

Northeastern University
College of Social Sciences
and Humanities

GENERAL REGULATIONS

Graduate Programs 2019-2020

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GENERAL INFORMATION

The [Academic Catalog](#), located on the Office of the Registrar's website, contains the university's primary statements about academic programs and degree requirements, as authorized by the president or the Board of Trustees. For information about other academic policies and procedures; student responsibilities; student academic and cocurricular life; faculty rights and responsibilities; or general personnel policies, benefits, and services, please refer to [University Policies](#) and related procedural guides, as appropriate.

STUDENT CLASSIFICATION

Regular Student — Those students who are admitted to a degree program.

Conditional Student — Students whose admissions files are missing official documentation. Conditional students must submit the requested documentation, to the satisfaction of the College, no later than the completion of their first month of study. Once the documentation has been submitted, the student's status will be re-evaluated.

Provisional Student — Students whose academic records do not qualify them for acceptance as regular students. Provisional students must obtain a B (3.000) average in the first nine semester hours of study or meet specifically delineated departmental requirements to qualify for full acceptance to a degree program.

Special Student — Special students are enrolled on a part-time basis (no more than six semester hours per semester). Credit can be earned for a maximum of nine semester hours over time. Students interested in taking more than nine semester hours must make a formal application to the degree program. Please use the following link to obtain the [Internal Admission Application Notification Form](#). Special Students who do not register for four consecutive semesters (excluding summer semester) will be subject to review and possible withdrawal by the College.

Doctoral Student — Students admitted to a doctoral program.

Doctoral Degree Candidate — Doctoral students who have completed departmental, college and university requirements except for dissertation.

STUDENT STATUS

For academic purposes, a graduate student is considered a full-time student if enrolled in a minimum of eight semester hours of credit for the semester, with the following exceptions:

- Students who hold Stipended Graduate Assistantships will be considered full-time if enrolled for a minimum of six semester hours of credit. However, some departments may require more credits for maintaining departmental progression standards.
- Students enrolled in Doctoral Research or Co-op are considered full-time.
- All graduate students who are formally registered in a continuation status, Dissertation, Dissertation Continuation, Doctoral Research, Master's Research, Master's Continuation, or Qualifying/Comprehensive Exam Preparation courses may be considered full-time at the discretion of their department. It is ordinarily assumed that such students will be in residence.
- Students in their last semester of coursework may be considered full-time when enrolling in fewer than eight semester hours to complete degree requirements.

NOTE: To be eligible for some types of financial aid, the minimum full-time load may be defined differently. For information, contact the [Graduate Student Financial Services Office](#).

GRADING SYSTEM

The student's performance in graduate courses will be graded according to the following numerical equivalents in the Office of the University Registrar's [Academic Catalog](#).

GRADING POLICIES

In the College of Social Sciences and Humanities, not more than two courses or 6 semester hours of credit, whichever is greater, may be repeated to satisfy the requirements for the degree. Only such repeats will be counted in calculating the cumulative grade-point average.

No grade changes are permitted after the end of the final examination period one calendar year from the semester in which the student registered for the course. In calculating the overall cumulative average, all graduate-level course work completed at the time of clearance for graduation will be counted unless the student is immediately continuing on for a PhD degree in his or her department.

CLASS CREDITS

All credits are entered as semester hours.

Graduate Office policy states that in calculating the overall GPA, all graduate level coursework completed at the time of clearance for graduation will be counted unless otherwise designated at the time of registration or unless counted toward a previous degree.

GRADUATE ACADEMIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GAAC)

The Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that the graduate curriculum of the College promotes the College's and University's evolving intellectual and pedagogical aims. The Committee acts on all matters relating to the academic life of graduate students in the College in accordance with guidelines approved by the College and the committee. The responsibilities of this committee are: (a) oversight over the quality and scope of the College's graduate curricula, including recommendations for changes to the general program of the College, approval of graduate degree and certificate programs, and review of proposed changes to those programs; (b) review of student appeals on decisions concerning academic probation, change in requirements, permission to resume studies, academic warning, and repeating of courses. The Committee shall adhere to all policies and procedures adopted by the Faculty of the College and the Faculty Senate.

In addition, the Committee shall adhere to policies and procedures issued by the Provost's Office. Actions on graduate matters taken by the Graduate Academic Advisory Committee shall constitute the recommendations by the Faculty on these matters. The Committee shall make recommendations on behalf of the Faculty directly to the Dean (or his or her Designee). If the Dean supports them, the recommendations shall, as needed, then be sent to the University Graduate Council for consideration. The Committee's and Dean's actions shall be reported periodically to the units involved and to the College Council for informational purposes.

