

# Guidelines for the Admissions and Progress Committee

Revision date: May 2021

The **Admissions and Progress Committee** (A&P) is a subcommittee of the Board of Graduate Studies (BGS). Members are appointed annually for a one year term, renewable normally to a maximum of three consecutive terms, by the Chair of the BGS in consultation with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. Ideally, the members of A&P will broadly represent different programs across the University.

The information in these guidelines is obtained from the [Graduate Calendar](#) and the [Bylaws of the Board of Graduate Studies](#). In general, only information directly required to make decisions on cases submitted to A&P is included in this document. Every effort is made to keep these guidelines current, but changes do occur and these supersede the information provided in these guidelines. Although decisions are made with reference to the guidelines, individual attention is given to each request.

In-course students who wish to petition A&P should take note of the procedures, general requirements, and requirements for documentation listed in the graduate calendar, but they should also consult with staff in the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Note that applicants may not petition A&P directly.

Documents related to admissions that must be considered by A&P must be submitted to the Graduate Admissions Specialists. Documents related to student progress must be submitted to the Graduate Records and Postdoctoral Officer of the appropriate college ([gradrec1@uoguelph.ca](mailto:gradrec1@uoguelph.ca) for COA, LANG, CEPS, CSAHS; [gradrec2@uoguelph.ca](mailto:gradrec2@uoguelph.ca) for CBS, OAC, OVC).

The A&P Committee generally meets on the **third Thursday of every month**. The deadline for submission of documents to be considered at A&P is the preceding Thursday. Quorum for an A&P meeting is one faculty member and one graduate student.

## Table of Contents

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Table of Contents .....   | 1 |
| Mandate .....   | 2 |
| Membership .....  | 3 |
| Acronyms .....  | 3 |
| <a href="#">Admissions</a> .....  | 3 |
| Admission Requirements .....  | 3 |
| Upgrading Standards .....   | 4 |
| Direct Admission to PhD Programs .....                                      | 5 |
| Admission of Applicants Already Holding a Doctoral or Master's Degree ..... | 6 |
| Alternate Admissions Criteria .....   | 6 |
| Description of Graduate Students .....                                      | 8 |
| Advanced Standing Credit .....  | 9 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Transfer of Credits, Post Admission .....  | 10 |
| Internal Program Transfer .....  | 10 |
| Internal Program Transfer Application Procedures .....                                     | 10 |
| Study Option Transfers .....   | 15 |
| Study Option Transfer Procedures .....   | 15 |
| <a href="#">Registration</a> .....   | 16 |
| Leave of Absence Requests .....  | 16 |
| <a href="#">Program Duration</a> .....   | 17 |
| <a href="#">Academic Standings</a> .....   | 19 |
| Changing Historical Academic Records .....   | 19 |
| Grade Interpretation – extension of Incomplete Courses .....                               | 19 |
| Failed Courses .....   | 20 |
| Grounds for Academic Consideration .....   | 20 |
| <a href="#">Unsatisfactory Progress</a> .....  | 21 |
| Required to Withdraw .....   | 21 |
| <a href="#">Appeals of Decisions</a> .....   | 22 |
| Figure 1. Dispute resolution mechanisms involving graduate students .....                  | 23 |
| Table 1. Program durations for graduate students defined by Class Level <sup>1</sup> ..... | 24 |

## Mandate

The actions of A&P are informed by Senate policies regarding admission of applicants and progress of graduate students.

Guided by Senate-approved policies, A&P shall:

- review and decide upon the admission of applicants under alternate admissions criteria.
- review and decide upon requests for readmission.
- review and decide upon student status pertaining to maximum registration limits.
- take action on behalf of the BGS with respect to unsatisfactory progress.
- review and decide upon requests for Leave of Absence based on medical, psychological, or compassionate grounds.
- review and decide upon requests for academic consideration based on medical, psychological, or compassionate grounds.
- review and decide upon requests for academic consideration regarding course results (e.g. INF) based on medical, psychological, or compassionate grounds.

*Note:* A&P does not reassess numerical final grades that have been submitted to and recorded by Registrarial Services.

- make decisions on student appeals of dispute resolution issues related to evaluation of progress, and qualifying or oral examinations, including procedural irregularities.

Decisions of the A&P are subject to appeal to the Senate Standing Committee on Student Petitions.

## Membership

- Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (normally Chair)
- three faculty members
- three graduate students (one of whom shall be the President of the Graduate Student Association)
- one representative from Office of Student Affairs
- two staff from the Office of Graduate Studies, one of whom shall be the recording secretary (non-voting)

Half of the voting members of A&P shall be members of the BGS. A Vice-Chair is to be elected annually by the Committee.

## Acronyms

**BGS** – Board of Graduate Studies

**A&P** – Admissions and Progress Committee

**OGPS** – Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

**AVPGS** – Assistant Vice-President of Graduate Studies

**ADGS** – Associate Dean of Graduate Studies

**ADR** – college Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies

**GPC** – Graduate Program Coordinator

**GPA** – Graduate Program Assistant

All regulations and information concerning graduate studies are provided in the graduate calendar, which is updated several times per every year and made available as a PDF file and [online](#).

## Admissions

### Admission Requirements

Admission to a graduate program, whether in the “Regular”, “Provisional”, or “Special” category is, in all cases, based upon the recommendation of the program and department concerned and is subject to the approval of the AVPGS on behalf of the BGS.

**Master’s:** Normally, the minimum requirement for admission to a master's program is successful completion of an undergraduate degree/ baccalaureate, in an honours program or the equivalent, from a recognized university.

The applicant must have achieved a grade average of at least 70% (B-) in the last four semesters of study, normally the last two years of undergraduate study (full-time equivalent).

Applicants who hold the DVM degree (or equivalent) and who are applying to the master's program must have achieved an overall average grade of at least 70% (B-) in their DVM program.

Applicants are advised that for admission to some master's programs, a higher program grade average than the minimum 70% (B-) average may be required.

Applicants who have not achieved the minimum grade average may wish to upgrade their academic qualifications prior to applying to a master's program. For information on upgrading, see "Upgrading Standards" below.

For information on alternate admissions criteria for master's programs, see "Alternate Admissions Criteria" below.

**Doctoral:** Normally, the minimum requirement for admission to a doctoral program is the successful completion of an undergraduate/baccalaureate degree, and successful completion of a graduate/master's degree – both from recognized universities.

