the spirit of the specified regulation or requirement.

Requirements for Candidates for Master's Degrees

Advising and Guidance from the Graduate Committee

At the beginning of a student's work toward the master's degree, the chair of the student's graduate program, in consultation with the student, designates a primary academic advisor. The primary academic advisor may be the chair of the graduate program or another faculty member. This advisor also may serve as chair of the student's graduate committee. The graduate committee, when required by the program, will consist of a minimum of three members who meet periodically with the student to discuss his or her progress.

Time to Completion of the Master's Degree

Time to completion is typically two-three years with full time enrollment after official admittance into the program. Effective Fall 2011, failure to complete the master's degree after five years will result in the student being placed on probation. The probationary period will begin at the start of the sixth year. As part of the probationary status, the student will not be able to register for an additional semester unless the student has received a letter of approval signed by the chair of her/his master's program. The probation notice will be rescinded if the student completes the degree within seven years. Students who do not complete the degree within seven years are subject to dismissal. Approved leaves of absence do not count toward these time limits.

By this policy, if at the end of year seven, additional time is needed for completion of the master's degree due to circumstances beyond the student's control, and the student has completed all of the degree requirements except the thesis and/or capstone experience (e.g., field practicum/internship), an extension in the form of a letter of petition may be requested. To request an extension, the student's Graduate Committee Chair, with the approval of the Program Chair/Director, must submit a petition to the Chair of the Graduate Council to be evaluated by the Chair of the Graduate Council and the VCAA. If the program does not file for an extension, the student will be dismissed.

The extension request should provide a timeline for completion that includes the expected graduation date and the reason(s) necessitating the extension.

The student will be subject to the policy of continuous registration, including the entirety of the probation and extension period, except if s/he is on a leave of absence (see continuous registration.)

The Catalog stipulates the specific requirements for a master's degree in each program of the University. The minimum requirements include the following:

1. Students must maintain continuous registration, including the semester in which the degree is awarded.
2. Students must complete at least 24 credit hours of graduate coursework in residence. A minimum total of 30 credit hours of graduate coursework are required for all master's degrees. A maximum of six hours of transfer credit is allowed for programs requiring 30 credit hours; additional credit hours may be accepted for transfer in programs that require more than 30 credit hours, as long as the 24 credit minimum in residence is maintained.
3. Graduate students must maintain at least a B average in courses approved by the program or graduate committee and presented for the degree.
4. Students must fulfill all departmental or school course requirements. (No credit is granted for graduate courses in which a grade lower than a B- has been received).
5. Students must complete all other requirements as listed by the specific graduate program.
6. Students must complete all requirements, including thesis if required by the program, within five years after admission to the Graduate Division.

There are specific [Graduate Level Forms](#) (Form 1, Form 2, and Form 3) used to mark the student's progress through the graduate program. They should be completed in collaboration with the primary academic advisor and submitted within the stated deadlines. Other useful forms are also posted at this site.

Examination

If a general examination is required for the student's master's degree, the examination may be written, oral, or a combination of both. The decision for pass or fail shall be by majority vote of the graduate committee in programs that utilize a graduate committee. In programs that do not use graduate committees, the program faculty by majority vote shall determine whether the student has passed or failed.

Thesis

If a thesis is required for the student's master's degree, the graduate committee, or the program faculty in programs that do not use graduate committees, will supervise and approve the thesis. Programs may designate additional examiners for the master's thesis beyond the student's graduate committee. Students must receive approval from the [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) for theses involving human subjects or from the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#) (IACUC) for theses involving use of vertebrate animals. Approval from these institutional committees, where appropriate, must be sought at the time of approval of the thesis topic, and research on the thesis may not commence until after IRB and/or IACUC approval is granted. Where appropriate, permission from other entities, such as the [Office of Research Services](#) and theUH Hilo [Environmental Health & Safety Office](#) may be required.

Publication is required for all theses.

Awarding of the Degree

When a student has satisfied the requirements for a master's degree, the student submits [Form 3: Thesis/Project/Dissertation and Degree Requirements Completion](#) to the Graduate Division by the required deadline, generally about three weeks after the end of the final semester. If submitting a thesis, this form verifies that the thesis has been submitted to the Library. See the complete requirements checklist below.

Deadlines

Degree completion dates will be posted on the [University Academic Calendar](#). Those who have not completed all degree requirements by the established deadlines will be required to register the following semester.

Completion Letter

Students who complete all requirements for the degree well in advance of the award of the degree may, upon request, receive a statement from the Office of the Registrar certifying that all requirements for the degree have been completed.