STUDENT CONCERNS

The GAAC is charged with review of student appeals on decisions concerning academic probation, change in requirements, permission to resume studies, academic warning, and repeating of courses. Members of the committee from the student's own unit are recused from the appeal process. Graduate students may request permission to present their appeals in person. If a student believes that all pertinent information has not been presented, the student may request that the GAAC reconsider its decision. If the Committee reaffirms its action, and the student is still not satisfied, an appeal for review may be made through the University's Academic Appeals Resolution Committee. The appeals procedure is described in the [Academic Catalog](#).

Detailed procedures for filing a student concern can be obtained by contacting the CSSH Graduate Office at 617-373-5990 or gradcssh@northeastern.edu.

REGULATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

REGISTRATION

Students must register via the myNortheastern portal. Procedures to do so are available on the myNortheastern website. Students must register within the dates and times listed on the Registrar's [Academic Calendar](#). Web registration is available during the first and second weeks of the semester for adding and dropping courses. Students who fail to register within this time frame will not earn credit or a grade for the course(s) in question.

Students are encouraged to obtain advisor approval of course selections each semester. This approval is required for all assistantship recipients and by some departments for all students. Students should check with individual departments for specific guidelines.

TRANSFER CREDIT

For general regulations concerning transfer credit in Northeastern's graduate degree programs, please visit [Regulations Applying to All Degree Programs](#).

A student may petition to transfer up to nine semester hours of his or her program using credits from another institution, provided that the credits transferred consist of a grade of B seven years of the date the request is made to the CSSH Graduate Office and been completed within the seven years prior to the awarding of the student's degree at Northeastern. Grades are not transferred. Some departments accept fewer than nine transfer credits. Please refer to the appropriate department for specific information. Students should petition through their departments to the Graduate Office by completing the Transfer Credit form found at the Office of the University Registrar. An official transcript must be attached to the petition. Transfer credit is not allowed for those enrolled in graduate certificate programs.

AWARDS

Only those students who are registered in degree programs are eligible for awards. Award recipients will receive an official award letter from the CSSH Graduate Office. Please pay attention to this letter as it is an official contract which should be read carefully. In order to maintain awards, students must be making satisfactory progress toward their degrees. Please refer to the Satisfactory Academic Progress section below for more information. Near the end of each funded term, student performance will be evaluated by their assignment supervisor and that evaluation will be filed with the CSSH Graduate Office.

Students receiving a Stipended Graduate Assistantship (SGA) must be in full-time status and be registered for a minimum of six semester hours. Students on an SGA are paid on the 15th and the last day of each month. If either of these days falls on a weekend day, the payday is the Friday prior. The Health Plan Fee (NUSHP) is covered by the SGA award whereas the University Health and Counseling Services Fee is not. Students on an SGA must be available to come to campus during normal business hours and are expected to spend 20 hours per week supporting their assignment. Unsatisfactory progress in either your graduate program or your performance in assistantship-related duties or any deviation from the above may result in the early termination of your assistantship.

College of Social Sciences and Humanities Dean's Scholarship and Excellence Fellowship recipients must be in full-time status and be registered for a minimum of eight semester hours.

WITHDRAWALS FROM COURSES

To withdraw from a course, a student must drop the course via their myNortheastern account within the deadlines as established by the Registrar. Consult the [Academic Catalog](#) for more information.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Satisfactory academic progress means satisfying requirements in the Graduate Programs General Regulations and in the regulations specified by each department.

The College sets minimum standards for all students to fulfill. Departments and programs may have additional requirements that exceed those of the College. These requirements can be found in the Academic Catalog and department guides. Graduate students must be making satisfactory progress, including maintaining the graduation requirement of a grade-point average of 3.000 in their coursework and the timely completion of coursework and comprehensive/qualifying examinations.

Receipt of financial support administered by the College is contingent on satisfactory academic progress toward the degree and on meeting department-specific guidelines. The College requires that all students receiving awards will generally have two semesters to reach a 3.000 GPA. Students whose cumulative GPA is below 3.000 will be reviewed by their departments and by the CSSH Graduate Office and may have their funding terminated on recommendation of their department or by decision of the College in consultation with their department. In addition, continued funding for stipended graduate assistants is contingent on satisfactorily carrying out duties as assigned.

Students enrolled in a program offering a cooperative (Co-op) education or internship option must be approved to participate. A minimum GPA of 3.000 is required at the time the Co-op job or internship begins.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Full-time students who will not be involved in any academic endeavor for a period of time are required to petition via the Request for Leave of Absence Form on myNortheastern. The CSSH Graduate Office will not accept retroactive leave requests. Please note that if a student is requesting a leave for medical reasons, a Medical Leave of Absence Form must be completed. Students should contact [University Health and Counseling Services](#) at 617-373-2772. Leaves of absence generally are not approved for more than one calendar year at a time. Further, a leave of absence is generally not appropriate for an international student on a student visa, unless the student is leaving the United States. Please consult with an international student advisor at the Office of Global Services. Leaves of absence are not appropriate for master's or doctoral students who are working on a thesis or dissertation but are away from the Northeastern campus. Except in the case of medical leaves, being on an approved leave of absence does not extend the amount of time allowed for (1) degree completion, or (2) the makeup of incomplete grades.

