

Policy 303-22

CHAPTER 5 – GRADUATE DEGREE CANDIDACY

This section is filled with procedural language and is not suitable for a policy. The candidacy process was effectively a degree auditing process that was driven by a printable PDF form and wet signatures. With the adoption of Degree Works—where students, staff, and faculty can audit a degree in real time--we no longer need this process.

The Grad Office piloted opting out of the candidacy form with great success two years ago. Biology and Counseling still want to perform their own candidacy processes and marking the students in Degree Works. The language below should support maximum graduate program latitude and not get us bogged down in the procedure.

5-1. Candidacy

If programs choose to have a candidacy process, it must be defined in the program's handbook.

The program specified on the candidacy form constitutes the graduation requirements for the student.

Advancement to graduate degree candidacy requires the following:

- A. Admission to a graduate program.
- B. Completion of at least 15 credits of graded graduate course work, at least 10 of which must be at the 500 level, but no more than 50% of the course work required for the degree.
- C. Maintenance of at least a 3.0 cumulative post- baccalaureate GPA.
- D. Submission of the Application for Degree Candidacy form to the Graduate Programs Office, specifying a graduate degree study program approved by the major department. This program, at the student's option, may be based on either current requirements or those in effect at the time of admission. The form must be submitted before the student has completed one-half of the minimum credits unless program requirements allow submission after the mid-point of the student's program. All applications for graduate degree candidacy must be submitted no later than the first Friday of the term before anticipated graduation unless special permission is granted by the appropriate Vice Provost or designee.
If any changes to the list of courses identified on the candidacy form occur after advancement to candidacy, students must submit a Candidacy Contract Change form to the Graduate Programs Office that has been signed by their advisor(s).
- E. Successful field experience as required by specific degree programs.
- F. Approval of the appropriate Vice Provost or designee.

- G. No application for degree candidacy that includes courses in a proposed substantive program revision will be approved until the Graduate Affairs Council has reviewed and approved the substantive program revision. Substantive here means a change in any core requirements, changes affecting an entire cohort or group of students or changes to more than 20% of the minimum credits for the degree program.

5-2. Graduate Degree Committee

As part of the candidacy process, a graduate degree committee is appointed. The primary responsibilities of graduate committees are:

- A. Counsel candidates in their study program;
- B. Direct and supervise candidates' research;
- C. Direct candidates in preparing for the comprehensive examination; and
- D. Arrange, conduct and appraise the comprehensive examination.

If the chair or internal member of a graduate degree committee is changed after a student has been advanced to candidacy, the individual initiating the request for change must submit a Change of Graduate Committee form to the Graduate Programs Office, including a brief explanation of the rationale for the change and bearing the signatures of:

1. the student, (2) the original chair and/or internal member of the graduate degree committee, (3) the replacement chair and/or internal member of the graduate degree committee, (4) the department's graduate program director and (5) the department chair. If any person whose approval is required objects to the proposed change(s) and refuses to sign, he or she must explain the rationale for the objection in a memo to the appropriate Vice Provost or designee, who is responsible for making the final decision.