Checklist for Completion of Degree Requirements: Master's Degrees

Master's Degree (non-thesis option)

- **Graduate program:** Appoints primary academic advisor and, where appropriate, graduate committee, in consultation with the student.
- **Student** submits [Form 1: Graduate Committee Formation](#) to the Graduate Division Office, indicating the student will complete the Non-Thesis track.
- **Student:** Satisfies residence and course requirements.
- **Student:** Maintains continuous enrollment in program.
- **Student:** Completes any other program requirements.
- **Student:** Registers for semester in which degree requirements will be completed.
- **Student:** Submits [Graduation Application](#) form to the Business Office by the required deadline. *If student wants to participate in Commencement exercises, student submits the separate [Commencement Registration](#) by the required deadline.*
- **Student:** Passes final examination, and/or passes requirements for papers or projects as specified by the graduate program.
- **Student:** Completes all other requirements specified by the graduate program.
- **Student:** Submits the [Authorization to Participate in Commencement](#) to the Graduate Division by the deadline posted in the [University Academic Calendar](#).
- **Student:** Submits [Form 3: Thesis/Project/Dissertation and Degree Requirements Completion](#) with appropriate signatures to the Graduate Division by the required deadline.

Master's Degree (thesis option)

- **Graduate program:** Assigns primary advisor and committee.
- **Student:** Submits [Form 1: Graduate Committee Formation](#) to the Graduate Division Office.
- **Student:** Submits [Form 2: Thesis/Project/Dissertation Proposal](#) to the Graduate Division Office when ready to begin thesis.
- **Student:** Satisfies residence and course requirements.
- **Student:** Maintains continuous enrollment in program.

- **Student:** Completes coursework required for the degree.
- **Student:** Completes any other program requirements.
- **Student:** Passes general examination if required.
- **Student:** Registers for semester in which degree requirements will be completed.
- **Student:** Submits **Graduation Application** form to the Business Office by the required deadline. *If student wants to participate in Commencement exercises, student submits the separate **Commencement Registration** by the required deadline.*
- **Student:** Submits a copy of the **Thesis/Project/Dissertation Defense Schedule** form to the Graduate Division one month prior to the defense deadline posted in the **University Academic Calendar**. Student retains the original until the time of the defense, and submits the completed form to the Graduate Division with the Primary Advisor's signature indicating successful (or unsuccessful) completion of the defense.
- **Student:** Defends and completes thesis.
- **Student:** Obtains signatures of committee members on **Form 3: Thesis/Project/Dissertation and Degree Requirements Completion**.
- **Student:** Submits thesis on **ETD Administrator**.
- **Student:** Obtains initials of the Collection Development Librarian (or designee) on **Form 3**, then submits form to the Graduate Division by the required deadline posted in the **University Academic Calendar**. The Graduate Division obtains final signatures.

Requirements for Candidates for Doctoral Degrees

Time to Completion for Doctoral Degree Candidates: PhD

Time to degree is typically five years with full time enrollment after official admittance into the program. A student who has not completed her/his degree after seven years will be placed on probation. The probationary period will begin at the start of the eighth year. As part of the probationary status, the student will not be able to register for an additional semester unless the student has received a letter of approval signed by the chair of her/his Ph.D. program. A copy of the signed letter is to be submitted to the Graduate Division; a copy will be sent to the Office of the Registrar. The probation notice will be rescinded if the student completes the degree within ten years. Students who do not complete the degree within ten years are subject to dismissal. Also, a student who has not submitted **Form 2: Thesis/Project/Dissertation Proposal** and advanced to candidacy after five years will be placed on probation and will not be able to register for an additional semester unless the student has received a letter of approval signed by the chair of her/his Ph.D. program. The probation notice will be rescinded if the student advances to candidacy prior to seven years. If the student has not filed this form within seven years, the student shall be dismissed. Approved leaves of absence do not count toward these time limits.

If at the end of year ten more time is needed for completion of the doctoral degree due to circumstances beyond the student's control, and the student has completed all degree requirements except the dissertation, an extension may be requested. Similarly, if more time is needed for advancement to candidacy due to circumstances beyond the student's control, an extension may be requested. To request an extension, the student's Graduate Committee Chair, with the approval of the Program Chair/Director, must submit a petition to the Graduate Division for evaluation by the Chair of the Graduate Council and the VCAA. If the program does not file for an extension, the student will be dismissed.

The extension request should provide a timeline for completion that includes the expected graduation date and the reason(s) necessitating the extension.

The student will be subject to the policy of continuous registration, including the entirety of the probation and extension period, except if s/he is on a leave of absence (see continuous registration).

Time to Completion for Doctoral Degree Candidates: Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

Time to completion is typically three years with full-time enrollment for Post-BSN entry students, and 2 years for Post-MSN entry students after official admittance into the program. Failure to complete the Practice Inquiry Project (PIP) within five years will result in the student being placed on probation. The probationary period will begin at the start of the sixth year. As part of the probationary status, the student will not be able to register for an additional semester unless the student has received a letter of approval signed by the chair of the DNP program. The probation notice will be rescinded if the student completes the degree within seven years. Students who do not complete the degree within seven years are subject to dismissal. Approved leaves of absence do not count toward these time limits.