The applicant must have achieved a grade average of at least 73% (B) in the master's degree program. Applicants are advised that for admission to some doctoral programs, a higher program grade average may be required.

Applicants who have not achieved the minimum grade average may wish to upgrade their academic qualifications prior to applying to a doctoral program. For information on upgrading, see "Upgrading Standards" below.

Applicants who hold the DVM degree (or equivalent) and who are applying to the DVSc program must have achieved an overall average grade of at least 73% (B) in their DVM program.

Some programs offer direct admission to a doctoral program from an Honours undergraduate/Baccalaureate degree program. For details, refer to the section entitled "Direct Admission to PhD Programs from an Honours Undergraduate/ Baccalaureate Program".

## **Upgrading Standards**

### **a. Applicants to a Master's program who do not hold an honours equivalent degree**

Applicants who have not completed undergraduate courses above the 30 required for a three-year general degree will be required to complete one full year (ten semester courses) of senior level (3000 or 4000) undergraduate courses (5.0 course credits) and maintain a minimum average of 70% (B-). These courses will be evaluated independently of the applicant's previously completed coursework. If the student does not achieve the required minimum average of 70% on these courses, s/he should then complete an additional 2 senior level (3000 or 4000) undergraduate courses (1.0 course credits) and the evaluation will be repeated on the full 6.0 course credits.

In cases where the student has completed more than the 30 required undergraduate courses, these will be deducted from the number of courses required. For example, if the applicant has completed 32 semester courses, s/he will only be required to complete an additional eight semester courses or 4.0 course credits. Upgrading does not guarantee admission.

### **b. Applicants to a Master's program who hold an honours equivalent degree at a level of performance marginally below the minimum university requirement**

Applicants will normally be required to complete three senior level (3000 or 4000) undergraduate courses (1.5 course credits) in a single semester and maintain a minimum grade average of 70% (B-). These courses will be evaluated independently of the student's previously completed coursework. If the student does not achieve the required minimum average of 70% (B-) in these courses, s/he should then complete an additional two senior level (3000 or 4000) undergraduate courses (1.0 course credits) and the evaluation will be repeated on the full 2.5 credits. Upgrading does not guarantee admission.

In both (a) and (b) above, courses taken as upgrading will NOT subsequently be considered for advanced credit or transfer credit toward a Master's degree at this university.

### **c. Applicants to a Doctoral program who hold a Master's degree at a level of performance marginally below the minimum university requirement**

Applicants will be required to complete a minimum of three semester courses (1.5 course credits) at the graduate level. They must maintain a minimum grade average of 73% (B) with no individual grade below 70%. Upgrading does not guarantee admission.

In all cases (a, b, and c above), the applicant will be directed to the department of interest for assistance with the selection of courses and for information about departmental admission requirements. The department requirements may be higher than those listed here, but must be consistent across all applicants. For example, if a department has established an admission requirement of 75% instead of the University's 70% minimum, they must apply that standard to all entering and upgrading students.

## **Direct Admission to PhD Programs**

Applicants who have successfully completed an Honours Baccalaureate/ undergraduate degree may apply directly to a doctoral program on their initial application for admission. The applicant must have achieved a superior academic record in the last two years of full time equivalent study. A superior record is normally defined as a cumulative average of 80% (A-) or above, as assessed by the OGPS. The reference on the Referee Assessment Form must rate the student as "outstanding". A statement of the applicant's research interests including evidence of his/ her research aptitude, capability, and proficiency is required.

Following an examination of the application materials submitted, the Graduate Program Committee will submit a written recommendation to the AVPGS regarding the request for direct admission to the PhD program. Such direct admission students are designated as "Regular". Typically such offers of direct admission include a strong recommendation from the Graduate Program Committee directed to the student's Advisory Committee that at least 0.5 graduate level course credits should be required elements of the student's Program of Study. These credits must be successfully completed by the end of the student's first year of study.

## **Admission of Applicants Already Holding a Doctoral or Master's Degree**

Applicants who hold a recognized doctoral degree deemed to be equivalent to a Canadian doctoral degree in the same field of study as the program to which they are applying will not be considered for admission. Applicants in this situation are directed to contact the OGS. In cases where it is not sufficiently evident that the program applied for is different from the completed program and where the department wishes to admit the applicant, the department will be required to clarify in writing the differences between the completed and proposed areas of research. See the OGS for more information.

An applicant who holds a recognized doctoral degree in one field and who wishes to study at the master's or doctoral level in a different field may be admissible. In cases where it is not sufficiently evident that the program applied for is different from the completed program and where the department wishes to admit the applicant, the department will be required to clarify in writing the differences between the completed and proposed areas of research. See the OGPS for more information.

The same conditions and requirements for applicants to doctoral programs shall apply to those holding a recognized master's degree deemed to be equivalent to a Canadian master's degree and who wish to apply to a master's program.

## **Alternate Admissions Criteria**

Applicants who believe that their experiential learning may compensate for academic standing that does not meet the university minimum requirements are directed to contact the program(s) of interest regarding availability of alternative admissions criteria.

Applicants to some master's and diploma programs who can provide evidence of a significant, sustained record of relevant experience and relevant task performance (normally a minimum of 5 years) to compensate for the shortcomings or deficiencies in the type or quality of their previously completed undergraduate degree may contact the program of interest regarding the availability of alternate criteria. Similarly, if an applicant has not completed an honours degree or its equivalent, but can demonstrate relevant skill development over a sustained period of time, admission on the basis of alternate admissions criteria may be considered.

See details and exceptions in the program-specific information below.

Should a Graduate Program Committee recommend admission of an applicant based on alternate criteria (normally on the basis of sufficient evidence of sustained experience - normally a minimum of 5 years - relevant to the field of study, and as well as the Graduate Program Committee's assessment and support of the applicant's ability, aptitude and capacity to pursue graduate studies as included in the student's application materials), the student's file is submitted to the OGPS by the Graduate Program Committee for a final determination on whether the alternate admission criteria are satisfied. The OGPS may consult with and defer to A&P when making decisions on such applications.

Students admitted on the basis of alternate criteria shall be classified as Provisional.

