

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 2020-2021 Rackham Graduate School Academic Policies..... | 1 |
| Preface | 1 |
| Fundamental Tenets of Membership in the University Community..... | 1 |
| 1 Admission, Matriculation, and Tuition | 2 |
| 1.1 Admission to Graduate Programs..... | 2 |
| 1.2 Admission as Non-Candidate for Degree..... | 3 |
| 1.3 Tuition and Fees | 3 |
| 1.3.1 Residency Regulations and Tuition | 3 |
| 1.3.2 University Assistantships | 3 |
| 1.3.3 Indebtedness to the University | 4 |
| 1.4 Required Fee Totals for the Doctor of Musical Arts (D.M.A.) Degree | 4 |
| 2 Registration | 5 |
| 2.1 Full-Time Study and Enrollment Eligibility..... | 5 |
| 2.2 Registration and Enrollment for Ph.D. Programs | 5 |
| 2.2.1 Extramural Study Status for Ph.D. Students | 6 |
| 2.2.2 Leaves of Absence for Ph.D. Students | 6 |
| 2.2.3 Withdrawal and Discontinuation from a Ph.D. Program | 10 |
| 2.2.4 Reinstatement to a Ph.D. Program..... | 10 |
| 2.2.5 Candidacy Course Registration..... | 11 |
| 2.3 Registration and Enrollment for Master’s and Doctorate of Musical Arts Programs | 12 |
| 2.3.1 Detached Study for D.M.A. and Master’s Students..... | 12 |
| 2.3.2 Disenrollment and Withdrawal from a Master’s or D.M.A. Program | 13 |
| 2.3.3 Readmission to a Master’s, D.M.A., or Certificate Program..... | 13 |
| 2.4 Within-Semester Medical Accommodation | 14 |
| 2.5 Graduate Student Parental Accommodation..... | 14 |
| 2.6 Time Limit Extensions for Family Care..... | 14 |
| 2.7 Emergency Mental and Physical Health Withdrawal and Reinstatement | 15 |
| 2.8 Retroactive Term Withdrawal | 15 |
| 2.9 Change of Graduate Program..... | 15 |
| 2.10 Special Arrangements for On-Campus and Off-Campus Course Enrollment..... | 15 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 2.10.1 Consortial agreements for courses outside the University of Michigan | 16 |
| 2.11 Non-Candidate for Degree Status..... | 16 |
| 3 Coursework, Grading and Academic Standing..... | 17 |
| 3.1 Adding, Dropping, Modifying, and Repeating a Course..... | 17 |
| 3.2 Visiting (Auditing) a Course | 18 |
| 3.3 Grades and Transcripts | 19 |
| 3.3.1 Visit (VI) | 20 |
| 3.3.2 Satisfactory (S) and Unsatisfactory (U)..... | 20 |
| 3.3.3 Incomplete (I) | 20 |
| 3.3.4 Drop (W) and Unofficial Drop (ED) - Policy Adjustment for the 2020-21 Academic Year | 20 |
| 3.3.5 Multi-Term Course (Y)..... | 20 |
| 3.3.6 Adjusted Rackham Grading Policy for the 2020-21 Academic Year | 21 |
| 3.4 Good Academic Standing..... | 21 |
| 3.5 Deficiencies in Academic Progress, Academic Probation, and Dismissal | 22 |
| 3.5.1 Unsatisfactory Academic Standing | 22 |
| 3.5.2 Academic Probation and Dismissal: Ph.D. and D.M.A. Programs..... | 23 |
| 4 Doctoral Degrees | 25 |
| 4.1 Cognate Requirement | 25 |
| 4.2 Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship Training | 26 |
| 4.3 Advancing to Candidacy | 26 |
| 4.3.1 Ph.D. Candidacy Requirements | 27 |
| 4.3.2 D.M.A. Candidacy Requirements..... | 27 |
| 4.4 Doctoral Dissertation Requirements | 27 |
| 4.4.1 Time Limit for Completing a Doctoral Degree | 27 |
| 4.4.2 Candidacy Course Registration..... | 28 |
| 4.4.3 Formation of the Dissertation Committee | 29 |
| 4.4.4 Human Subject and Other Research Approval | 29 |
| 4.4.5 Use of Copyrighted Material | 30 |
| 4.4.6 Dissertations in Languages Other Than English | 30 |
| 4.4.7 Dissertation Formatting Requirements | 30 |
| 4.4.8 Oral Defense Preparation | 30 |
| 4.4.9 Oral Examination Report and Approval | 30 |

| | |
|--|----|
| 4.4.10 Post-Defense Meeting and Dissertation Revisions..... | 31 |
| 4.4.11 Submitting the Dissertation to the University Library | 31 |
| 4.4.12 Dissertation Embargo | 31 |
| 4.4.13 Final Dissertation and Degree Requirement Deadlines, and Commencement Eligibility | 32 |
| 4.5 Student-Initiated Ph.D. Programs..... | 33 |
| 5 Master’s Degrees | 34 |
| 5.1 Residency Requirement..... | 34 |
| 5.2 Credit Hours..... | 34 |
| 5.3 Cognate Requirement | 34 |
| 5.4 Additional Program Requirements | 35 |
| 5.5 Time Limit | 35 |
| 5.6 Application for Degree..... | 35 |
| 5.7 Transfer of Credit | 35 |
| 5.8 Accelerated Master’s Programs | 36 |
| 6 Dual Degree Programs | 37 |
| 6.1 Student-Initiated Dual Degree Programs..... | 37 |
| 6.2 Double-Counting Credit Hours for Dual Degree Programs | 38 |
| 7 Certificates of Graduate Studies Programs..... | 39 |
| 8 Rackham Academic and Professional Integrity Policy | 40 |
| 8.1 Forms of Academic and Professional Misconduct | 40 |
| 8.1.1 Cheating or Obtaining an Improper Advantage | 40 |
| 8.1.2 Plagiarism | 41 |
| 8.1.3 Research Misconduct..... | 41 |
| 8.1.4 Dishonesty in Publication | 41 |
| 8.1.5 Abuse of Confidentiality | 42 |
| 8.1.6 Misuse of Computer Facilities | 42 |
| 8.1.7 Misuse of Hazardous Substances in Research-Related Activities | 42 |
| 8.1.8 Fabrication, Falsification, or Unauthorized Modification of an Academic Record..... | 42 |
| 8.1.9 Obstruction of the Academic Activities and Research of Another | 42 |
| 8.1.10 Illegal or Unauthorized Use of University Resources..... | 42 |
| 8.1.11 Other Forms of Academic Misconduct and Attempted Academic Misconduct | 42 |
| 8.1.12 Professional Misconduct | 42 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 8.2 Handling Allegations of Misconduct | 43 |
| 8.2.1 Inquiries Concerning Non-Academic Misconduct | 43 |
| 8.2.2 Who Conducts Investigations into Allegations of Academic and Professional Misconduct | 43 |
| 8.2.3 Reporting Allegations of Misconduct to Rackham | 44 |
| 8.2.4 Procedures for Academic Misconduct Hearings..... | 45 |
| 8.2.5 Findings and Decision | 48 |
| 8.2.6 Appeal | 48 |
| 9 Academic Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedures | 50 |
| 9.1 Scope of the Policy | 50 |
| 9.2 Resolution Board | 51 |
| 9.3 Dispute Resolution Principles and Responsibilities | 51 |
| 9.3.1 Impartiality | 51 |
| 9.3.2 Confidentiality | 51 |
| 9.3.3 Timeliness..... | 52 |
| 9.3.4 Communication | 52 |
| 9.4 Resolution Conference | 52 |
| 9.5 Academic Dispute Resolution Process..... | 52 |
| 9.6 Reconsideration..... | 53 |
| 9.7 Rackham Dispute Resolution Process..... | 53 |
| 9.8 Rackham Dispute Resolution Process (Expedited Process for extended time to degree of doctoral students due to the COVID-19 pandemic)..... | 54 |
| 9.8.1 Rackham Dispute Resolution Process..... | 54 |
| 9.8.2 Rackham Appeal Process..... | 55 |
| Appendix: University Policies on Rights, Integrity, and Conduct..... | 56 |

2020-2021 Rackham Graduate School Academic Policies

Preface

The graduate programs of the Rackham Graduate School are located in the schools, colleges, and departments of the University of Michigan. The academic policies and regulations in this document have been established by the Rackham Executive Board to ensure consistent standards in admissions, registration, degree requirements, and the awarding of degrees across all Rackham graduate programs. Individual graduate programs have additional requirements and rules. Students are expected to be familiar with both the policies of the graduate school and those of their programs.