By this policy, if at the end of year seven additional time is needed for completion of the DNP degree due to circumstances beyond the student's control, and the student has completed all of the degree requirements except the Practice Inquiry Project (PIP), an extension may be requested. To request an extension, the student's Graduate Committee Chair, with the approval of the Program Chair/Director, must submit a petition to the Chair of the Graduate Council to be evaluated by the Chair of the Graduate Council and the VCAA. If the program does not file for an extension, the student will be dismissed.

The extension request should provide a timeline for completion that includes the expected graduation date and the reason(s) necessitating the extension.

The student will be subject to the policy of continuous registration, including the entirety of the probation and extension period, except if s/he is on a leave of absence (see continuous registration).

The School of Nursing DNP Program Guidelines is available [online](#).

Time to Completion for Doctoral Degree Candidates: Doctorate in Pharmacy (PharmD)

The Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy Handbook is available [online](#).

Admission to Doctoral Work

For masters' degree candidates intending to continue into the doctoral program in the same graduate program, the student's graduate committee, at a designated time near the completion of the student's masters' work, decides whether or not to admit the student to the doctoral program. This will be indicated on the form **Petition to Continue from a Master's Program to a Doctoral Program** submitted to the Graduate Division by the program. For entry into a UH Hilo doctoral program from a masters' program at another university, or from a masters' program in a different discipline at UH Hilo, students follow the regular graduate application and admission procedures.

Beginning the Program

At the beginning of the student's doctoral work, the chair of the graduate program appoints a primary academic advisor or graduate committee (whose chair is the principal advisor). The initial advisor assists the student in planning coursework and in understanding the program structure and requirements; the advisor has primary responsibility for monitoring the progress of the student's work. The advisor may or may not become the student's graduate committee chair at a later stage in his or her studies. The initial advisor should meet with the student at least once each semester.

Requirements for a Doctoral Degree

The Graduate Catalog stipulates the specific requirements for the doctoral degree in each program. The requirements include:

1. Maintenance of at least a B average in courses approved by the program's graduate committee and presented for the degree.
2. Fulfillment of all program course requirements (no credit is granted for graduate courses in which a grade lower than B- has been received).
3. Completion of at least 24 credit hours in residence regardless of any previous graduate coursework elsewhere. **Students continuing their studies for a doctoral degree in the same UH Hilo program from which they earned their masters' degree need not fulfill a second residence requirement.**
4. Continuous registration including the semester in which final degree requirements are completed (including the summer, if the degree is to be conferred in the summer).
5. Demonstration to the graduate committee by means of a comprehensive examination (written and/or oral) of familiarity with basic hypotheses and techniques of the discipline and competence in applying them.
6. Fulfillment of any research skills requirements.
7. Submission of a dissertation on a topic approved by the department or school, embodying the results of original research and giving evidence of high scholarship.
8. Successful defense of the dissertation at a final oral examination.
9. Completion of any other requirements specific to the graduate program.

Research Skills Requirements

Each graduate program establishes foreign language reading competency or equivalent research skills for its students. The graduate program determines the method(s) to be used to fulfill these requirements. Graduate students may register for research skills courses that have been established in each program.

Formation of Dissertation Committee

By the end of the second semester of coursework in a doctoral program, **Form 1: Graduate Committee Formation** should be submitted.

Committees are formed and modified (if necessary) by mutual agreement between the student and the faculty. The principal dissertation supervisor serves as chair of the graduate committee. Faculty are not required to serve on a particular dissertation committee if they do not wish to, and they are entitled to withdraw from a dissertation committee for reasonable cause. Faculty members from outside the student's own department or school may serve on the dissertation committee, but they do not replace the external examiner, who is appointed by the VCAA before the final oral examination is scheduled.

Visiting, affiliate, and research faculty of UH Hilo (not holding the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor) may be appointed to a dissertation committee by the VCAA or designee upon recommendation of the program for a period not to exceed their term appointment at UH Hilo. If such term appointment is renewed, the member may continue to serve on the student's graduate committee.