## **University-wide Alternate Admissions Criteria:**

(excepting the graduate programs listed below)

An applicant who does not meet the university's minimum academic requirements for admission may be considered for admission to a master's or diploma program if the following criteria are met:

- The student must present a significant record of relevant experience in the field of study, normally of at least five years. The nature of the relevant experience for admission shall be determined by the specific Graduate Program Committee for the field of study.
- The application must include a) a positive recommendation from the Graduate Program Committee based on a personal interview with the candidate (verbal) and b) a written statement from the candidate outlining the purpose and goal of pursuing graduate studies.
- The application must include identification of a proposed advisor (the candidate must seek support from the proposed advisor in advance) and a proposed Program of Study, including the anticipated time to completion according to the Maximum Registration policy.
- The application for admission must include references from the potential advisor (a faculty member) and the GPC in which the applicant's aptitude for graduate studies is addressed explicitly.
- When required by the department, school, or program, the applicant must submit the results of any specified standardized examinations (e.g. GMAT, general GRE, disciplinary GRE, etc.) with whatever specified levels of performance are required. The decision to require submission of such standardized test scores is at the discretion of the department or school.

## **Master of Fine Arts**

No more than 50% of the graduate students in this program in any given year shall be admitted under alternate admissions criteria. An applicant to this program who does not meet the university minimum academic requirements for admission may be considered for admission if the following criteria are met:

- The student must present a significant and sustained record of relevant experience through on-going educational or professional development in the field of study (normally at least five years). The nature and quality of the relevant experience for admission shall be determined by the Graduate Program Committee.
- The application for admission must include references from a potential advisor (the applicant must seek support from a proposed faculty advisor in advance) and the GPC in which the applicant's aptitude for graduate studies is addressed explicitly.
- The application must include: a) a positive recommendation from the Graduate Program Committee based on a personal interview with the candidate (verbal); and: b) a written statement from the candidate outlining the purpose and goal of pursuing graduate studies.
- The application must include a proposed Program of Study, including the anticipated time to completion according to the Maximum Registration policy.

## **Master of Arts (Leadership), Master of Business Administration (Distance Education format) and Master of Business Administration (Residential format)**

There is no limit to the number of applicants who may be admitted through alternate admissions criteria to these particular programs.

An applicant to any of these programs who does not meet the university minimum academic requirements for admission may be considered for admission if the following criteria are met:

- A significant and sustained record of relevant experience, normally at least five years. The nature of the relevant experience for admission shall be determined by the specific Graduate Program Committee for the field of study.
- Submission of positive references from people who can judge such matters (usually an advisor or graduate coordinator) in which the applicant's aptitude for graduate education, and, in the case of admission to the executive programs, ability to cope with the distance education format, are specifically addressed.
- A recommendation from the Graduate Program Committee based on the results of the applicant's interview (verbal) and/or statement of purpose (written).
- For some programs, the application must include identification of a proposed advisor (the candidate must seek support from the proposed advisor in advance) and a proposed Program of Study, including the anticipated time to completion according to the Maximum Registration policy. See program specific information.
- Demonstration of continuous successes in continuing education or professional development.
- When required by the department, school, or program, the applicant may be required to submit the results of any standardized examinations specified (e.g. GMAT, general GRE, disciplinary GRE, etc.) with whatever specified levels of performance are required. The decision to require submission of such standardized test scores is at the discretion of the department or school.

## **Description of Graduate Students**

**Regular Student:** Applicants who have fulfilled all university or program admission requirements and are offered admission to a graduate program are assigned to the Regular student category.

**Provisional Student:** An applicant whose qualifications for meeting the minimum university or program requirements cannot be clearly appraised may be considered for admission as a Provisional student. (This category is unavailable for applicants who clearly do not meet the minimum university admission requirements as assessed by the OGPS).

While on Provisional student status, the student's program must include at least one graduate course in each semester and may include active involvement in supervised thesis research.

Students in a Master's program must attain a 73% (B) average with no individual grade below 70% (B-). Students in a doctoral program must attain a 77% (B+) average with no individual grade below 73%.

It is the responsibility of the department/ school to provide written notification to each of its admitted Provisional category students of the number of courses to be completed in the program of study, the code and title of each required course, and the final grade level that must be attained in all such courses. If at the end of the student's first semester the department/ school is satisfied with the student's progress according to the provisions specified, it will recommend to the AVPGS that the student be transferred to the Regular category. Upon transfer to the Regular category, the student shall receive credit for courses completed while in the Provisional category.

If transfer to the Regular student category is not achieved at the end of the student's first semester, the student may be permitted to continue for a second semester in the Provisional student category. At the end of the second semester, the student's academic record will be reviewed again. If transfer to the Regular student category is not recommended at this time, the student may be Required to Withdraw or may submit a request to A&P to be allowed to continue in the Provisional student category for one additional semester (i.e. a third semester). Decisions of A&P may be appealed to the Senate Committee on Student Petitions (see section on Appeals).

**Special Student:** Students who are admitted and registered in a non-degree program shall be assigned to the Special student category. Normally Special category students are those attending the University on a Letter of Permission, or as an Ontario Visiting Graduate Student, or are on exchange.

## **Advanced Standing Credit**

In some specific instances, students in particular graduate programs may seek approval for advanced standing credit, based on graduate courses taken before their admission to the University of Guelph graduate program. A maximum of two courses will be considered for advanced standing credit. The requirements and procedures for seeking such approval are summarized below. Courses submitted for consideration for approval must include the following elements:

- must be credit courses in a graduate degree program offered through an accredited institution;
- must include evaluative components that are graded (i.e. include assignments or exams that are graded);
- must be of comparable credit weight to graduate courses offered at the University of Guelph;
- must not duplicate work already completed by the student in the University of Guelph program.

Requests for advanced standing credit are considered on their individual merits.

To apply for advanced standing credit, students must submit a formal written request to the relevant GPC, including a course outline with sufficient detail that the course can be assessed against the above criteria. If a sufficiently detailed course outline is not available, it is the student's responsibility to obtain additional information from the institution at which the course was taken. The application for advanced standing must be submitted at the time of application

to graduate studies, and no later than the end of the first week of the semester of the student's first registered semester.

The request shall be submitted by the GPC to the Graduate Program Committee, which will review the documentation according to the following criteria.

- The course was not used by the student to obtain a degree.
- The course was not used to obtain admission to the graduate program.
- The course is equivalent in credit weight and level to the course within the University of Guelph program for which it is to substitute.

If approved, the advanced standing credit(s) will be noted on the student's Graduate Degree Program form and transcript.

### **Transfer of Credits, Post Admission**

Students who have left an uncompleted graduate program elsewhere and have gained admission to graduate studies at the University of Guelph may be eligible to transfer some credits by submitting an "Application for Transfer Credit" form. Transfer credit may be assigned if the courses are deemed relevant to the student's program of study.