The graduate school maintains an academic, scholarly, and professional code of conduct to safeguard standards of learning, research, and professional integrity. Students are expected to understand and observe these standards. In conjunction with the schools and colleges, the graduate school has procedures for investigating allegations of misconduct and imposing sanctions.

The authoritative version of Rackham Graduate School Academic Policies is updated annually and published online. In the event of any discrepancy, the version published on the Rackham website is the authoritative version. Each new edition is archived.

This edition of Rackham Graduate School Academic Policies was written by Assistant Dean John Godfrey, with help from staff members of the Rackham Graduate School. Comments or suggestions are welcome. Students, faculty, and staff may send comments to rackham.policies@umich.edu.

Fundamental Tenets of Membership in the University Community

The University of Michigan is a community devoted to learning. Members of our community advance, preserve, and transmit knowledge through study, teaching, artistic expression, research, and scholarship. As a public university, we have a special obligation to serve the public interest.

All who join the university community gain important rights and privileges and accept equally important responsibilities. We believe in free expression, free inquiry, intellectual honesty, and respect for the rights and dignity of others. We respect the autonomy of each person's conscience in matters of conviction, religious faith, and political belief. We affirm the importance of maintaining high standards of academic and professional integrity. In defining the rights we enjoy and the responsibilities we bear, we must keep those basic principles in mind.

All members of the university have civil rights guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. Because the search for knowledge is our most fundamental purpose, the university has an especially strong commitment to preserve and protect freedom of thought and expression. Reasoned dissent plays a vital role in the search for truth; and academic freedom, including the right to express unpopular views, is a cherished tradition of universities everywhere.

All members of the university have the right to express their own views and hear the views of others expressed, but they must also take responsibility for according the same rights to others. We seek a university whose members may express themselves vigorously while protecting and respecting the rights of others to learn, to do research, and to carry out the essential functions of the university free from interference or obstruction.

Adopted by the Senate Assembly, June 18, 1990

1 Admission, Matriculation, and Tuition

The Rackham Graduate School administers applications for graduate and graduate/professional degrees in more than 200 master's and doctoral programs. [Applications and information about procedures, requirements, fees, deadlines, and links to descriptions and requirements of individual graduate programs, are available online.](#) The Rackham application fee is non-refundable and subject to change.

Persons with a master's or doctoral degree are not eligible to apply for admission for another degree at the same level and in the same field except for the following instances. Admission to a master's program in the same field may be allowed if the previous master's program was not accredited. A person who already holds a doctorate (i.e., Ph.D., D.Phil., D.M.A., etc.) may apply to a doctoral program, but only in a new field or for a different doctoral degree in the same field. Admission requires the approval of the chair and faculty in the second doctoral program. Students who wish to apply to a second graduate program in a new field must comply with regulations for dual degree programs ([section 6](#)).

Students may not, under normal circumstances, enroll in two doctoral programs simultaneously. Those seeking an exception must submit a Rackham OARD "Petition for Modification or Waiver of Regulation."

For the purposes of professional development, University of Michigan tenure track faculty, clinical instructional faculty, research faculty, and lecturers may apply to a graduate degree or certificate program. Faculty may not apply to degree programs offered by their own departments. In schools or colleges that do not have a departmental structure, faculty and lecturers may not enroll in degree programs offered by their school or college. In all cases, the chair and dean of the applicant's unit of appointment must approve the application.

A student who has been permanently dismissed from an academic program of the Rackham Graduate School because of academic or professional misconduct, or who has withdrawn voluntarily rather than participate in an investigation of allegations of academic or professional misconduct, may not apply to or enroll in any other Rackham program for five years from the date of dismissal or for the period specified in the letter of dismissal.

1.1 Admission to Graduate Programs

Upon the recommendation of the graduate programs, the graduate school grants admission to applicants who meet its requirements. Admitted students are required to provide the graduate school with an official transcript (i.e., one bearing the official seal of the school and the Registrar's signature) indicating satisfactory completion of all coursework, title of the bachelor's degree or equivalent, date of conferral, and any additional documents as required.

An applicant may be conditionally admitted before providing an official transcript. A graduate program also may conditionally admit a student under certain prescribed conditions, such as the maintenance of a minimum grade average in specified courses. Conditionally-admitted students must meet all requirements before any degree milestone (i.e., taking preliminary or qualifying exams, advancing to candidacy, or receiving the degree) will be recorded in the official academic record or any transfer credit will be accepted.

Students must register for the term to which they are admitted or request the program to defer their admission.

1.2 Admission as Non-Candidate for Degree

Qualified applicants may be admitted with Non-Candidate for Degree (NCFD) status. These students may take a limited number of courses for professional development or to test their capabilities in a graduate setting. Graduate students visiting from another institution may also be admitted as NCFD students.

Those seeking NCFD status may either apply for admission to a department or program, or for admission to the graduate school more generally (i.e., unclassified admission) ([section 2.11](#)).

NCFD students with departmental admission may enroll for no more than two terms. NCFD students with unclassified admission may enroll for one term and take no more than two courses in that term, with no more than one course in a single degree program. Upon successful completion of their courses and with permission from Rackham, students with unclassified admission may continue for no more than one additional term.

[Requirements and application forms are available online.](#)

An NCFD student cannot count credits earned under this status toward a Rackham degree unless admitted to a program as a regular degree-seeking student and with approval by the program's graduate chair.

Rackham students who are dismissed for violations of academic or professional integrity are ineligible for admission to NCFD status for five years from the date of dismissal or for the period specified in the letter of dismissal.

1.3 Tuition and Fees

The Regents of the university determine tuition and fees, which are subject to change without notice. Programs that require an enrollment deposit apply this to tuition for the term in which the student is admitted. It is not refundable. Mandatory fees are charged for Registration, Michigan Student Assembly (MSA), Student Legal Services, and Rackham Student Government, and students are responsible for paying these unless they receive a financial aid award that covers them.

The [Registrar provides an annual schedule of tuition and fees](#) for each school and college with Rackham degree programs.

1.3.1 Residency Regulations and Tuition

The university sets tuition at different rates for Michigan residents and those from out-of-state. To be eligible for resident classification a student must [demonstrate compliance with the university's Residency Classification Guidelines](#). Students are responsible for using the correct university residency classification when applying for admission and registering.

1.3.2 University Assistantships

Depending on the appointment fraction, Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs) and Graduate Student Staff Assistants (GSSAs) receive tuition grants under the terms of the university's collective bargaining agreement with the Graduate Employees Organization (GEO). Graduate Student Research Assistants (GSRAs) receive tuition grants according to university policy. [For information, contact the Office of Academic Human Resources.](#)

1.3.3 Indebtedness to the University

Students must pay all accounts due the university in accordance with regulations established by the university's Executive Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer. A hold credit will be placed on the account of a student who does not meet financial obligations to the university which may prevent the student from registering or receiving transcripts or diplomas.

1.4 Required Fee Totals for the Doctor of Musical Arts (D.M.A.) Degree

For students in Doctor of Musical Arts programs, the Required Fee Total (RFT) designates the number of fee hours for which payment of tuition is required. D.M.A. students must accumulate at least 36 fee hours to be recommended for candidacy and a total of 68 fee hours to receive the doctorate. If a student has earned a master's degree from an accredited institution that the admitting department deems relevant to the D.M.A., the RFT required for candidacy may be reduced to 18 fee hours, and 50 fee hours for the doctorate.

Precandidate tuition is not charged for more than 9 credit hours per full term (5 for a half term or up to 9 for a combined spring/summer term), and a precandidate who enrolls for more than 9 credit hours in a full term earns no more than 9 fee hours. A candidate normally earns a maximum of 8 fee hours, but a candidate who pays for an additional course earns a corresponding number of fee hours. Courses that are taken outside the university that are used to satisfy the cognate requirement ([section 4.1](#)) and courses elected during candidacy that are taken without tuition charges ([section 4.4.2.1](#)) do not count toward the RFT.

A deficiency at the time of admission to candidacy or at the time of completion of the degree may be made up by payment at the current rate per credit hour without actual enrollment.