TIME LIMITATIONS

For the master's degree, course credits earned in the program of graduate study or accepted by transfer are valid for a maximum of seven years.

If students wish to apply for an extension of the time limit, they must submit a petition to their department of study. The petition must include a detailed plan for completion of all remaining degree requirements. In the case of master's time limit extension requests for coursework, the department must certify that the content of each of the courses has not changed since the time the student completed the course. If deemed appropriate, the department will recommend approval of the extension to the College. The Associate Dean has final approval of time limit extensions.

APPLICATION FOR THE DIPLOMA

Application for the diploma is made by Applying to Graduate via the myNortheastern portal. Even though all other degree requirements may have been met, the Application to Graduate must be completed in order to assure that the degree will be conferred on the appropriate graduation date. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that degree requirements have been met. Once degree requirements have been met, the student will be cleared for commencement. Please note that there are no honors distinctions awarded at the graduate level.

CHANGES IN REQUIREMENTS

The continuing development of the College may result in regular revision of curricula. When curriculum changes are made, students are allowed to complete the degree requirements of the program when they matriculated. If a student wishes to complete the degree requirements of the new curriculum, the student may request this in writing to the CSSH Graduate Office.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

The Doctor of Philosophy degree is awarded to candidates who give evidence of high scholastic attainment and research ability in their major field. Specific degree requirements are administered by a committee in charge of the degree program. It is the responsibility of the chair of this committee to certify to the College the completion of each requirement for each candidate. Note that Advanced Standing is determined at the time of admission by the Graduate Program Director.

CONTINUITY OF REGISTRATION

Students are expected to maintain satisfactory progress toward their intended degree. All students must register as approved by their advisors or the departmental Graduate Program Directors. After establishing degree candidacy, registration must be continuous until graduation requirements are complete unless a leave of absence is allowed by and recommended by the departmental graduate committee and approved by the College. For each of the first two semesters that a doctoral candidate has established candidacy, the student must register for Doctoral Dissertation. For each semester beyond the two Dissertation registrations, the student must register for Doctoral Dissertation Continuation until the dissertation is approved by the College and submitted to ProQuest. During the terms when a student is registered for Doctoral Dissertation or Dissertation Continuation, coursework is not permitted as the course requirements for the degree have already been met. If the academic program requires enrollment in seminars or courses in addition to Dissertation or Dissertation Continuation, the Graduate Program Director will make a recommendation to the College. Approval of the College must happen prior to registration. Students must be registered for Dissertation or Dissertation Continuation during the semester in which they take the final oral examination (including the full summer semester if that is when defense occurs). **Any student who does not attend Northeastern University for a period of one year may be required to apply for readmission.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course requirements in each doctoral program are specified by the committee in charge of the doctoral program and departmental regulations. These are detailed in the [Academic Catalog](#) for the student's term of entry.

GPA REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for the degree, a minimum cumulative GPA for your program, as noted in the Academic Catalog, must be obtained. This average will be calculated each semester according to the grading system noted in the [Academic Catalog](#) and will exclude any transfer credits or repeated courses. Individual programs may have additional GPA requirements. These can be found in the [Academic Catalog](#) or program policies and procedure documents. A student who does not make satisfactory progress toward degree requirements, as specified by the individual department, may be terminated from the program. A student cannot begin working on exam requirements with a GPA that is below the program minimum.

ANNUAL STUDENT PROGRESS REVIEW

All PhD degree students are required to meet with their faculty advisor for an annual student progress review. The reviews will be submitted to the departmental graduate committee, which will determine whether satisfactory progress is being made and students are eligible to proceed to complete their graduate work. The CSSH Graduate Office will receive a copy of each student's review.

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT

All PhD students must spend the equivalent of at least one academic year in residence at the University as a full-time graduate student. The departmental graduate committee specifies the method by which the residence requirement is satisfied. Residency is required of all students receiving a stipended graduate assistantship.

COMPREHENSIVE AND QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS

In programs where comprehensive or qualifying exams are required, students must complete these requirements within the time limit set by the program.

PROSPECTUS/PROPOSAL

All CSSH doctoral programs require an approved prospectus or successful proposal defense for candidacy.