Outside Member

1. In consultation with his or her committee chair, the student will identify a UH faculty member from outside of the student's graduate program to serve as an outside voting member of the dissertation committee.
2. The outside member must possess sufficient familiarity with the student's research topic to be able to review and comment on the manuscript.
3. The committee chair must ascertain that the outside member is indeed independent of the faculty in the student's graduate program and that his or her membership on the committee will not constitute any conflict of interest.
4. The outside member fulfills the following functions:
 1. Represents the University faculty on the committee, ensuring administration of proper procedures and fair treatment of the student;
 2. Ensures that the level of research is indeed appropriate to the student's degree objective; and
 3. Provides disciplinary expertise and an academic perspective that may not be possessed by the faculty of the student's graduate program.
5. The approval process for the outside member is as follows
 1. The student and committee chair will forward the name of the proposed outside committee member to the Graduate Council.
 2. If the Graduate Council affirms the selection, the name will be sent forward to the VCAA for final approval.
 3. If the Graduate Council does not affirm the selection, the VCAA will determine how to resolve the disagreement; final selection will rest with the VCAA if the disagreement cannot be resolved between the candidate/committee chair and the Graduate Council.

External Examiner

The VCAA or designee, upon recommendation from the graduate program, adds an external examiner to the examination committee as the representative of the Graduate Division and the university. The external examiner is either a UH Hilo faculty member from a related area outside the student's graduate program or someone from a related discipline outside the University. Normally, the external examiner will have no involvement in the supervision of the student's dissertation. The external examiner's function on the

examination committee is to render an independent judgment and to assure that the dissertation satisfies Graduate Division standards. Because the external examiner is supposed to serve the Graduate Division, s/he therefore must have substantial experience evaluating the scholarship/research of doctoral students (e.g., by being part of a graduate program, on graduate committees, supervising graduate research).

In special circumstances, particularly when a student would benefit from early counsel from a faculty member outside UH Hilo, the department chair or director of graduate studies can petition the VCAA or designee to appoint an external examiner while the dissertation is still being written. If the nominee is from another institution, the program chair should forward the nominee's academic credentials, including a vita, to the VCAA or designee to be evaluated. The VCAA or designee then invites the nominee or another faculty member to serve as external examiner.

Comprehensive Examination

A comprehensive or proficiency examination is used to test candidates' specialized knowledge in the discipline and to demonstrate that they are qualified to undertake advanced-level dissertation work. The comprehensive examination may be written and/or oral.

The student's graduate committee serves as the examination committee, and this body determines the outcome of the examination. The student may repeat all or part of the comprehensive examination only once without prior approval from the VCAA or designee. The student has five years to complete the doctorate after passing the comprehensive examination, before being placed on probation.

Dissertation Planning

After the student passes the comprehensive examination, the student's graduate committee will oversee the dissertation work. The committee will include an additional member chosen from a field outside the graduate program or from a similar field but from a different university, appointed by the VCAA or designee. Based on the student's recommendations, the committee is appointed by the chair of the student's graduate program. Two of the three regular members of the committee must be full time faculty at UH Hilo. Students must receive approval from the [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) for theses involving human subjects or from the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#) (IACUC) for dissertations involving use of vertebrate animals. IRB and/or IACUC approval, where appropriate, must be sought at the time of approval of the dissertation topic, and research on the dissertation may not commence until after IRB/IACUC approval is granted. Where appropriate, permission from other entities, such as the [Office of Research Services](#) or the UH Hilo [Environmental Health & Safety Office](#) may be required.

Prospectus

The prospectus functions to identify the topic to be undertaken in the dissertation and to formalize the approval of the project by a faculty committee. The timing, format, length, and conventions governing the prospectus are set by each graduate program. If the student's program requires a prospectus, the student should submit it within six months after being admitted to candidacy; the prospectus must first be approved by the dissertation committee. In a conventional prospectus, a student is asked to identify a topic, to summarize relevant backgrounds, and to explain the approach. Some programs substitute for the prospectus another means of ensuring that the student's project has been identified clearly and has received written approval by each member of the committee.

Before approving the dissertation project, the chair of the graduate committee is encouraged to arrange a conference with the student and the other committee members for the purpose of discussing the research topic. Each program must inform doctoral students of its expectations, standards, and procedures regarding

the prospectus or other approval of dissertation projects and must provide access to samples of accepted proposals or prospectuses. Graduate programs should include specific information about their expectations for a prospectus in advising manuals for graduate students.

Admission to Candidacy

After the student has passed the comprehensive examinations and met all research skills and coursework requirements, as certified by the program's submission of the **Recommendation for Admission to Candidacy for a Doctoral Degree** form, he or she will be officially admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree by the VCAA. This is generally done in the semester in which the student plans to complete the dissertation. Intra- and inter-program majors and minors should be declared at this time where applicable.

At least two semesters normally elapse between admission to candidacy and the granting of the degree. Doctoral candidates must complete all requirements for the degree, including the dissertation, within five years after admission to doctoral candidacy.

Dissertation Defense

The graduate committee has direct charge of all matters pertaining to the dissertation. The student's dissertation must have the unanimous approval of his or her dissertation committee and of the chair of the graduate program before arrangements are made for the final examination for the degree. Members of the student's graduate committee serve as the examination committee.