2 Registration

A student's registration status may change during the course of graduate study and include full-time, part-time, and approved periods of non-enrollment. Eligibility for certain registration statuses depends on the student's degree level (i.e., Ph.D., D.M.A., master's, certificate) and program, and each status has different requirements. During approved periods of non-enrollment, students will not have the same access to university services as those available to registered students, such as courses, consultation with faculty, access to laboratories and other campus research facilities, computing services, University Library privileges, financial aid, University Health Services, and recreational sports memberships (sections [2.2.2](#), [2.3.1](#)).

A student who registers on or after the first day of classes (not including course adds, drops, or changes to an initial registration) will be charged a late registration fee. [For information on the registration process, consult the Registrar's Office website.](#)

2.1 Full-Time Study and Enrollment Eligibility

Some graduate programs, other university policies, or U.S. government agencies, such as the Veterans Administration and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, may require a student to be enrolled for a minimum number of credit hours to be considered a full-time student. International students must be enrolled full-time under requirements set by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and on F-1 or J-1 visas should [consult the International Center with any questions concerning enrollment, course registration, and visa status.](#) International students who wish to be registered less than full-time must obtain permission in advance from the International Center or risk compromising their visa status.

Enrollment eligibility is jointly determined by the graduate programs and the graduate school. A student who has fulfilled all degree requirements must apply for graduation in the term in which completion is expected and may be prohibited from further enrollment.

2.2 Registration and Enrollment for Ph.D. Programs

Students in Ph.D. programs must register for each fall and winter term until final completion of degree requirements unless they have received an authorized leave of absence ([section 2.2.2](#)) or have been approved for extramural study ([section 2.2.1](#)). Students enrolled in the fall and winter terms are entitled to services during the spring and summer half terms whether or not they are registered. A student who takes candidacy or preliminary exams in a spring or summer half term must register in that half term. A student who defends the dissertation and/or finalizes degree requirements in a spring or summer half term must register for the full spring/summer term and submit the final dissertation and all materials by the published deadline to avoid registering for another term ([section 4.4.10](#)).

Pre-candidates preparing for qualifying exams may be enrolled in 990, "Dissertation/precandidate," for the number of credit hours that reflect their effort and as required by outside agencies such as the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Candidates will be registered for 995, "Dissertation/candidate," which consists of 8 credit hours for a full term.

Students in dual degree programs ([section 6](#)) fulfill registration requirements when they are registered in one of the programs on the Ann Arbor campus.

2.2.1 Extramural Study Status for Ph.D. Students

A student who enrolls at another institution to pursue study relevant to the Ph.D. for a period that overlaps substantially with a university fall or winter term, may apply for extramural study status. A student engaged in fieldwork or research, or who has an internship but is not enrolled in a formal course of study at another institution, is ineligible for extramural study and must maintain their registration.

A student must seek advance authorization for extramural study from Rackham OARD by providing documentation confirming acceptance to a course of study and assessment of tuition or fees. A student may request extramural study status if:

- the graduate chair has approved the course of study as directly relevant to the student's ability to complete the Ph.D.;
- tuition or fees are being paid to the other institution;
- the course of study is seven weeks or longer during a fall or winter term, but no more than six full terms; and
- is in good academic standing after having completed at least one fall or winter term of study.

A student may pursue extramural study more than once but for no more than six full terms over the graduate career. If a student intends to study at another institution for longer than six full terms, the student should withdraw and seek reinstatement when ready to return.

A student not authorized for extramural study and not registered for the term or on a leave of absence will be considered to have withdrawn and will be discontinued from the graduate program.

U.S. visa regulations may restrict extramural study options for international students, who must consult with the International Center.

A student who has unsatisfactory academic standing is not eligible for extramural study status.

2.2.2 Leaves of Absence for Ph.D. Students

A leave of absence enables a doctoral student to not register during a fall or winter term and remain in compliance with the continuous enrollment requirement. A leave will be granted to students recovering from illness or injury, who are providing care or assistance for family and dependents, who are meeting military service obligations, or for other personal reasons.

Alternatives to a leave that allow a student to remain eligible for student services should be considered. These options include providing an accommodation for a temporary reduction in coursework, research, teaching or other educational responsibilities that allows the student to remain enrolled, and extending time required for achieving candidacy and completing the degree (sections [2.4](#), [2.5](#), [2.6](#)).

Emergency situations may require a student to seek a leave of absence that begins after the third week of classes. When a student withdraws during a term to start a leave of absence, adjustments to tuition and fee charges are made according to the schedule set by the Registrar's Office. Emergency leaves do not reverse the charges set by this schedule.

A student on a leave of absence suspends progress toward the Ph.D. degree for a minimum of one fall or winter term. No tuition and fees are charged for the period during which a student is on a leave of absence, with the exception of charges for leaves that begin after the third week of classes, as noted above. A leave of absence may have implications for federal financial aid and loans. Students should consult the Office of Financial Aid to determine how a leave might affect their aid and eligibility to defer student loan repayment.

While students on leave do not have the full services available to registered students and may not use university facilities or services, including the use of laboratories, equipment, and other research facilities, or faculty research advising, they may have access to limited services, as described below, to help them remain current in their field of study. They also may have access to faculty and administrative staff for planning the transition back to registered status.

U.S. immigration regulations may restrict the eligibility of an international student for a leave of absence. International students must consult the International Center to learn if a proposed leave is permissible under visa regulations and, if it is not, to be advised on other possible courses of action.

The following general policies apply:

1. Directors of graduate study review requests for leaves and forward recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School or designee for review and approval.
2. A student must complete one term of study in the Ph.D. program before requesting a leave. A newly admitted student who has registered may seek an admissions deferral if the request and approval of the deferral occur before the end of the third week of classes in the initial term of registration. After the third week of the term, the student may withdraw and apply for reinstatement at a later term (sections [2.2.3](#), [2.2.4](#)).
3. With the exception of a leave for military service or for personal reasons, a student may request a leave for up to two consecutive fall or winter terms, or 12 consecutive months, and may request an extension for up to an additional 12 months, or a maximum leave of 24 months.
4. Leaves of absence will not be approved for prior terms.
5. A leave of absence is not required for the spring/summer since students are in active status during these terms whether or not they enroll for courses.
6. Students on leave may finish work from previous terms, such as completing work for courses in which grades of incomplete have been assigned, but may not complete other academic requirements such as taking exams for achieving candidacy.
7. A student returning from a leave must enroll for the next fall or winter term that follows the leave. A student at the end of a term of an approved leave who does not request a new leave or register for the next fall or winter term will be considered to have withdrawn and will be discontinued from the program at the end of the term that follows the leave.
8. A student on leave may ask to return early. Approval is subject to the recommendation of the graduate program and approval by the Dean of the Graduate School or designee.
9. The time limit for reaching candidacy or for completing the Ph.D. degree will be extended by the number of terms the student is on leave (sections [4.3](#), [4.4.1](#)).
10. A student who has been suspended for academic or non-academic reasons is not eligible to apply for a leave of absence. A student on an approved leave of absence who subsequently is suspended will have the leave rescinded.

2.2.2.1 Leave of Absence for Medical Reasons

A student who has a serious physical or mental health condition that prevents continued participation in the program will be granted a leave of absence for medical reasons. A request for a leave for medical reasons requires a written recommendation from a health care provider.

A student's graduate program may initiate a request for a leave for medical reasons in the event that the student is incapacitated. Students who are withdrawn under the provisions of the university's Policy on Emergency Mental Health and Readmission will be granted a leave of absence for medical reasons for the duration of the withdrawal. [The checklist and link to request a leave of absence for medical reasons is available online.](#)

For some medical circumstances, students should consider whether a within-semester medical accommodation is more appropriate ([section 2.4](#)).

2.2.2.2 Leave of Absence for Family Necessity or Dependent Care

A student may be required to step away from study for a term or more to take care of an urgent family necessity or to provide dependent care. A student will be granted a leave of absence in the following situations:

- to take care of a serious circumstance that directly affects a family member, such as a death, serious health condition, financial difficulty, or other critical life situation; or
- to provide care for a dependent incapable of self-care because of age or disability.

The student must explain why a leave is needed. For leaves for family necessity, "family" is defined according to the University's Standard Practice Guide ([SPG 201.11](#)) to include the student's spouse or domestic partner with whom the student shares living accommodations and expenses, and, without regard to their place of residence, the child, sibling, parent, grandparent or other related individual whose primary care is the responsibility of the student. A "dependent" is defined as: a biological, adopted or foster child, stepchild, or legal ward who is either under 18 years old; a family member (as defined above) older than 18 years and unable to provide self-care; or a spouse or domestic partner.