Graduate courses taken for credit in non-degree programs or through the University of Guelph Open Learning Program (at either the graduate or undergraduate level) may also be considered for transfer credit. Such courses must not have been used for credit towards any degree or honours equivalent qualification, and must not have been a part of the basic minimum admissions requirement for the University of Guelph graduate program.

Students may not complete more than half of their prescribed course requirements outside of the University of Guelph graduate program, whether through Letter of Permission, the Ontario Visiting Graduate Student program, or advanced standing credit or transfer procedures, and must meet the minimum duration of the program into which they have been accepted.

See section Establishment of the Program of Study for more information.

### **Internal Program Transfer**

An internal program transfer is a transfer between degrees within the same program (e.g. from the MSc to the PhD in Plant Agriculture; from Graduate Diploma to DVSc; from PhD to MA in History, etc.). Should a student wish to change to a different graduate program (e.g. PHD.IBIO to PHD.MCB), the regular "Application for Admission" policies and processes will apply.

### **Internal Program Transfer Application Procedures**

Transfer requests, including all required documentation, must be submitted before the end of the fourth semester (unless otherwise specified below). Requests must not be initiated prior to the end of the student's second semester of study.

- Transfer requests must be submitted using the "Transfer Application" form. Along with the request to transfer, the student must include a written report of progress in research. The

report should include a review of research conducted and any papers presented, published or submitted, research seminar title, etc.

- Confirmation of funding is required through the submission of a “Funding Form” (which accompanies the transfer application) from the department into which the student wishes to transfer.
- The student must be recommended highly by the Advisory Committee, supported by a written recommendation from Department Chair and the Graduate Program Committee. All the materials – including the application, the funding form, the research progress report, and the written recommendations, shall be forwarded to A&P for a final decision.
- In all cases, a transfer fee is payable to the Office of Registrarial Services when the application is submitted to the OGPS.

### **From Master's to Doctoral**

(when the student does not hold the equivalent of a master's degree from a Canadian University)

- The “Application for Transfer to Another Program” form must be initiated by the student during semester 3 or 4. Requests must not be initiated prior to the end of the student's second semester for study.
- The student must have an accredited undergraduate degree with an average of at least 77% (normally B+ to A+).
- The student must have completed at least 1.0 graduate level course credits (two 0.5-credit graduate courses), plus a seminar or equivalent course recognized for credit at the University of Guelph, with grades of at least 80% (A-)
- The student must submit a written report of progress in research. The report should include a review of research conducted for the master’s thesis and any papers presented, submitted or published.
- The request to transfer and the research progress report shall be reviewed by the student’s Advisory Committee, which shall provide written commentary on the candidate’s aptitude for doctoral-level research, and on the suitability of the master’s research project for expansion to a doctoral project.
- The request to transfer, the research progress report and the statement from the Advisory Committee shall be reviewed by the Graduate Program Committee and the Department Chair/Director who will provide a statement concerning the candidate’s research aptitude, capability, and proficiency.
- A doctoral-level Funding Form and a new Advisory Committee Form (listing the new additional committee member) must be included with the application.

## **From Master's to Doctoral**

(when the student holds a recognized master's degree in a related field)

- The "Application for Transfer to Another Program" form must be initiated by the student during semester 3 or 4.
- The student must have accredited undergraduate and graduate degrees with an average of at least (normally) 77 (B+ to A+)
- The student must have completed at least 0.5 graduate level course credits (one 0.5 credit graduate course), plus a seminar or equivalent course recognized for credit at the University of Guelph, with at least grades of at least 80% (A-).
- Supporting documentation from the Advisory Committee commenting on the candidate's aptitude for doctoral-level research, as well as the suitability of the master's research project for expansion to a doctoral-level project must be included.
- A statement from the Graduate Program Committee and the Department Chair/Director concerning research aptitude, capability, and proficiency must be included.
- A doctoral-level Funding Form and a new Advisory Committee Form (listing the new additional committee member) must be included with the application.

## **From Graduate Diploma to DVSc**

- The "Application for Transfer to Another Program" form must be initiated by the student no later than the end of the student's second semester
- The student must have successfully completed a DVM degree with high academic standing as set out in the admission requirements
- The student must have achieved a "superior record to date" in the Graduate Diploma program and must show a particular aptitude for applied studies (see the degree regulations for the Doctor of Veterinary Science, Admissions section, Chapter IV)
- Supporting documentation is required from the Advisory Committee, the Graduate Program Committee and the Interdepartmental DVSc Committee commenting on the candidate's aptitude for doctoral-level research
- A doctoral-level Funding Form and a new Advisory Committee Form (listing the new additional committee member) must be included with the application

## **From DVSc to PhD**

- The application for a "Study Option or Degree Program Transfer" form must be initiated by the student during semester 3 or 4. Requests must not be initiated prior to the end of the student's second semester of study.
- In cases where the student was admitted on the basis of a good quality (i.e. high academic standing as set out in the "Admission Requirements") master's degree but has not yet completed the DVSc Qualifying Examination, transfer requests are normally approved.

- Students without a master's degree must have an accredited undergraduate degree with an average of at least 77% (normally B+ to A+).
- Students without a master's degree must have completed at least 1.0 graduate level course credits (two 0.5-credit graduate courses), plus a seminar or equivalent course recognized for credit at the University of Guelph, with grades of at least 80% (A-).
- Where the student has successfully completed the DVSc Qualifying Examination, consideration may be given by the Graduate Program Committee to deem it equivalent to the PhD Qualifying Examination. In cases where there is a considerable change in the field of study, the Graduate Program Committee may require that the student complete the PhD Qualifying Examination.
- Supporting documentation is required from the Advisory Committee, the Graduate Program Committee, and the Department Chair/Director.
- A doctoral-level Funding Form must be included with the application; funding must be guaranteed for a minimum of nine semesters, including funding already provided in the DVSc program.

### **From PhD to DVSc**

- The "Application for Transfer to Another Program" must be initiated by the student. The student must hold a DVM degree with high academic standing, as set out in the "Admission Requirements".
- In instances where the student has not yet completed the PhD Qualifying Examination, transfer requests are normally approved.
- Where the student has successfully completed the PhD Qualifying Examination, consideration may be given by the Interdepartmental DVSc Graduate Program Committee to deem it equivalent to the DVSc Qualifying Examination. In cases where there is a considerable change in the field of study, the Interdepartmental DVSc Graduate Program Committee may require that the student complete the DVSc Qualifying Examination.
- Supporting documentation is required from the Advisory Committee, and the Interdepartmental DVSc Graduate Program Committee.
- A completed doctoral-level Funding Form must be included with the application; funding must be guaranteed for a minimum of nine semesters, including funding already provided in the PhD program.