DOCTORAL DEGREE CANDIDACY

PhD degree candidacy is established when students have completed all departmental requirements for candidacy. These requirements vary by department and include completing the minimum number of graduate semester hours required of doctoral students by the department (this may include an earned master's degree accepted by the department) and passing a qualifying examination and/or a comprehensive examination. All CSSH doctoral programs require an approved prospectus or successful proposal defense for candidacy. Once students reach doctoral degree candidacy they will be certified, in writing, by the College. Registration in coursework is not permitted once a student reaches candidacy.

DISSERTATION

Each doctoral student must complete a dissertation that embodies the results of extended research and makes an original contribution to the field. This work should give evidence of the candidate's ability to carry out independent investigation and interpret in a logical manner the results of the research. The method of approval of the dissertation is established by the departmental graduate committee. No dissertation committee shall have fewer than three faculty

members, two of whom shall be from Northeastern University. The chair of the dissertation committee will be a full-time tenured or tenure-track member of the faculty of Northeastern University and will hold an appropriate doctorate. A research faculty member may chair a dissertation committee if he or she holds an appropriate doctorate and has received the approval to do so from the tenured and tenure-track faculty members of the unit(s) in which his or her appointment resides.

FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION

The final oral examination will be on the subject matter of the doctoral dissertation and on important developments in the field of the dissertation. Other fields may be included if recommended by the examining committee. This examination will be taken after completion of all other degree requirements and must be held at least four weeks prior to the commencement at which the degree is to be awarded. All internal and external committee members are expected to participate in the defense. The College must be notified of all scheduled defenses and expects that the defense will be publicly advertised for *at least two* weeks prior to the scheduled date. Some programs may require up to 30 days' notice.

- Upon successful defense of the dissertation, the student must have a dissertation approval record signed by the members of the dissertation committee and the department Chair. Contact the CSSH Graduate Office for the approval form template.
- The student must have the dissertation approval record approved by a representative from the CSSH Graduate Office.
- The student must submit an electronic copy of the dissertation to ProQuest, following the directions outlined at the University Library website.

THE MASTER'S DEGREE

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

A candidate for the master's degree must complete a minimum of thirty semester hours of graduate-level coursework and additional requirements as determined by the department in which the student is registered.

To qualify for the degree, a minimum cumulative average of 3.000, equivalent to a grade of B, must be obtained. This average will be calculated each semester according to the grading system noted on the [Office of the University Registrar's](#) website and will exclude any transfer credits or repeated courses. A student who does not make satisfactory progress toward degree requirements, as specified by the individual department, may be terminated from the program.

CONTINUITY OF REGISTRATION

Students are expected to maintain satisfactory progress toward their intended degrees. Students who have not completed their thesis after having registered for the specified number of thesis credits must register for Master's Continuation each subsequent semester until the thesis is approved by the CSSH Graduate Office and submitted to ProQuest. Master's Continuation will carry no credit but will be recorded on the student transcript with the appropriate grade (S or U) for each semester of registration. All students must be registered in the last semester of their program. **Any student who does not attend Northeastern University for a period of one year will be required to apply for readmission.**

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

A final written or oral comprehensive examination is required in some programs. This examination will be given by the department concerned at least two weeks before the commencement at which the degree is expected.

THESIS

Theses are required in some programs and should demonstrate the individual's capacity to execute independent work based on original material. Registration for Thesis is required. In cases in which a grade is required, theses must receive a grade of B (3.000) or better to be accepted.

- Upon successful defense of the thesis, the student must have a thesis approval record signed by the members of the thesis committee. Contact the CSSH Graduate Office for the approval form template.
- The student must have the thesis approval record approved by a representative from the CSSH Graduate Office.
- The student must submit an electronic copy of the thesis to ProQuest, following the directions outlined at the University Library website.

PLUSONE

The PlusOne program allows Northeastern University undergraduate students the opportunity to pursue both a bachelor's and master's degree simultaneously. In a PlusOne program, up to 16 credits of undergraduate work are replaced by graduate coursework, thus permitting the completion of both degrees in a shorter period of time than would be possible if students pursued each degree separately through the traditional route. In most programs, with appropriate academic progress, students receive the master's degree one year after completing the undergraduate degree. The PlusOne degree program at Northeastern is designed to attract talented and motivated undergraduate students who wish to pursue academic advancement in order to achieve an additional advantage in the workplace.

More information about the PlusOne program can be found on the CSSH [PlusOne website](#).

INTERDISCIPLINARY DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

Some graduate students may wish to pursue doctoral programs that involve substantial work in two or more departments. To meet this need, an interdisciplinary program may be established that corresponds in scope and depth to doctoral standards but does not agree exactly with the individual departmental regulations. For such possibilities, the option discussed in the [Academic Catalog](#) is available.