Students who have become parents through birth or adoption may remain enrolled, with the benefits of this status, but seek a Graduate Student Parental Accommodation within the term ([section 2.5](#)).

[The checklist and link to request a leave for family necessity or dependent care are available online.](#)

2.2.2.3 Leave of Absence for Military Service

A student will be granted a leave of absence for the duration of a military service obligation to their country of citizenship. The student must provide documentation confirming induction or authorization for active duty. [The checklist and link to request a leave for military service are available online.](#)

2.2.2.4 Leave of Absence for Personal Reasons

A student may request a one-term non-renewable leave of absence for personal reasons before the beginning of the term for which the leave is to take effect. A leave for personal reasons may be taken only once during the graduate career, even if the leave is granted after the third week of classes. A student considering a personal leave is encouraged to discuss other possible arrangements with the advisor and chair of graduate studies that may allow the student to continue in the program and maintain the benefits of enrolled status. [The checklist and link to request a leave of absence for personal reasons are available online.](#)

2.2.2.5 Services Available to Students on Leave

While on a leave of absence, a student

2.2.2.5.1 Insurance and Health Care

- may be eligible to purchase an extension of existing health insurance coverage at personal expense;
- is not eligible to begin enrollment in either GradCare or the Domestic Student Health Insurance Plan;
- can have access to the services of the University Health Service (UHS) at personal expense on a fee-for-service basis by purchasing the UHS Prepaid Plan, or through the provisions of any health insurance coverage the student may have;

2.2.2.5.2 Academic services

- retains access to the university's libraries, including borrowing privileges and remote access;
- is not eligible for university-administered fellowships, grants, temporary student employment, or any of the following appointments: Graduate Student Instructor, Graduate Student Research Assistant, or Graduate Student Staff Assistant;
- is not eligible for university grants or reimbursements for supplies, materials, travel, or other expenses;

2.2.2.5.3 Student Loans

- is not eligible to apply for new student loans intended to span the period of non-enrollment;
- should consult with the Office of Financial Aid for deferral and forbearance options of
- outstanding student loans;

2.2.2.5.4 Email and Computing

- retains access to their university email account, storage space in the IFS home directory, and to university websites that require authentication with a login ID;
- does not have access to certain elements of the basic computing package including statistics and computation services on university UNIX systems, or printing in Campus Computing Sites or University Libraries;

2.2.2.5.5 Other

- may be able to retain their University Housing contract, depending on the duration of the leave and its intersection with the contract (students who live in University Housing should consult with the Housing Office to understand their options to continue or cancel their contracts);
- retains access to the International Center; and
- can have access to Recreational Sports with a continuing student pass at personal expense.

2.2.3 Withdrawal and Discontinuation from a Ph.D. Program

A student should consult with the faculty advisor and the director of graduate studies before deciding to withdraw from a Ph.D. program. A student who withdraws or who is dismissed for academic reasons is officially discontinued by the graduate school and the Registrar's Office. Similarly, a student who is not on an approved leave of absence and does not maintain registration through a fall or a winter term will be considered to have withdrawn and will be discontinued from the program. Funding commitments made at the time of admission expire when a student is discontinued.

A student who withdraws from a non-Rackham portion of a dual degree graduate program during a fall or winter term must be registered in the Ph.D. program by the last day of classes for the term or will be considered to have withdrawn and will be discontinued.

2.2.3.1 Disenrolling from a Term Policy Adjustment for the 2020-21 Academic Year

A student may disenroll from a term before the first day of classes but no later than the end of the third week of classes, by notifying the Registrar's Office, providing the university identification number, the name of the student's graduate program, and the term when disenrollment should take effect. A disenrollment fee is assessed if a student disenrolls after the first day of classes. To maintain standing in the Ph.D. program, a student who disenrolls from a fall or winter term must obtain a leave of absence ([section 2.2.2](#)), seek extramural status ([section 2.2.1](#)), or subsequently re-register during that term. Otherwise, the student is presumed to have withdrawn and will be discontinued from the program. International students must consult with the International Center before disenrolling, as this will affect their visa status.

2.2.4 Reinstatement to a Ph.D. Program

A student who has withdrawn or been discontinued from a Ph.D. program while in good academic standing ([section 2.2.3](#)), or has been discontinued for failing to show sufficient progress ([section 3.5](#)), may seek reinstatement to the same program or apply to a different program. A student who has withdrawn or been discontinued from a Ph.D. program may apply for reinstatement only once per academic term.

The former student must complete an application for reinstatement and provide supporting materials. No fee is charged for this application. A former student on probation when last enrolled in the graduate school ([section 3.5](#)) must provide reasons for the lack of academic progress, explain how conditions that produced poor performance have changed, and present specific plans for improvement. If a former student seeking reinstatement was on probationary admission, or had unsatisfactory academic standing, that standing remains in effect if reinstatement is granted unless the issue is remedied and the program and the graduate school remove or modify the status.

Reinstatement is at the discretion of the faculty admissions committee or the standing faculty committee of the graduate program. More than one faculty member must be involved in a reinstatement decision; in no case shall a reinstatement decision be made by a single faculty member. Decisions to approve or deny the reinstatement request are based on factors such as the former student's academic progress at the time of withdrawal as well as readiness to return, the availability of faculty to advise the student, and considerations such as the availability of funding, space, and research facilities. If a student has been dismissed or required to withdraw, reinstatement may be granted only if the application has been approved by both the graduate program and the graduate school.

In the case of a candidate who was discontinued, the graduate program may, at its discretion, ask the graduate school to reinstate the former student as a candidate or to return him or her to precandidacy status if, for instance, the state-of-the-art knowledge in the field has changed substantially since the student was last active in the program. A reinstated student who is returned to precandidacy status must meet candidacy requirements again. Terms completed before a reinstated student was discontinued are counted toward the time limits for achieving candidacy ([section 4.3](#)) and for completing the doctoral degree ([section 4.4.1](#)).

If approved for reinstatement, students who were discontinued during or after the spring 2012 term will be assessed a reinstatement fee upon their first registration. The fee will be equal to a quarter of the prevailing Rackham candidacy tuition at the term of reinstatement for each fall and winter term that he or she was discontinued. The maximum fee will be equivalent to two full terms of the prevailing Rackham candidacy tuition at the term of reinstatement regardless of the length of absence. The program is responsible for paying at least half of the assessed reinstatement fee. A student who faces a severe financial hardship may apply for a grant from the graduate school to cover his or her portion of the fee.

A discontinued student may apply for admission to another Ph.D. program by completing the regular admissions application. A student returning from a leave of absence does not apply for reinstatement, but registers for the next fall or winter term that follows the leave ([section 2.2.2](#)).

2.2.5 Candidacy Course Registration

Ph.D. candidates are registered in the fall and winter terms for 995, "Dissertation/candidate," which consists of 8 credit hours for a full term. No part-time enrollment is possible. A student who defends in the spring and/or summer half-term must register for 8 credit hours of 995 for the spring/summer full term.

A candidate who registers for a course should seek prior approval from the faculty advisor. A candidate may elect either one course per term, or more than one course for a total of no more than four credits, without paying additional tuition. Courses may be taken for credit or as a visit (audit). A candidate who does not elect a course during a term of 995 enrollment may, in the next term, either register for courses for no more than 8 credits or register for no more than two courses that total more than 8 credits. An additional course may not be taken in anticipation of taking none in a future term. A candidate who takes courses beyond this limit will be assessed additional tuition per credit hour.

2.3 Registration and Enrollment for Master's and Doctorate of Musical Arts Programs

Registration for the fall or winter terms gives a student access to student services for the term of enrollment. Students who are enrolled full-time during the fall and winter terms and during either the spring or summer half terms have access to these services during the half term they are not enrolled; some services may be at personal expense.

A master's student or D.M.A. precandidate who is not on Detached Study must enroll in the graduate school at least once within a calendar year (12 months) or must apply for readmission.

2.3.1 Detached Study for D.M.A. and Master's Students

D.M.A. and master's students may, with approval and under certain conditions, not enroll for fall or winter term but remain active in the program. Detached study is a registration status available to students who are not enrolled for courses or directed research but are working toward completion of the degree as a primary activity. Ph.D. students are not eligible. Detached study assures the student of return at the end of the period of detached study without the need for readmission and may be used for certification to the student's employer or to an external agency granting support. Students on detached study may continue to defer or apply for student loans.