### **From Doctoral to Master's**

(prior to completion of the Qualifying Examination)

- The "Application for Transfer to Another Program" must be initiated by the student.
- Requests are normally approved on the basis of the student changing goals/career paths.
- In some instances, the Advisory Committee may recommend a transfer to a master's program after having determined that the student's aptitude and/or background

preparation for research are not adequate for PhD/ DVSc studies. In cases where the student has failed the first attempt at the Qualifying Examination and has decided, in consultation with the Advisory Committee, that a transfer to the master's program would be appropriate, such a transfer may be approved.

- Where the student had been admitted to the program with a master's degree previously completed, the Advisory Committee's recommendation must demonstrate that the recommended master's degree is different in focus and content from the original master's degree.
- Supporting documentation from the Advisory Committee, the Graduate Program Committee, and the Department Chair/ Director is required.
- A completed master's-level Funding Form must be included with the application.

### **From Doctoral to Master's**

(after successful completion of the Qualifying Examination)

- The "Application for Transfer to Another Program" must be initiated by the student.
- Requests are normally approved as a result of the student changing goals/career paths, or for medical/compassionate reasons.
- Where the student had been admitted to the program with a master's degree previously completed, the Advisory Committee's recommendation must demonstrate that the recommended master's degree is different in focus and content from the original master's degree.
- Supporting documentation from the student's Advisory Committee, the Graduate Program Committee, and the Department Chair/ Director is required.
- A master's-level Funding Form must be included with the application.

### **From Doctoral to Master's**

(after 2nd failed attempt to successfully complete the Qualifying Examination or the Final Oral Examination)

- No transfer will be permitted.
- A "Required to Withdraw" notation (RTW) will be entered on the transcript of the student's last PhD/ DVSc registration.
- In the event that the student wishes to enter the master's program, the student must apply for admission to that program.
- Should the student be admitted to the master's program, he/ she shall be placed in semester 1 of the master's program.
- Where the student had been admitted to the program with a prior master's degree, the Advisory Committee's recommendation must demonstrate that the recommended master's degree is different in focus and content from the original master's degree.

- The master's degree, if undertaken, must be completely self-contained; the student must complete all the required elements of the program, including required courses, thesis, thesis defence, etc. The Advisory Committee will make a recommendation regarding any credits to be transferred from the incomplete PhD/DVSc.
- A master's-level "Funding Form" must be included with the application.

### **From Master's to Graduate Diploma (Type 1)**

- An opportunity to transfer from a master's program to a Graduate Diploma (Type 1) is available only where there is an approved Graduate Diploma (Type 1) program in place for the particular program.
- In some instances, the Advisory Committee may recommend a transfer to a Graduate Diploma (Type 1) after having determined that the student's aptitude and/or background preparation for research are not adequate for master's studies.
- The "Application for Transfer to Another Program" must be initiated by the student.
- Students should consult with the Office of Graduate Studies for more information.

### **Study Option Transfers**

A study option transfer is a transfer between study options within the same program (e.g. from the MSC.CHEM:L to the MSC.CHEM in Chemistry). Should a student wish to transfer to a different program (e.g. MSC.CHEM to MSC.PHYS), the regular "Application for Admission" policies and processes will apply. In certain cases where students plan to continue their research in a different program, a study option transfer may be applicable. Students should consult with the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for more information.

### **Study Option Transfer Procedures**

#### **Study Option Transfer from Master's to Master's**

An opportunity to transfer from a thesis option to a coursework option within a master's program (or vice versa) is available only where there is an approved coursework option in place for the particular program.

In some instances, the Advisory Committee may recommend a transfer to a coursework master's after having determined that the student's aptitude and/or background preparation for research are not adequate for a thesis-based master's program. Conversely, students in a coursework program may wish to expand a Major Research Project or Paper to a master's thesis.

The application for a "Study Option or Degree Program Transfer" must be initiated by the student.

In addition to the transfer form, new copies of the following must be submitted:

- Advisory Committee form
- Graduate Degree Program form

- Funding Form

Transfer requests must be submitted no later than the end of the semester before the semester in which the student expects to graduate (e.g. by the end of the Winter semester if the student expects to complete their program in the subsequent Summer semester).

Students should consult with the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for more information.

## **Registration**

### **Leave of Absence Requests**

#### **Leave of Absence for Registration at Another University**

University of Guelph graduate students, with prior permission from the AVPGS, may arrange a Leave of Absence (LOA) to register at another university. Students should consult the OGS about the options available when planning such activities.

#### **Leave of Absence (LOA) from Graduate Studies**

A graduate student may make arrangements in advance, subject to recommendation by the Graduate Program Committee and approval by the Admissions & Progress Committee (A&P), for an LOA from graduate studies for no more than three consecutive semesters. Requests for parental leave will be accommodated under the LOA regulations. The written approval of an LOA by A&P will include a specified adjustment to the program duration stated in the Program Duration policy (Registration/Program Duration section). Withdrawal in the first semester of study will be permanent. If the student wishes to re-activate the application file for a future semester, it must be done through their academic department/school. A new application fee will be required; a decision form will be required from the department/school before a new offer of admission will be issued.

The AVPGS may routinely approve a recommendation from the Graduate Program Committee for a student's request for a one semester LOA in which there is no adjustment to the program duration contemplated.

Requests to continue an LOA beyond three consecutive semesters must be submitted to the Graduate Program Committee who will forward their recommendation of approval to A&P.

Additional requests for a further LOA must be submitted for approval to A&P and are unlikely to be considered except in exceptional circumstances. As well, repeated requests for multiple semester leaves will not be considered except under highly exceptional circumstances.

During an approved LOA, graduate students must not engage in activities related to their academic program; i.e. the student cannot engage in academic courses or activities including completion of incomplete courses from previous semesters, or research/ writing activities related to his/her academic program; the student cannot engage in communications or request feedback from his/her advisor or advisory committee related to his/her academic program; the student cannot use university research facilities related to his/ her academic program.