Final Oral Exam

After the student's program has been notified of the appointment of an external examiner, the program director, in conjunction with the chair of the examination committee, may proceed to schedule the final oral examination.

Because of the time required to give adequate consideration to the student's research, the student should submit the dissertation to the graduate committee well in advance of the final oral defense. Normally, two months is recommended; the student should consult the committee.

The final oral examination is open to any person wishing to attend. Members of the graduate committee must be given sufficient time to question the candidate about the dissertation. The final defense is a public examination, however, and the committee chair is responsible for the conduct of an open and impartial examination, including reasonable participation by observers. At the conclusion of the examination, it is customary for the chair to request that everyone except the graduate committee leave the room, so that the members may reach a decision. This procedure should not be invoked at any other time during the examination and should not preclude questions from either committee members or outside observers. The final oral examination shall not exceed 4 hours in length.

No member of a graduate committee can be expected to participate in a dissertation defense if that member has not had at least two weeks to read and consider the dissertation beforehand.

At the final examination, the student will be required to respond to examiners' questions concerning the dissertation and to defend the validity of the dissertation. To pass, the student must receive unanimous approval from the total graduate committee present. All members of the graduate committee who accept the dissertation in partial fulfillment of requirements for the doctorate shall so attest by their signatures on

Form 3: Thesis/Project/Dissertation and Degree Requirements Completion. If the external examiner does not signify approval in this manner, he or she should give the reason for dissent by submitting a separate memorandum to the VCAA or designee within three days of the examination.

If at the final examination the examiners generally approve of the dissertation but require significant changes and are not yet prepared to sign **Form 3: Thesis/Project/Dissertation and Degree Requirements Completion**, the chair of the graduate committee will coordinate with other members of the committee to compile all required changes and will inform the student of the scope and substance of those changes. The committee will establish how the changes will be reviewed and approved.

Following the oral exam and approval of the dissertation, and with the signatures of the members of the dissertation committee, the student submits **Form 3: Thesis/Project/Dissertation and Degree Requirements Completion** to the Graduate Division, indicating that the student has now fulfilled all academic requirements for the doctoral degree, including submission to Mookini Library via **ETD Administrator**, and has successfully defended the dissertation. The Graduate Division obtains the final two signatures.

Remote Participation

Normally, all members of the graduate committee and the external examiner are present at the defense. At the discretion of the program, with the unanimous consent of all members of the graduate committee and the student, committee members or the external examiner may participate in the defense via real-time teleconferencing or real-time videoconferencing. In all cases, the chair and at least one other member of the dissertation committee must be physically present.

If in exceptional circumstances one member of the graduate committee cannot be present (either physically or *virtually*), they may submit questions and comments in writing. Such arrangements must be approved in advance by the program and must have the unanimous consent of all other members of the graduate committee and the student.

Deadlines

Degree completion deadlines are noted in the **University Academic Calendar**.

Completion Letter

Students who complete all degree requirements well in advance of the awarding of the degree may, upon request, receive a statement from the Office of the Registrar certifying that all requirements for the degree have been completed.

Checklist for Completion of Degree Requirements: Doctoral Degree

- **Graduate program:** Assigns principal academic advisor and graduate committee. Submits **Form 1: Graduate Committee Formation**.
- **Student:** Submits **Form 2: Thesis/Project/Dissertation Proposal** when ready to begin the dissertation.
- **Student:** Satisfies residence and course requirements.
- **Student:** Passes research skills examinations (if required).

- **Graduate program:** Arranges comprehensive examination.
- **Student:** Takes comprehensive examination.
- **Student:** Writes a prospectus.
- **Graduate program:** Submits [Recommendation for Admission to Candidacy for a Doctoral Degree](#) form to the Graduate Division by the required deadline.
- **Student:** Maintains appropriate registration for dissertation credit each semester, including semester in which all degree requirements will be completed.
- **Student:** Completes dissertation.
- **Graduate program:** Nominates Outside Member by memo to the Chair of Graduate Council who then forwards his/her recommendation to the VCAA or designee.
- **VCAA or designee:** Appoints Outside Member and so notifies the graduate program.
- **Graduate program:** Nominates External Examiner by memo to the VCAA or designee.
- **VCAA or designee:** Appoints External Examiner and so notifies the graduate program.
- **Student:** Submits [Graduation Application](#) form to the Business Office by the required deadline. *If student wants to participate in Commencement exercises, student submits the separate [Commencement Registration](#) by the required deadline.*
- **Student:** Submits a copy of the [Thesis/Project/Dissertation Defense Schedule](#) form to the Graduate Division one month prior to the defense deadline posted in the [University Academic Calendar](#). Student retains the original until the time of the defense, and submits the completed form to the Graduate Division with the Primary Advisor's signature indicating successful (or unsuccessful) completion of the defense.
- **Student:** Defends and completes dissertation.
- **Student:** Obtains signatures of committee members on [Form 3: Thesis/Project/Dissertation and Degree Requirements Completion](#).
- **Student:** Submits dissertation on [ETD Administrator](#).
- **Student:** Obtains initials of the Collection Development Librarian (or designee) on [Form 3](#), then submits form to the Graduate Division by the required deadline posted in the [University Academic Calendar](#). The Graduate Division obtains final signatures.