Students working as a GSI, GSRA, or in any other capacity at the university, including hourly employment, or who are using laboratory facilities or taking examinations (including preliminary examinations and the oral defense), may not have detached study status.

[International students who elect detached study](#) must work full-time on their studies to maintain their visa status.

A student's primary activity while on detached study should be work toward the degree that does not require access to university services apart from library privileges, a computing account, and certain forms of financial aid. Detached study may not be used for medical reasons or job search purposes.

To be eligible for detached study, a student must:

- be an active student in a Rackham master's or D.M.A. program who has completed at least one term;
- have been registered at least one full or half term in the previous twelve months or be a D.M.A. candidate;
- not be registered for the requested period of detached study;
- be in good academic standing with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher;
- be within the time limit for the degree (i.e., five years for a master's degree or seven for a D.M.A.; a student who exceeds the limit must petition for an extension of time to degree) (sections [5](#), [4.4.1](#));
- have submitted to Rackham Admissions a final official transcript of the undergraduate degree (or equivalent) and the date it was awarded; and
- state when any uncompleted course will be completed.

Only one period of detached study of no more than twelve months can be approved at a time, for a combined total of no more than three years (nine full terms, including spring/summer) during the course of study for the degree. The Detached Study online form must be submitted by the program's graduate coordinator to Rackham OARD no sooner than five months prior to the beginning of the requested detached study period and no later than the last day of classes for the first term of the requested detached study period. Detached study will not be granted retroactively for any reason.

Students returning from detached study to full-time registration status do not need to seek readmission. Students who enroll for courses while on detached study automatically lose their detached study status.

2.3.2 Disenrollment and Withdrawal from a Master's or D.M.A. Program

2.3.2.1 Withdrawing/Disenrolling from a Term - Policy Adjustment for the 2020-21 Academic Year

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 emergency, the graduate school is adjusting policy for students disenrolling from Rackham master's or D.M.A. programs on the Ann Arbor campus in the 2020-21 academic year.

A student in a master's or D.M.A. program may disenroll from a term up until the last day of classes of the term by notifying the Registrar's Office, providing their university identification number, the name of their graduate program, and the term when disenrollment should take effect. A fee is assessed if a student disenrolls after the first day of classes. Tuition will not be charged if the student disenrolls before the end of the third week of classes of a full term or before the end of the second week of the spring or summer half terms, but [after these dates prorated tuition will be charged according to dates and amounts set by the Registrar](#). For complete information, [see the Registrar's website](#).

Withdrawing may affect eligibility for federal financial assistance and repayment obligations, and the Office of Financial Aid should be consulted.

International students in master's or D.M.A. programs must consult with the International Center before disenrolling or withdrawing, as this will affect their visa status.

2.3.3 Readmission to a Master's, D.M.A., or Certificate Program

A master's student or D.M.A. precandidate who has not been enrolled in the graduate school for more than one year (12 months) and is not enrolled by the end of a period of Detached Study must apply to the graduate school for readmission. A student who has been placed on probation after exceeding the time limit for reaching candidacy or completing the degree, and who is subsequently dismissed for failing to demonstrate sufficient progress, may be allowed to seek readmission ([section 3.5](#)). Readmission is dependent upon approval by the graduate program and availability of space and facilities for the term in which readmission is requested. International students seeking readmission must certify proof of adequate funding so Rackham Admissions can issue the appropriate visa documents.

The graduate program may ask a student who seeks readmission after withdrawing for health reasons to provide a physician's certification of readiness to return to active status ([section 2.7](#)). If a student seeking readmission was on probationary admission, academic probation, or extended probation, that standing will continue in effect if readmission is granted, unless the graduate program and the graduate school remove or modify the status. If a student is dismissed or required to withdraw, readmission may be granted only by obtaining approval of the graduate program and the graduate school.

2.4 Within-Semester Medical Accommodation

Faculty and graduate programs should make reasonable accommodations for course-related work and other academic deadlines when students have a brief illness or other health-related difficulty during the term. Consultations about health-related services are available at [University Health Services](#), [Counseling and Psychological Services](#), the [Psychological Clinic](#), and [Services for Students with Disabilities](#).

2.5 Graduate Student Parental Accommodation

Graduate student parental accommodation allows a student to maintain registered full-time student status immediately following the birth or adoption of a young child, along with all the benefits of such status, while facilitating the return to full academic participation. Eligible students may be granted a parental accommodation of up to eight weeks while continuing to be enrolled full-time, and extension of certain time limits. Rules of research funding or external fellowships may require suspension of payments during the parental accommodation period. In this instance, the Rackham Childbirth Accommodation Fund may provide salary or stipend, and benefits.

A student must submit a Request for Graduate Student Parental Accommodation after consultation with her or his advisor, principal investigator, and graduate chair. The form must be submitted to the student's graduate program office for approval and forwarded to Rackham for authorization. The student provides Rackham with appropriate documentation of the anticipated birth or adoption (a letter from the student's medical provider with an estimate of delivery date or from the adoption agency with an estimate of placement date). Further information is found on the [Graduate Student Parental Accommodation Policy section of Rackham's website](#).

For other family care issues affecting time to degree, see [section 2.6](#).

2.6 Time Limit Extensions for Family Care

Demands of caring for immediate family (such as children, ill or injured partners, or aging parents) may seriously affect the time that graduate students can devote to educational responsibilities. When combining educational pursuits with dependent care becomes difficult, a graduate student may request a one year extension to the time limits for achieving degree, candidacy, and fellowship eligibility ([section 4.5](#), [4.4.1](#), [5](#)). "Family" is defined according to the University's Standard Practice Guide ([SPG 201.11](#)) to include the student's spouse or domestic partner with whom the student shares living accommodations and expenses, and, without regard to their place of residence, the child, sibling, parent, grandparent, or other related individual whose primary care is the responsibility of the student. A student should use the Rackham ["Petition for Modification or Waiver of Regulation" form](#), explaining the reasons for the request. The graduate chair reviews and approves petitions with input, as needed, from the graduate school.

2.7 Emergency Mental and Physical Health Withdrawal and Reinstatement

The university reserves the right to request or require students to withdraw from the university when mental or physical health-related behavior significantly disrupts the ability of the student or other students, faculty, or staff to participate in the educational and research programs or employment opportunities of the university. A student who withdraws at the request or requirement of the university has the opportunity to engage in a structured and supportive process of withdrawal and subsequent re-entry that is designed to facilitate the student's likelihood of success. Students who withdraw or are withdrawn under this policy may be considered for reinstatement following a determination by the Vice President for Student Affairs or designee that the behaviors that led to withdrawal have, for the most part, been eliminated. [Full details of this policy are available online.](#)

Ph.D. students have the option of seeking a Leave of Absence for medical reasons ([section 2.2.2](#)).

Adjustments to tuition and fee charges for an emergency leave that begins after the start of a term are made according to the schedule set by the Registrar's Office. Emergency leaves do not reverse the charges set by this schedule.

2.8 Retroactive Term Withdrawal

Any request to retroactively withdraw from the term after the last day of classes must meet the following conditions and be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School:

1. A retroactive withdrawal will be considered only within twelve months from the end of the term.
2. There must be a compelling case with documentation to support the exception, including a sufficient explanation of why the student did not seek an incomplete or withdrawal during the term.
3. The retroactive withdrawal will apply to all classes in the term unless a physical or mental health problem prevented the student from finishing a particular class.

2.9 Change of Graduate Program

An application to change from one graduate program to another within the graduate school requires full consideration by the new program's admissions committee. [The student must submit a full application and contact the new program about required supporting materials.](#) An international student seeking to change a program must document availability of sufficient funding if the change will extend the expected study period.

Doctoral students in some programs may receive a master's in their field on the way to the doctorate. A student who wishes to change from one degree program to another within the same department or field of specialization, however, such as from the master's program in Economics to the doctoral program in Economics, must follow the procedures described above. A candidate who applies to change to another doctoral program will revert to precandidacy status. For adding a second degree program, see [section 6](#).

2.10 Special Arrangements for On-Campus and Off-Campus Course Enrollment

The Rackham Graduate School has degree programs at the Dearborn and Flint campuses. Students generally enroll in courses on their home campus—Ann Arbor, Dearborn, or Flint—and must fulfill the minimum credit hour requirement for the degree at their home campus.