Failure to obtain prior approval for LOA will be considered as a voluntary withdrawal from graduate studies at the University of Guelph. A formal application for readmission to the program will be required in order to resume studies, conditional on acceptance. Students who are readmitted are subject to the policies and regulations of the calendar under which they were readmitted.

Students who are restricted from registering due to the Program Duration policy will not receive approval for an LOA until they have submitted a Plan of Study or an Extension Appeal and it has been approved by A&P. Once they have received approval to continue in the program, they may request an LOA and if that is approved, they can subsequently return to their studies for the approved program extension.

## **Program Duration**

### **Program Duration Schedule**

Program durations for graduate students at the University of Guelph are defined by Class Level which is the total of full-time and part-time (if any) semesters valued at 1 and 0.3 for each, respectively.

These Completion Periods apply to all programs, unless a specific program has received approval from the Board of Graduate Studies for a different period. Students will be advised about their program Completion Period in their offer of admission letter.

**Table 1** provides the Program Completion Period and Maximum Program Duration for Full-Time and Part-Time graduate programs at the University of Guelph.

If a student transfers from full-time to part-time within the Program Completion Period, the number of part-time semesters remaining in the Completion Period will be twice the number of full-time semesters remaining. If a student transfers from part-time to full-time within the Completion Period, the number of full-time semesters remaining in the Completion Period will be half the number of part-time semesters remaining. The number of semesters between the revised Completion Period and Maximum Program Duration is the same for both full-time and part-time students.

### **Continuation to Maximum Program Duration**

Graduate students who do not complete their program within the prescribed completion period will be notified at the beginning of the subsequent semester (e.g. semester 7 for full-time Master's, semester 13 for full-time Doctoral) that no further registration will be permitted pending approval of a Plan of Study (PoS). Students, in consultation with the advisory committee, will be asked to submit a PoS allowing registration beyond the completion period. The plan must be submitted to the Records Officer in OGPS before the end of the semester of notification. PoS for continuation up to Maximum Program Duration are usually approved by the Records Officer on behalf of A&P.

On approval of the PoS, master's students may continue up to the Maximum Program Duration (9 full-time semesters). With approval of the PoS, doctoral students may continue for up to three additional semesters (for a total of 16 full-time semesters), after which a second PoS must be submitted to continue to Maximum Program Duration (18 full-time semesters).

PoS will only be approved to the end of Maximum Program Duration (MPD), even if the PoS indicates that more time is required to complete the program.

If the student and the advisory committee do not submit the PoS as required, the student will be withdrawn from the subsequent semester, and must apply to A&P for readmission. A PoS will be required as part of the application for readmission.

### **Appeal for Extension beyond Maximum Program Duration**

A student who fails to complete their graduate program by the end of Maximum Program Duration will be withdrawn from the program for failure to complete. Students who are withdrawn must apply for readmission.

Students who wish to appeal the requirement to withdraw and request an extension beyond the Maximum Program Duration for their program must submit an "Appeal for Extension of Maximum Program Duration" to the Records Officer for consideration by A&P. The appeal form must be submitted prior to the deadline to register for the semester, and must include the following documentation:

- An approved PoS for timely degree completion, signed by the student, the faculty advisor, the other members of the student's advisory committee and the GPC
- An indication of the progress made since submission of the previous PoS and an explanation for delays that prevented completion as outlined in the previous PoS.
- A recommendation from the Graduate Program Committee or Department Chair/ School Director
- A recommendation from the ADR of the college

*Note:* If the student, faculty advisor, and members of the student's advisory committee are unable to agree on a plan of study for degree completion, the GPC shall provide a letter commenting on the feasibility of the plan of study provided by the student.

In considering a request for an extension, A&P shall review all departmental Student Progress Reports submitted to date. As per existing policy, such reports shall have been provided to the student each semester via his/her advisor.

A&P will grant or deny the request for the extension based on all the documentation provided. Where A&P supports the request, it may also provide advice and recommendations on the proposed plan of study.

Should the student fail to complete the degree program within the prescribed time frame following approval of his/her appeal for extension of Maximum Program Duration, the student will be withdrawn for failure to complete, unless they submit a new appeal for extension.

Decisions of A&P may be appealed to the Senate Committee on Student Petitions. Such appeals will include an examination of all relevant documents and evidence used by A&P in making its decision. Information on the procedures for submitting appeals to the Senate Committee on Student Petitions are set out in the regulations included in the bylaws for the [Senate Committee on Student Petitions](#). These regulations are available on-line or through [Student Judicial Services](#) (see "Appeals of Decisions" for more information.)

## Academic Standings

### **Changing Historical Academic Records**

Occasionally A&P is asked to remove the record of course failures from a student's transcript. Requests of this nature are usually denied. However, with submission of documented compassionate or medical reasons, the final grade of a failed course may be changed to WNP (withdrawn no penalty).

In rare instances, a student's entire semester record may be deleted for documented medical and compassionate reasons; however, not only would the failed courses be removed, but also the courses with satisfactory grades during the same semester. The student may wish to present a case for deleting some, but not all, of the term record (i.e. explaining why part of the semester was successful while part was not). Such requests will be considered on an individual basis. In this case, courses that the student has asked to be deleted will be denoted as WNP on the transcript.

Requests to add courses, whether for credit or audit, to student records at grade reporting time or after semester end will normally be denied. Similarly, requests to delete credit courses or change them to AUD (audit) at grade reporting time or after the end of a semester would not normally be considered.

Students/faculty are responsible for ensuring that course registration is correct no later than the published deadline for course drops.

Requests for grade reassessment based on the calculation of grades or the methods and criteria used to establish final grades are **not** considered by A&P. However, requests for grade reassessment based on the application of academic regulations or procedures in course grading can be appealed to A&P by submitting an Appeal for Academic Consideration (page 20). In that case, A&P could approve a "late drop" of the course under consideration (WNP) or change the final grade from a numerical value to AUD (audit). Such requests will be considered on an individual basis.

### **Grade Interpretation – extension of Incomplete Courses**

Any student who receives an INC or MNR grade and for whom the final grade is not received in the Office of Registrarial Services prior to the first day of the next semester, must complete the course in the next registered semester, at the end of which it is required that the INC be replaced by a grade or an INF (incomplete failure). If the student is not registered in the semester in which the course is completed, any submitted grade will not be accepted and the student will receive INF as a final grade. Note that the student does not register for the incomplete course again; when a grade is received, the grade will replace the INC or MNR originally recorded. Students who are registered may have, at the department/school graduate committee's discretion, up to the end of that subsequent semester to finish the course requirements before the grade of INF is automatically recorded.