Submission and Electronic Publication of the Thesis and Dissertation

Style Policy

It is the student's responsibility to prepare a final manuscript that meets the style requirements of both the UH Hilo Graduate Division and his or her graduate program. Please follow the UH Mānoa [Style and Policy Guide for Electronic Thesis and Dissertations](#) for general guidelines on the physical format of the manuscript with the following exceptions:

- **Signature Page** – Do not include a signature page. Signatures appear only on [Form 3: Thesis/Project/Dissertation and Degree Requirements Completion](#) and are not included in the manuscript. By signing this form, committee members indicate approval of the content and the form of the finalized manuscript.
- **Abstract** – An abstract is required for all theses. For more information about formatting your abstract, please see the ProQuest/UMI guide to [preparing your manuscript for submission](#).

- **Margins** – For margin specifications, please see the ProQuest/UMI guide to [preparing your manuscript for submission](#).

Submission

All graduate works must be submitted via [ETD Administrator](#), a web-based service for the submission and publication of student theses and dissertations. In the case where online submission is unfeasible, please contact the [Mookini Library](#) or call (808) 932-7296 for assistance.

Students must first create an account to start the submission process. ETD Administrator will then walk you through the next several steps. Please see the guides and other resources on the ETD Administrator website for more information on publishing options and copyright as well as frequently asked questions about online submission. The ETD Administrator submission process must be completed by the required deadline in the [University Academic Calendar](#) to submit **[Form 3: Thesis/Project/Dissertation and Degree Requirements Completion](#)** to the Library and the Graduate Division.

Publication

Publication is required for all theses.

Archive

In addition to publication, deposit of an open-access copy in the UH Hilo online institutional repository is required. Submission will be made as part of the ETD Administrator process.

Degree Conferral and Participating in Commencement

Graduating from a program and participating in Commencement are two separate activities. Graduating from a program means the student has successfully completed all requirements identified by the program. It is an academic milestone whose indicator is conferral of the graduate degree.

Commencement is a public celebration of the academic completion of a degree program. Separate applications are required to graduate from a program and to participate in Commencement. A student may complete the degree and decide not to participate in Commencement. A student may not participate in Commencement before completing the degree.

To apply to graduate, the student submits the **[Graduation Application](#)** (please also see **[Instructions for Graduation Application](#)** and **[Credit Card Payment Form for Graduation Application](#)**) to the Business Office by the required deadline.

Degree Conferral

Degrees are conferred three times each year: December, May, and July. Commencement exercises are conducted twice a year, in December and in May. Students who complete degree requirements late in the summer or in the fall semester may participate in Commencement in December. Students who complete degree requirements in the spring semester may participate in Commencement in May.

Completion of Degree: Thesis/Project/Dissertation

To be eligible for degree conferral, students in a thesis/project/dissertation track must conduct and pass the thesis, project or dissertation on or about April 15 for Spring degree conferral, and on or about November 15 for Fall degree conferral. The defense must be scheduled a month prior to the deadline for the defense as posted in the Academic Calendar using the form [Thesis/Project/Dissertation Defense Schedule](#). A copy of the form is submitted to the Graduate Division with signatures of the student and the primary advisor, identifying the date, time and location of the defense. The student retains the original until the defense is completed, submitting the form to the Graduate Division with the primary advisor's signature indicating that the defense was successful.

Actual deadlines for scheduling the defense and the defense itself are posted in the [University Academic Calendar](#) for Fall, Spring and Summer.

Theses and projects must be submitted to committee members a minimum of two weeks prior to the defense to allow for thoughtful review and feedback prior to the defense. It is recommended that dissertations be submitted to committee members at least two months prior to the defense. In no case may the dissertation be submitted to the committee than two weeks prior to the defense. Submission to the committee that will be less than two months prior to the defense should be approved by the committee members.

Completion of Degree: Non-Thesis

Students in non-thesis tracks submit the form [Authorization to Participate in Commencement](#) to the Graduate Division. This form indicates confirmation from the graduate program that the student is on track and expected to finish all degree requirements by the end of the semester, and is signed by the student, the Primary Advisor and the Graduate Program Chair. It is due by the Thesis Defense deadline.