Depending on the availability of space, a student at one of the three U-M campuses may take courses for credit offered at another U-M campus. Subject to approval by their home program, master's students may take

courses offered by a Rackham program at another U-M campus and earn up to half the credits required for the degree. Programs on the Flint and Dearborn campuses list graduate courses, but students should confirm in advance that a course is available for graduate credit. Grades earned for these courses will be calculated as part of the GPA. Credits earned at the Dearborn or Flint campuses in a non-Rackham program may be eligible for transfer to a Rackham master's degree, for up to a limit of six credits ([section 5.1](#)). Students must check with the host program about tuition charges.

Ann Arbor students electing a course at Dearborn or Flint must complete a guest application.

- [Dearborn Guest Application](#)
- [Flint Guest Application](#)

Dearborn and Flint students electing a course at Ann Arbor must complete a guest application.

- [Ann Arbor Guest Application](#).

Students are responsible for arranging to have a transcript sent to their home campus along with a "Request for Transfer Credit Form." For more information, contact: Dearborn Graduate Studies Office, 1055 Administration Building, (313) 583-6321; or Flint Office of Graduate Programs, 251 Frances Willson Thompson Library, (810) 762-3171.

2.10.1 Consortial agreements for courses outside the University of Michigan

The University of Michigan participates in reciprocal agreements with the Michigan Intercollegiate Graduate Study Program (MIGS) and the Big Ten Academic Alliance that allow students to take courses or use facilities uniquely available at an institution other than their own.

The Big Ten Academic Alliance, a consortium that includes the University of Chicago, sponsors the Traveling Scholar Program which enables doctoral students to spend up to a full academic year taking courses or working in library and other collections, laboratories and research facilities at other member institutions. Traveling Scholars pay regular fees to their home institution, where they remain registered, and pay no additional tuition. Visits are limited to two semesters, or three quarters, and graduate credits earned at the host university are automatically accepted by the home university. [The application is available online](#).

The Michigan Intercollegiate Graduate Study Program (MIGS) allows graduate students to take advantage of an academic opportunity at another Michigan university that is not available on the student's home campus. A master's student may enroll at a host institution for up to six credit hours while doctoral students may enroll for up to nine credit hours. Credit hours earned elsewhere do not count towards the Required Fee Totals for D.M.A. students ([section 1.4](#)). [The application is available online](#).

2.11 Non-Candidate for Degree Status

A student admitted to a graduate program with NCFD status ([section 1.2](#)) who wishes to be admitted to the program for a degree must submit a new full application. Courses elected by a student with NCFD status cannot be counted toward a degree unless the student is admitted to the degree program and the graduate chair and the graduate school determine that the courses are acceptable. An international student with NCFD status must submit to Rackham Admissions documentation of sufficient funding for the additional study period.

3 Coursework, Grading and Academic Standing

Courses taken in fulfillment of Rackham degree requirements must be approved for Rackham graduate credit. Courses at the 300 level or below may not be used for graduate credit. Courses at the 400 level must be approved by the Registrar to carry graduate credit, and usually require additional work for graduate students. Graduate programs maintain lists of approved graduate courses, which are [listed by graduate program in Rackham's Programs of Study website](#).

Students may request Rackham OARD to receive graduate credit for a 400-level course not normally approved for such credit, but should do so before taking the course since approval is not guaranteed. Both the instructor and the graduate chair of the student's program must endorse the request, which must be accompanied by a memo explaining how graduate-level work will be accomplished in the course. The Registration Adjustment Request forms are available online.

Courses not approved for Rackham graduate credit appear on the transcript with the notation NFC or NDC ([section 3.3](#)). The course grade will appear but will not be averaged into the cumulative grade point average or the total credits required for the program total.

3.1 Adding, Dropping, Modifying, and Repeating a Course

Students should change course selections only after consultation with their advisors. No change to a course is allowed after a grade has been assigned. The Registrar's Office evaluates revised course elections to determine if an adjustment in fees is necessary.

Through the third week of classes in a full term (or the second week of classes in a half term), a student may add or drop a course without a "W" appearing on the transcript. Until the last day of classes in a term, a student may change status from credit to visit (audit), or increase or decrease the credit hours for a course within the range listed in the Time Schedule. [The Registrar's Office publishes each year's Drop/Add deadline on its website](#).

Certain graduate programs may have additional deadlines or procedures. Approval by the graduate program is required to change course elections.

After the third week in a full term (or the second week in a half term) and until the last day of classes, students must request a late course drop or add via Wolverine Access.

A student who seeks to drop the only course for which he or she is registered must follow procedures for a term withdrawal (sections [2.3.2](#), [2.2.3](#)) as outlined on the Registrar's website. A student in a Ph.D. program who drops the only course for which he or she is registered will be considered to have withdrawn and be discontinued from the program unless on an approved Leave of Absence or Extramural Study (sections [2.2.1](#), [2.2.2](#)).

A course withdrawal remains on the transcript with a notation of "W" and is not calculated as part of the GPA. A student who registers for a course and either never attends or stops attending—but does not officially drop the course—receives a notation of "ED" (Unofficial Drop). A notation of "ED" is equivalent to a grade of "E" (failure) ([section 3.3](#)).

Requests for a retroactive withdrawal from a course after the last day of the term will be considered only in exceptional circumstances and will not be approved after a grade has been submitted. A request for retroactive withdrawal must be made within 12 months from the end of the term and usually applies to all classes in the term. Applications for retroactive withdrawal require documentation of compelling circumstances why the student was unable to complete the course and unable to request a withdrawal during the term. A student must submit a "Registration Adjustment Request" to Rackham OARD that includes documentation confirming extenuating circumstances ([section 2.8](#)). At no point after the term has ended will a course be removed from a student's record; it will remain on the transcript and noted as "W" ([section 3.3](#)). International students should consult with the International Center before dropping courses as this may affect their visa status.

For any other change of status to a course during the term (e.g., credit to visit, etc.), a student must obtain signed approval from the course instructor and the chair of the graduate program, and submit the request to the Registrar's Office before the last day of classes. Students should contact their graduate program administrator or the Registrar's Office.

A student may repeat a course with permission of the advisor and course instructor. Credits for the course may not be earned beyond the limit set by guidelines of the graduate program. Each election and grade for a course that is repeated will remain on the transcript and will be counted into the grade point average as separate elections.

3.2 Visiting (Auditing) a Course

With permission of the graduate chair and the course instructor, a student may enroll in a graduate course as a visitor (auditor) rather than for credit. The student should confer with the instructor to reach an agreement on what will constitute satisfactory completion of the course. The student is expected to attend class regularly and may be asked to submit assignments and take examinations. Full fees will be assessed at the current rate of tuition. After registering for the course online, the student must register for this status in person at the Registrar's Office and present a Drop/Add form with the signatures of both the instructor and the student's department graduate chair. Students should check their class schedule for accuracy and completeness.

A notation of "VI" appears on the transcript when the course is completed successfully ([section 3.3](#)). A visit (audit) is not counted toward degree credit requirements and is not calculated as part of the GPA if completed successfully. A student who fails to complete the course successfully, however, will receive a grade of "E" (failure) which is calculated as part of the GPA. After a grade has been issued, a course will not be changed from letter grade to visit (audit) status, or vice versa.

3.3 Grades and Transcripts

As the university has a fiduciary responsibility to maintain and report an accounting of class and student enrollment totals to state, federal, and other agencies, the academic transcript is maintained as a complete record of the student's enrollment activity. The transcript is part of a student's academic record. Other university offices collect and maintain necessary information about students. The transcript and these other records constitute the student's permanent academic record. [For more information about the permanent academic record, see "Student Rights and Records"](#). The permanent academic record is the history of a student's academic progress and cannot be altered except in conformance with policies governing dropping, adding, and modifying courses, and the achievement of degree milestones (e.g., advancement to candidacy, receipt of a degree, etc.). This record may not be altered because of dissatisfaction with a particular instance of academic performance.

Instructor grades are entered on the student's permanent academic record. Students may elect courses without letter grades, either as a visit (audit) or for Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) grading.

Students must make satisfactory progress toward their degrees and have a minimum Rackham cumulative grade point average (GPA) of B (3.0 on a 4.0 point scale) to maintain satisfactory academic standing. The maximum term and cumulative GPA is 4.0. Some programs have requirements above the Rackham minimum for maintaining satisfactory academic standing. Students who fall below the GPA requirement of their program or Rackham are placed on academic probation. Courses in which grades of D or E are earned cannot be used to fulfill degree requirements.