Requests for extensions to complete an incomplete course are considered by A&P for documented medical or compassionate reasons. Refer to the section on Appeals for Academic Consideration (page 20).

## Failed Courses

A graduate student who receives a grade of less than 65% in any course (graduate or undergraduate, prescribed, or additional) is deemed to have failed the course.

The student's Advisory Committee shall then take the following action:

- As a minimum, the notation "Some Concerns" shall be included in the Student Progress Report for the semester during which the course was taken (see Section II General Regulations, Student Progress Reports).
- Following a review of the Student Progress Report, the Graduate Program Committee will recommend to A&P that the student be required to do one of the following:
  1. replace the failed course as soon as possible with another course of equal relevance, rigor and credit value, preferably in the following semester\*;
  2. complete remedial studies by registering in a "directed study" course, created by the department, of equal credit value, and which has been tailored to meet the student's deficiencies from the failed course, preferably in the following semester\*;
  3. repeat the failed course when it is next offered;
  4. fulfil a Supplemental Condition.

Regarding (1) and (2) above, students may not register for courses they have previously passed unless the course has different content (e.g. "Special Topics" courses), or unless expressly directed to do so in writing by A&P.

Regarding (4) above, recommendations for a Supplemental Condition are discouraged, but may be approved by A&P under exceptional circumstances. The following information must be supplied with the recommendation from the Graduate Program Committee:

- a. a breakdown of the evaluation and grading scheme for the failed course
- b. an indication of the student's performance in each component of the course, related to a) above
- c. an indication of the percentage of the course that the supplemental condition will include
- d. a signed statement from the instructor of the course indicating a willingness to provide such a supplemental condition
- e. a brief explanation of the reasons the supplemental condition option has been chosen.

The student's Advisory Committee is responsible for informing the student once the decision on a course of action has been approved by either the Graduate Program Committee or A&P.

## Grounds for Academic Consideration

Academic consideration may be granted on the following grounds:

- medical
- psychological
- compassionate

- misapplication of regulations or procedures
- other special circumstances

Generally, work commitments will not constitute grounds for academic consideration. The necessity for documentation will depend on the situation. Students should contact their Advisor or Graduate Program Coordinator regarding documentation requirements.

If, due to medical, psychological or compassionate circumstances a student is unable to complete any portion of the work in a course, the student should:

1. Inform the instructor-in-charge of the course in writing.
2. Supply documentation if the instructor requests it. If documentation is unavailable, the student should consult their Advisor.
3. Complete and submit missed work by the new deadline established by the instructor.
4. Consult with the Advisor or Graduate Program Coordinator if the student feels that appropriate consideration has not been granted by the instructor.

If the circumstances for academic consideration are such that they could affect a number of courses or completion of other work in the student's graduate program; or if the request for academic consideration involves a misapplication of regulations or procedures, or other special circumstances, the Advisor or Graduate Program Coordinator should be consulted regarding an appropriate course of action.

If the student cannot reach a mutually agreeable course of action with the Advisor or Graduate Program Coordinator, as appropriate, the student may discuss the issue with the Department Chair or the Assistant VP of Graduate Studies. See the Dispute Resolution Mechanisms section of the calendar. Flow charts for dispute resolution involving graduate students are also provided in **Figure 1** (page 22).

## Unsatisfactory Progress

### **Required to Withdraw**

When it is necessary to take action with respect to unsatisfactory performance by a graduate student, the following process applies. The Advisory Committee makes a recommendation to the department Graduate Program Committee which forwards a recommendation to the Records Officer. The AVPGS ensures that the student is aware of the department's recommendation and is offered the opportunity to make a submission. The recommendation of the department and any submission from the student are considered by A&P, which makes a decision on behalf of the BGS.

At any stage of the above process, a graduate student may request a reconsideration. It is hoped that communication with the Advisor, the Chair of the departmental Graduate Program Committee and A&P will be forthright and constructive.

More details concerning the process for initiating a recommendation that a student be required to withdraw from his/her program of study are provided below. This information is not included in the calendar, but this process has been approved by the BGS.

- The department submits a letter recommending withdrawal, including a chronology of events leading up to the recommendation, relevant evaluation reports and documentation

from the Advisory or Exam Committee. Documentation from the Advisory Committee is not required in the case of a second failed Qualifying Exam or thesis defense as submission of the report indicating that the student failed constitutes a recommendation to the BGS that the student be required to withdraw. The recommendation is normally submitted to the Records Officer by the GPC on behalf of the Graduate Program Committee. To allow time for the student to respond, and for the department to respond to the student's submission, departments should submit RTW requests at least one month before the next A&P mtg.