Participating in Commencement

To participate in the commencement ceremony, the student submits [Commencement Registration](#) online by the posted deadline. The student is responsible for ordering the relevant academic regalia from the [UH Hilo Bookstore](#). Please consult the Bookstore for deadlines to place your order.

Annual Review Form

The primary academic advisor will submit an annual review form for each graduate student under her or his charge to the chair of the graduate program, using the form provided by their graduate program. This form will include data concerning number of credits earned; progress toward meeting other requirements such as papers, projects or theses; GPA; and other specific requirements for the graduate degree. Individual student reports tracking progress towards completion of the degree will be received by the Graduate Council Chair and reviewed by the Graduate Division Office at the beginning of each academic year.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty

Graduate students are subject to the policies and procedures governing student conduct as described in the UH Hilo Student Conduct Code. This includes acts of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to,

plagiarism, cheating, and falsifying data. Students can find these policies in the [Academic Dishonesty](#) section of the Catalog.

Policy on Conduct Violations Other than Academic Dishonesty

Instances in which graduate students are alleged to have violated the UH Hilo Student Conduct Code in areas other than academic dishonesty will be handled following the procedures described in the [Student Conduct Code](#) section of the catalog.

Conduct and Removal of Financial Support

All other recommendations to dismiss a student from the Graduate Division or one of its programs, or to break a student's assistantship contract or to revoke a fellowship, tuition scholarship, or other source of financial support, are made to the VCAA, accompanied by appropriate documentation. The student will be informed of the basis for any such decision. The student may appeal the decision by using first the grievance procedure of the student's program and then, if needed, the appeals procedures of the Graduate Council Grievance Committee. Action on a recommendation to remove support from or to dismiss a student in good academic standing will await the outcome of the grievance procedure.

Academic Complaints

The process for handling academic complaints by graduate students will follow the same general procedure as utilized for undergraduate students at UH Hilo. This procedure is outlined in the [University of Hawai'i at Hilo Student Academic Complaint Policy](#). The following exception is made for graduate students:

Under Part III (Procedures for the Resolution of Academic Complaints Filed During the Regular Academic Year) Letter B (Complaint of Academic Impropriety), for complaints relating to academic impropriety involving post-baccalaureate students, the Dean shall refer the written complaint to the UH Hilo Graduate Council (Academic Complaints Committee) for timely review and recommendation (10 calendar days).

Appendix I Resources for Graduate Students

A. Student Services and Academic Services

1. [UH Hilo at a Glance](#)
2. [Housing](#) (on- and off-campus)
3. [Tuition and Estimated Cost of Attendance](#)
4. [Financial aid](#)
5. [Student Medical Services](#)
6. [Counseling Services](#)
7. [Disability Services](#)

8. Academic Support Services

- a. [Mookini Library](#)
- b. [Academic Computing Services](#)
- c. [UH Hilo Bookstore](#)

B. Academic Policies, Procedures, and Deadlines

- 1. [General Catalog \(2017-2018\)](#)
- 2. [Billing and Payment Information for Students](#)

C. [University Academic Calendar](#)

Appendix II **Forms**

A. **Graduate Level Forms**

- 1. [Form 1: Graduate Committee Formation](#)
- 2. [Form 2: Thesis/Project/Dissertation Proposal](#)
- 3. [Thesis/Project/Dissertation Defense Schedule](#)
- 4. Authorization to Participate in Commencement
- 5. [Form 3: Thesis/Project/Dissertation and Degree Requirements Completion](#)
- 6. [Petition to Substitute and/or Waive Courses-Graduate](#)
- 7. [Graduate Directed Reading or Research Course Form \(699V and 799V\)](#)
- 8. [Student Overload Approval Form Graduate Program](#)
- 9. [Graduate Repeat Course Notification Form](#)
- 10. [Petition for Leave of Absence](#)
- 11. [Permission to Enroll in Graduate Coursework as an Unclassified Graduate Student](#)
- 12. [Permission to Enroll in Graduate Coursework as an Undergraduate Student](#)
- 13. [Petition to Continue from a Master's Program to a Doctoral Program](#)
- 14. [Recommendation for Admission to Candidacy for a Doctoral Degree](#)
- 15. [Thesis/Dissertation Form for Graduate Level Degrees \(700 and 800\)](#)
- 16. [Graduate Internship Form](#)
- 17. Graduation Forms
 - [Graduation Application](#)
 - [Instructions for Graduation Application](#)

[Credit Card Payment Form for Graduation Application](#)

18. Commencement Forms

[Commencement Registration](#)

[Graduation and Diploma Information](#)

[Commencement Office](#)

- B. Office of the Registrar Commonly Used Forms (not specific to Graduate Studies)

Appendix III University Policies and Regulations

- A. Degree Requirements
Students must consult the requirements of their specific programs. General information about university requirements can be found in the [catalog](#).
- B. [Student Conduct Code](#)
- C. [Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- D. [Student Academic Complaint Policy](#)
- E. Institutional Review Board (IRB) Requirements

Students must receive approval from the [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) for theses or dissertations involving human subjects or from the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#) for theses or dissertations involving use of vertebrate animals. Approval from these institutional committees, where appropriate, must be sought at the time of approval of the thesis/dissertation topic, and research on the thesis or dissertation may not commence until after IRB approval is granted. Where appropriate, permission from other entities, such as the [Office of Research Services](#) and the UH Hilo [Environmental Health & Safety Office](#), may be required.