Coursework is graded with a letter system (A, B, C, D, or E) except for special courses noted below. An instructor may add "+" or "-" to grades. Letter grades for programs on the Ann Arbor campus are converted into numbers, or points, as follows:

| Letter Grade | Number |
|---------------------|---------------|
| A+ | 4.3 |
| A | 4.0 |
| A- | 3.7 |
| B+ | 3.3 |
| B | 3.0 |
| B- | 2.7 |
| C+ | 2.3 |
| C | 2.0 |
| C- | 1.7 |
| D+ | 1.3 |
| D | 1.0 |
| D- | 0.7 |
| E | < 0.7 |

Michigan Honor Points (MHP) and the Grade Point Average (GPA) are calculated with these numbers. MHP are determined by multiplying the number of credit hours for which the course was elected by the number of points earned on the grading scale.

For example, a grade of B for a 3 credit hour course produces 3 (credit hours) x 3.0 (points for a grade of B+), or 9 honor points. The GPA is calculated by dividing the MHP earned for a term or more by the number of semester hours (or credit hours) for the courses. A total of 45 MHP for 12 course credit hours produces a GPA of 3.75. For students enrolled in Rackham programs on the Flint and Dearborn campuses, a grade of A+ is converted to 4.0.

Other transcript notations include:

3.3.1 Visit (VI)

“VI” indicates successful completion of a course elected as a visit (audit). A student who does not complete a course and who has not dropped it may receive a grade of “F” on the transcript. These courses do not count for credit or degree credit requirements.

3.3.2 Satisfactory (S) and Unsatisfactory (U)

Programs designate courses for which S/U grading may be elected. With permission from the advisor and the instructor, and up until the final day of classes in the term, a student may elect S/U grading in a course that would otherwise be letter graded. Instructors cannot assign letter grades to students electing courses designated as S/U. A grade of “S” indicates satisfactory performance and is counted toward the credit requirements of the graduate program. A grade of “S” is considered to be a grade of “B” or better. A grade of “U” is assigned when performance is not acceptable and is not counted toward a student’s required credit hours. Grades of “S” and “U” are not factored into the GPA or Michigan Honors Points.

3.3.3 Incomplete (I)

A student may receive a grade of Incomplete (“I”) if the work remaining to be done by the end of the term is small and the instructor approves an extension and determines a deadline for final completion of the work. The notation of “I” remains a permanent part of the academic record. When coursework is completed to the satisfaction of the instructor, the grade will appear on the transcript as, for example, “I B+.”

3.3.4 Drop (W) and Unofficial Drop (ED) - Policy Adjustment for the 2020-21 Academic Year

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 emergency, the graduate school is adjusting policy for students withdrawing from a course in a Rackham graduate program on the Ann Arbor campus in the 2020-21 academic year.

A course may be dropped up until the last day of classes of the term and will be recorded on the unofficial transcript with the notation of “W.” This notation will not appear on the official transcript. A course that is dropped will not earn credit hours toward the degree program or Michigan Honor Points.

A student who registers for a course and either never attends or stops attending—but does not officially drop the course—receives a notation of “ED” (unofficial drop). A notation of “ED” is equivalent to a grade of “E” (failure) and is factored into the GPA.

3.3.5 Multi-Term Course (Y)

Programs may ask the Registrar to designate a graduate course as a multi-term sequence. For a course designated by the Registrar as multi-term, the instructor may report a “Y” grade at the end of the first term to indicate that the work is still in progress. A course must be approved as multi-term for a grade of “Y” to be given. When a final grade is reported, the grade will be posted for both terms and the “Y” notation will be removed.

3.3.6 Adjusted Rackham Grading Policy for the 2020-21 Academic Year (revised 11/12/20)

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 emergency, the graduate school is adjusting how grades will be recorded for students in Rackham programs on the Ann Arbor campus in the 2020-21 academic year. This change recognizes the benefit to students of graded assessments and the importance of providing flexibility appropriate for the present challenging circumstances.

The Rackham Executive Board has approved the following modification to grading for students enrolled in Rackham degree programs on the Ann Arbor campus during the fall, winter, and spring/summer terms of the 2020-21 academic year.

Instructors will submit letter grades for all graduate students enrolled in Rackham programs. A modified grading system will award letter grades of A+ to B-, and a notation of "NRC" (No Record COVID) for grades of C+ to E. Students will have the one-time option to change any or all of their letter grades of A+ through B- to S (Satisfactory).

Students will be able to view any letter grade recorded as NRC and decide whether to convert the notation. Students with grades of C-, C, or C+ may choose to earn course credit by converting the NRC to a letter grade. Letter grades of D or F do not receive Rackham credit.

Converted letter grades will appear on the transcript and will be used to recalculate the GPA. Deadlines for converting NRC notations to letter grades will be posted in the [Rackham Academic Policies](#) as soon as they are available.

Courses that are regularly graded S/U will not be converted to letter grades, but will continue to receive notations of S (Satisfactory) or U (Unsatisfactory).

Students may withdraw from a course by the last day of classes of the term or half-term without having a notation of "W" appear on the official transcript. It will appear on the unofficial transcript.

Instructors may choose to issue an Incomplete (I) and approve an extension with a deadline for completion of final work due in the course. An incomplete will not be permanently recorded on the transcript when the instructor submits the final grade.

Individual Rackham programs may have additional degree requirements for academic performance, such as in required or core classes. In these cases students should consult with their academic program for further information before making grade changes.

3.4 Good Academic Standing

A student in good academic standing:

- is making satisfactory progress toward the completion of degree requirements and is within the time limits of the degree program, including approved extensions (sections [4.3](#), [4.4.1](#), [5](#));
- is demonstrating an ability to succeed in the degree program; and
- has a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (B) or better.

3.5 Deficiencies in Academic Progress, Academic Probation, and Dismissal

Satisfactory academic standing, sometimes referred to as good academic standing, is defined by the graduate school and the academic program of the student. The graduate school considers students to be in satisfactory standing except as defined in section 3.5.1. Academic programs may, at their discretion, publish additional criteria for satisfactory academic standing.

Students should meet with their advisors regularly to discuss their academic performance and progress toward the degree. Graduate programs should immediately notify students in writing when performance falls below an acceptable level. The graduate school may take any of the following actions when a student's academic performance or progress toward the degree is deficient:

- enter a notation of unsatisfactory academic standing on the academic record;
- place a student on probation upon recommendation of the program;
- require a student to withdraw from the university; or
- not confer a degree or certificate.

3.5.1 Unsatisfactory Academic Standing

The graduate school will place a notation of "below minimum academic requirements" on the academic record at the end of the term in which a student's cumulative GPA falls below a B (3.0 on a 4.0 point scale). Graduate programs may have additional minimum academic requirements, such as requiring minimum grades in the overall program or in particular courses. The program will publish these additional minimum academic requirements and notify Rackham OARD when it determines that a student's performance is unsatisfactory. The program may decide whether unsatisfactory academic standing may be a basis for placing a student on academic probation.

A student with unsatisfactory academic standing will not be advanced to candidacy, will not be awarded a degree or graduate certificate, and may change programs and transfer credits only with permission of the admitting program. Upon the recommendation of the graduate chair, and with the consent of the graduate school, a student will be given an opportunity to correct the academic deficiency and return to satisfactory academic standing.

A master's student with unsatisfactory academic standing cannot be approved for detached study (section 2.3.1). A master's student with unsatisfactory academic standing when last enrolled in the graduate school who wishes to be reinstated or change fields or degree level must petition the program and the graduate school to modify the conditions of academic standing. The petition should: provide reasons for the poor academic record; explain how conditions that produced this performance have changed; and present specific plans for improvement. The graduate program must approve the petition before a student can be reinstated ([section 2.3.3](#)). A master's student whose cumulative GPA falls below a B (3.0 on a 4.0 point scale), is not making satisfactory progress toward the degree, and is failing to succeed in his or her plan of studies, may be denied permission to register, required to withdraw, or dismissed from the program. Time limits for a master's degree are discussed in [section 5](#).

Students may also be dismissed for failing to meet the standards of academic and professional integrity ([Appendix 1, Academic and Professional Integrity and Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Academic and Professional Misconduct](#)).

3.5.2 Academic Probation and Dismissal: Ph.D. and D.M.A. Programs

Ph.D. and D.M.A. programs have program-level policy for academic probation and dismissal that is consistent with the following Graduate School guidelines.