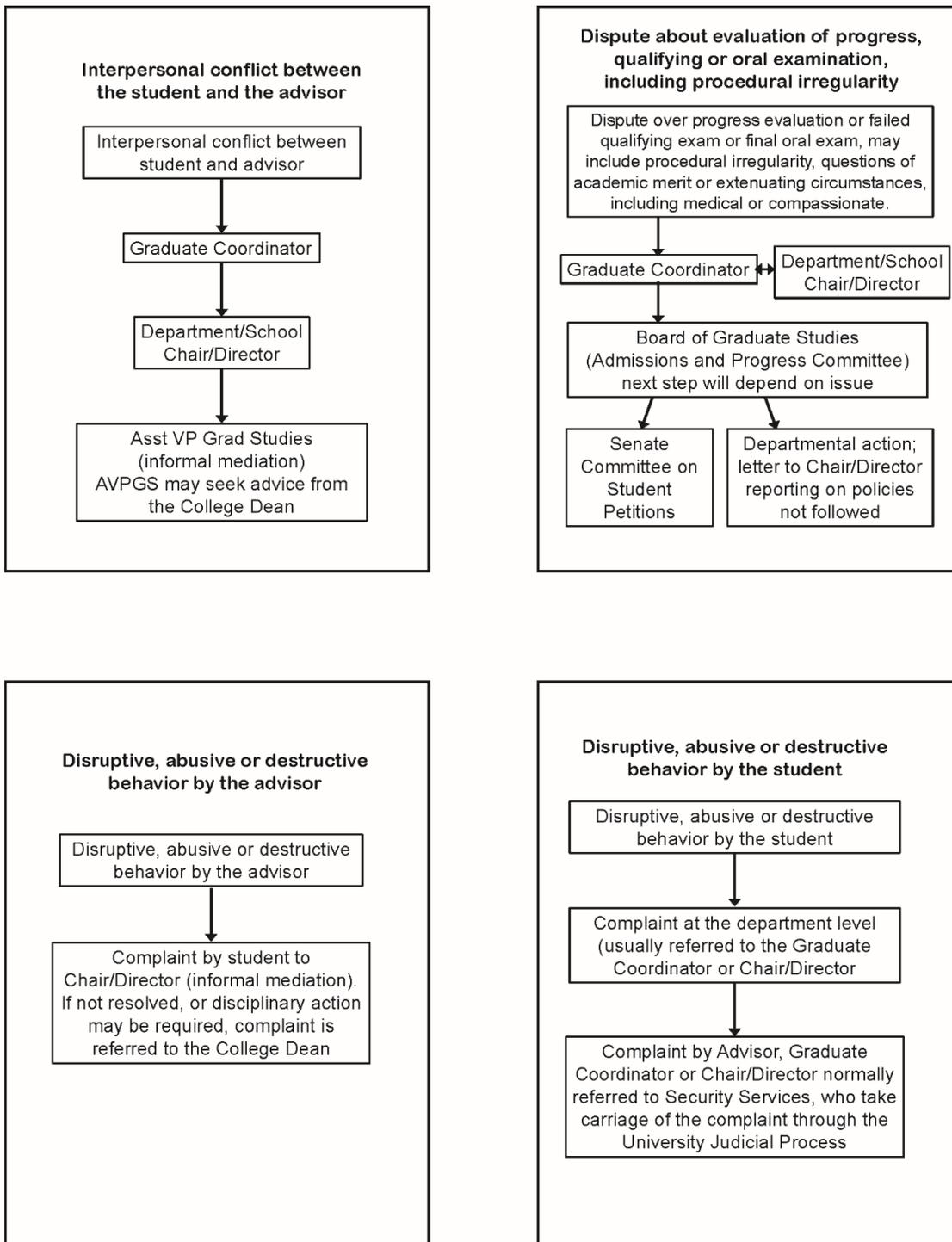
- The AVPGS sends a letter to the student notifying them of the recommendation. Included with the letter will be a copy of the letter from the department and the chronology. The student will be given the option to submit a response or to withdraw voluntarily. Any appeal from the student will be required not less than 10 working days from the date they received the notification letter.
- If there is a response, and if it contains information that may not have been previously available to the department, the department will be given the opportunity to review the response and comment on it. Any such comments must be received by the Records Officer no later than two working days prior to the next A&P meeting.
- The case, including any written submission from the student and any subsequent submission from the department, is considered at the next A&P meeting.

If the student submits a withdrawal notice for voluntary withdrawal prior to the meeting, the case will not be taken to A&P. The student's program will be closed and PWD (program withdrawal) will be indicated on the students' record. If A&P upholds the department recommendation for withdrawal, the record will indicate RTW. In either case, withdrawal will be effective as of the date on which the original recommendation was submitted to the Records Officer to provide the student with the best refund possible for the semester.

## [Appeals of Decisions](#)

In the event of a negative decision on any case relating to a graduate student's progress, including a request by the department that the student be required to withdraw (RTW), the student may, within 14 days of notification of the decision, request re-evaluation by A&P. Such a request must be accompanied by any information not previously available to the committee. If the negative decision is maintained, the student may, within 10 working days of notification of the decision, appeal to the [Senate Committee on Student Petitions](#). If the student has no new information to submit, they may appeal directly to the Senate Committee on Student Petitions. The decision of this committee is final.

**Figure 1. Dispute resolution mechanisms involving graduate students**



**Table 1. Program durations for graduate students defined by Class Level <sup>1</sup>**

| Program            | Completion Period <sup>2</sup> | Plan of Study & Progress Report to A&P by 20th class day | Continue with approved plan of study        | Second Plan of Study & Progress Report to A&P by 20th class day | Continue with second approved plan of study to Maximum Program Duration | Maximum Program Duration. To apply for an extension submit: <i>Appeal for Extension of MPD to A&amp;P by 20th class day</i> |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Master's-FT</b> | 6<br>(6 FT semesters)          | 7  | 8, 9  | n/a   | n/a   | 9   |
| <b>Master's-PT</b> | 4<br>(12 PT semesters)         | 4.3<br>(13 PT semesters)                                 | 4.6, 5<br>(14, 15 PT semesters)             | n/a   | n/a   | 5.0<br>(15 PT semesters)  |
| <b>DVSc-FT</b>     | 9<br>(9 FT semesters)          | 10   | 11, 12                                      | n/a   | n/a   | 12  |
| <b>DVSc-PT</b>     | 6<br>(18 PT semesters)         | 6.3<br>(19 PT semesters)                                 | 6.6, 7<br>(20, 21 PT semesters)             | n/a   | n/a   | 7.0<br>(21 PT semesters)  |
| <b>PhD-FT</b>      | 12<br>(12 FT semesters)        | 13   | 14, 15, 16                                  | 16  | 17, 18  | 18  |
| <b>PhD-PT</b>      | 8<br>(24 PT semesters)         | 8.3<br>(25 PT semesters)                                 | 8.6, 9, 9.3<br>(26, 27, 28 PT semesters)    | 9.3<br>(28 PT semesters)  | 9.6, 10<br>(29, 30 PT semesters)  | 10<br>(30 PT semesters)   |
| <b>DE&amp;T-FT</b> | 16<br>(16 FT semesters)        | 17   | 18, 19, 20                                  | 20  | 21, 22  | 22  |
| <b>DE&amp;T-PT</b> | 10.6<br>(32 PT semesters)      | 11<br>(33 PT semesters)                                  | 11.3, 11.6, 12<br>(34, 35, 36 PT semesters) | 12<br>(36 PT semesters)   | 12.3, 12.6<br>(37, 38 PT semesters)                                     | 12.6<br>(38 PT semesters)   |

**FT**, Full-time; **PT**, Part-time; **DE & T**, Direct entry and transfer from a master's program

1. Class Level is the cumulative total of full-time and part-time (if any) semesters valued at 1 and 0.3 for each, respectively.
2. These Completion Periods apply to all programs, unless a specific program has received approval from the Board of Graduate Studies for a different period. Students will be advised about their program Completion Period in their offer of admission letter.