Appendix IV Financial Information

Graduate students apply for financial aid in the same way undergraduate students do, by filing the [FAFSA](#). The UH Hilo financial aid code is 001611. Graduate students may be eligible for a number of types of financial aid, including tuition waivers, grants and loans. The priority deadline for submission of financial aid forms is February 1, 2018 for the 2018 academic year. Students must have been accepted before financial aid will be awarded; a completed financial aid application must be on file with the Financial Aid office for awards to be made. Please see <http://www.hilo.hawaii.edu/financialaid/> for more formation.

Financial Aid Eligibility

To maintain financial aid eligibility, students must fulfill satisfactory academic progress requirements. These requirements may be viewed in their entirety at

<http://hilo.hawaii.edu/financialaid/progress.php>

In general, satisfactory academic progress is defined as:

1. Maintaining a 3.0 GPA at the end of the academic year.
2. Attaining a 75% completion rate towards the educational objective for hours attempted at UH Hilo. The completion rate is calculated by dividing hours earned by hours attempted.
3. Courses with grades of F, W, I, NC and repeated courses count as hours attempted.
4. Hours declared in academic bankruptcy count as hours attempted.
5. Please check with the Financial Aid Office to know the maximum number of credits you may take in your program and be eligible for financial aid.

Satisfactory Progress Appeal Process

A student who is placed on Financial Aid Suspension may appeal the denial of financial aid. The appeal must be made by submitting a signed written letter to the Director of Financial Aid no later than 10 days after receipt of the notice of Financial Aid Suspension. The appeal will be directed to the Appeals Committee whose decision will be final. The decision will be based on demonstration of one of the following situations:

1. Error of fact;
2. Mitigating circumstances. Circumstances considered may include illness or injury, family difficulties, interpersonal and college adjustment problems.

If the appeal is granted, financial aid will be continued for a probationary period. The student will be advised in writing of the action of the appeal.

Graduate Assistantships and Employment

A limited number of Graduate Assistantship positions may be available in some graduate programs. Interested students are instructed to submit all application documents by the priority deadline, and follow instructions to apply for the GA position. Please consult the Program Director of your program for more information.

<http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/academics/graduate/documents/gradasstpolicyfinal07.doc>

Students applying for Graduate Assistantship positions do not need to file the FAFSA unless they want to apply for additional federal financial aid support.

Appendix V

Miscellaneous Information

- A. University equal opportunity and affirmative action policy

The University of Hawai'i at Hilo is an equal opportunity institution of higher education, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, sexual identity, age, disability, religious affiliation, or country of origin.

- B. [Policies and Procedural Guidelines for Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability](#)

The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of disability as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its 2009 amendments, and Section 504 regulations at 34 CFR Part 104, which are enforced by the U.S. Department of Education and apply to the education of students with disabilities.

C. Notice to students regarding privacy rights

The **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974** (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. You may familiarize yourself with your rights by reading the following link: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

D. Veteran's Benefits

<http://hilo.hawaii.edu/registrar/veteran.php>

Veterans who are continuing students must contact the Office of the Registrar after completing registration each semester in order to continue receiving benefits. All programs available to veterans/children of veterans are administered through the UH Hilo Office of the Registrar. If you are eligible for assistance through these programs, please contact the Office of the Registrar.

Questions concerning eligibility may be directed to the Veterans Administration by calling 1-888-GIBILL1 (1-888-442-4551) or going online to <http://www.gibill.va.gov/>

Vocational Rehabilitation participants should contact the Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Office Point of Contact:

Veronica Comeaux

Phone: [808-935-2451](tel:808-935-2451)

Fax: [808-935-6236](tel:808-935-6236)

Email: veronica.comeaux@va.gov

Hilo VA Benefits Office

154 Waianuenue

Suite #325

Hilo, HI 96720

Appendix VI

Administrative Organization of the Graduate Division

The Graduate Division is administered by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The Graduate Council is the chief recommending body on graduate policy for the university. The Graduate Council members are appointed by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Members represent UH Hilo's graduate programs, Faculty Congress, graduate students, the Graduate Division, the Office of the Registrar, the Library and academic units not otherwise represented.

UH Hilo Graduate Student Handbook
Revised 7/7/2017