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# TIME LIMITATIONS FOR COMPLETING GRADUATE PROGRAMS

*Effective fall 2014*

*While faculty and staff may advise the student on applicable time limits, it is solely the responsibility of the individual student to know and meet all time requirements. Extenuating circumstances for failing to meet time limits do not include incorrect oral information from faculty or staff where the correct information was set forth in a program publication or other document made available to the student. While reasonable efforts will be made to protect students who have already entered a program from the effects of subsequent changes in time limits, all graduate programs reserve the right to change time limits at any time without prior notice to students.*

The time limit for completing all degree requirements (including transfer credit) in non-doctoral programs is six calendar years, unless a more restrictive time limit has been established by the degree program. All students in research based doctoral programs must achieve candidacy for the degree within five calendar years or 72 credit hours attempted, whichever occurs first, and complete all requirements of the degree within ten calendar years unless a more restrictive time limit has been established by the program. (See [Advancing to Doctoral Candidacy](#) for more information)


A student's time-limit for completion starts with the first course approved for inclusion in the degree plan (including transfer credits) or the date of admission to the program, whichever occurs first, and includes planned and unplanned leaves of absence. Students who do not achieve candidacy or do not complete their degrees within the required time-limits will be dismissed from their degree program and the Graduate School unless a time-extension is granted. All requests for time-extensions must be received by the Graduate School prior to expiration of the degree program's time limit and must use the official Request for Time Extension to Complete Graduate Degree Requirements form.

## Time Limit Extensions

The Graduate School may grant extensions to the above time limits for a period of up to one year. Requests for extensions must be submitted by the Graduate Program Director to the Graduate School on behalf of, and signed by, the student, setting forth the applicable time limit, the extenuating circumstances which caused the student to be unable to meet the time limit, the tasks remaining to complete the degree and a realistic work plan and time frame during which those tasks will be completed and eligibility for award of the degree achieved. Requests for extensions will be reviewed and acted upon by the Graduate School. The Graduate School, in its discretion, may request additional relevant information before making its decision. Factors the Graduate School will consider in making its decision include, but are not limited to the following: 1) the strength, or lack thereof, of any extenuating circumstances offered for the student's failure to meet the time limit; 2) currency of the coursework and/or research effort falling outside the allowed time limit window; and 3) the likelihood that the student will be able to complete any required work within the next year. Requests for extensions longer than one year will not be considered. If approved, the student will be bound by the terms of completion outlined in the request. In the alternative, the Graduate School may condition its approval on written modification(s) to the request, in which case the request shall not be deemed granted until the student signifies acceptance by signing the written modification(s). Failure to follow any approved plan and meet the deadlines therein will result in dismissal from the degree program and the Graduate School.

A request for a second one-year time-extension may be granted only under extraordinary circumstances, and must be approved by a majority vote of the Graduate Council Executive Committee (GCEC). Requests for second one-year extensions must be signed by the student, submitted on the student's behalf by the graduate program director to the Graduate School and received prior to expiration of the first one-year time extension. In order to be considered by the GCEC, the request for a second time-limit extension must contain all of the following: 1) a statement of support from the graduate program director and thesis or dissertation committee, where applicable; 2) the extenuating circumstances which caused the student to be unable to meet the one year extension; 3) the tasks remaining to complete the degree; and 4) a realistic work plan and time frame during which those tasks will be completed and eligibility for award of the degree achieved. The GCEC, in its discretion, may request additional relevant information before making its decision. Factors the GCEC will consider in making its decision include, but are not limited to, 1) the strength, or lack thereof, of any statements of support with from the graduate program director, and, where applicable, the thesis or dissertation committee; 2) the strength, or lack thereof, of any extenuating circumstances offered for the student's failure to meet the one year extension; 3) currency of the coursework and/or research effort falling outside the allowed time limit window; 4) the likelihood that the student will be able to complete any required work within the next year; and 5) the impact the proposed extension would have on the student's knowledge and research. If approved, the student will be bound by the terms of completion outlined in the request. In the alternative, the GCEC may condition its approval on written modification(s) to the request, in which case the request shall not be deemed granted until the student signifies acceptance by signing the written modification(s). Failure to follow any approved plan and meet the deadlines therein will result in dismissal from the degree program and the Graduate School. Except under extraordinary circumstances, the GCEC will not consider a second one-year extension. A second, and any subsequent, request for a one year extension shall be subject to the same requirements as set forth above in this paragraph.



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