In accordance with its published policy, a program may place on academic probation a student who has academic or professional difficulties, as defined by the program, that prevent progress toward the degree. Academic probation is normally required before a program may recommend to the graduate school that a doctoral student be dismissed for academic reasons. As an exception, and only with advance notice to students, program policy may allow dismissal without probation for a student who fails to pass candidacy or preliminary exams. Academic probation will be noted on the student unofficial transcript.

3.5.2.1 Placing a Student On Academic Probation

The advisor or graduate chair or director may recommend that a student be placed on academic probation. The decision to place a student on probation must be made by a faculty group of at least three persons to include, for example, the department chair (or the chair's designee), the graduate chair, and the advisor; the graduate committee of the program; or another committee constituted of faculty. A D.M.A. student who has been placed on academic probation will not be eligible for detached study ([section 2.3.1](#)).

3.5.2.2 Length of the Probationary Period

The probationary period may be no shorter than two months of the fall or winter term and ordinarily conclude at the end of that term. For a student placed on academic probation within two months of the end of the fall term, the probationary period will extend into the winter term for a total of at least two months. For a student placed on academic probation within two months of the end of the winter term, the probationary period may include the spring or summer half-terms or the following fall term, for a total of at least two months. A student may be placed on academic probation starting in the spring or summer half term for a minimum of two months, and does not need to be enrolled during these half terms.

3.5.2.3 Notifications

The graduate chair must notify the student and Rackham OARD in writing before the probationary period begins, explaining the reasons and conditions of probation; the start and end dates of the probationary period; funding support (see below); conditions, if any, for removal from probation; and options for appeal (see below). A student who has been placed on probation may request a leave of absence from Rackham or withdraw (sections [2.2.2](#), [2.2.3](#)). The leave or withdrawal will stop the clock on the probationary period, which resumes when the student returns to active status or is reinstated. Probation will remain in effect until the conditions are remedied or the student is dismissed.

3.5.2.4 Funding a Student on Probation

The level of funding prior to academic probation should be continued through the probationary period.

3.5.2.5 End of the Probationary Period and Dismissal

At the end of academic probation, and upon the recommendation of the graduate chair and the consent of the graduate school, a student may either be removed from probation or dismissed from the program. The decision to dismiss a student must be made by a faculty group of at least three persons to include, for example, the department chair (or the chair's designee), the graduate chair, and the advisor; the graduate committee of the program; or another committee constituted of faculty. The graduate chair must notify Rackham OARD of a recommendation for dismissal.

3.5.2.6 Option to Appeal Academic Probation or Dismissal

Students must be notified of options to appeal academic probation or dismissal. The program should constitute a separate committee of review to consider appeals. Students may use the graduate school's Academic Dispute Resolution process only for procedural issues of fair and equal treatment under the policy of the program, and not to appeal the academic reasons for the decision.

Students who fail to meet standards of academic or professional integrity or who have been found responsible for violations of other university standards of conduct may be dismissed in accordance with separate procedures described in Rackham Academic and Professional Integrity Policy ([section 8](#)).

4 Doctoral Degrees

Doctoral degrees administered by the graduate school include:

- Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.). Conferred in recognition of exceptional demonstrated ability and scholarship in a relatively broad field of knowledge.
- Doctor of Musical Arts (D.M.A.). Offered in composition, conducting, and certain fields of performance for students demonstrating high competence in those areas. The degree program is intended to develop creative and performing artists with great breadth of knowledge and scholarship.

Doctoral education has two stages. During precandidacy students take preliminary coursework and prepare for advanced research by completing at least 18 hours of graded graduate coursework on the Ann Arbor campus. Precandidates who are successful in this coursework, who meet other program requirements including passing preliminary or qualifying exams, and who demonstrate readiness to do original and independent research, are admitted to candidacy by their program.

While credits earned at another institution cannot be transferred to a doctoral program, students may seek approval from their program to use credits earned elsewhere to satisfy certain degree requirements. These credits do not appear on the transcript.

4.1 Cognate Requirement

Rackham recognizes the value of intellectual breadth in graduate education and the importance of formal graduate study in areas beyond the student's field of specialization. Cognate courses are those in a discipline or area different from a student's field of study but that are related or connected with some aspect of this field. Students are encouraged to select courses that are relevant to their research and scholarship but that offer different disciplinary perspectives on their interests. Students may take cognate courses after candidacy but this requirement must be completed and graded before the final term in which the student defends the dissertation and fulfills requirements for the doctorate. Programs may have earlier deadlines for when this must be met and may have additional requirements. Students may satisfy the doctoral cognate requirement by:

Completing three credit hours of coursework in approved graduate-level cognate courses with a grade of B- or better before the final term of candidacy. Graduate programs may have additional requirements.

1. Taking courses within a subfield of their program that is sufficiently different from the student's own and which Rackham has approved as fulfilling the intent of the cognate requirement.
2. Taking a course that is cross-listed with another academic unit. Students and advisors should consider the intent of the requirement when selecting cross-listed or meet-together courses, and specific requirements of the program.
3. Completing graduate courses at another institution that meet the intent of the requirement and that are taken no more than two years before admission to the current Rackham doctoral program. The student must provide Rackham OARD with an official transcript and the program should notify Rackham OARD that the coursework fulfills the cognate requirement. Such courses do not transfer to the university transcript, do not carry credit, and do not apply toward the minimum 18 credit hours required for doctoral candidacy.

4.2 Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship Training

Ph.D. students are required to complete training in the responsible conduct of research and scholarship before advancing to candidacy. Each graduate program determines the content and methods for providing this and for ensuring its successful completion. Requirements may take the form of a course, workshop, or as part of a larger professional development seminar, but must include at least eight hours of face-to-face contact between students and faculty members, with more than one faculty member involved.

The graduate chair or designee must certify that each student who applies to advance to candidacy has completed the required training.

Training in the responsible conduct of research and scholarship is optional for students in master's and D.M.A. programs but strongly recommended.

Allegations of violations of academic integrity will lead to inquiries conducted by the graduate school or other schools and colleges, and may result in the imposition of serious disciplinary actions. Procedures for these inquiries are described in the Rackham Academic and Professional Integrity Policy ([section 8](#)).

4.3 Advancing to Candidacy

Students at the precandidacy stage of the doctoral program acquire knowledge and tools needed to undertake original and independent research. They learn about their field of study and gain familiarity with standards of evidence, argument, practice, and methods, and prepare to achieve candidacy, when they focus intensively on a narrower area of research.

Graduate programs should conduct annual reviews of students to assess their progress toward reaching candidacy. While faculty determine candidacy requirements and may set earlier deadlines, students should advance to candidacy no later than three calendar years after the first enrollment in the Rackham doctoral program. A student who does not achieve candidacy within three years and is not making satisfactory progress may be placed on academic probation unless the graduate program petitions Rackham OARD to request additional time because of extenuating circumstances.

The graduate program submits a recommendation for a student to be [moved to candidacy](#) by certifying that the requirements have been met by the deadline for the term in which the student will become a candidate.

[Deadlines are listed on the Rackham website.](#)

A student who registered in the immediately preceding fall and winter terms may take preliminary exams during May without registering for the spring half-term. A student who takes preliminary exams in the summer half-term must be registered.

The enrollment status of a student changes during the term in which he or she advances to candidacy. Tuition and fees will be adjusted to the candidacy rate. A student who advances to candidacy while enrolled in 990, "Dissertation/precandidate," will have that enrollment automatically changed to 995 "Dissertation/candidate" with 8 credit hours for the term. If a student is enrolled in classes other than 990, enrollment status will be changed to include an additional 8 credit hours of 995 for a full term or 4 credit hours for a half term, with tuition and fees adjusted.

4.3.1 Ph.D. Candidacy Requirements

Candidacy requirements for the Ph.D. include:

1. *Bachelor's degree or equivalent.* The U-M transcript must show a bachelor's degree or equivalent awarded by an accredited institution.
2. *Minimum Rackham grade point average.* A cumulative minimum GPA of B (3.0 on a 4.0 point scale) is required for all graduate work taken for credit. Programs may require a higher minimum cumulative GPA or a minimum grade for specified coursework.
3. *Coursework in residence.* Students must complete at least 18 credit hours of graded graduate coursework (including the grade of S – Satisfactory) registered as a Rackham student while in residence on the Ann Arbor campus. Courses elected as visit (audit) do not meet this requirement, or courses designated as 990, or with “preliminary” in the title.
4. *Cognate requirement.* Before advancing to candidacy students must complete 3 credit hours of cognate coursework with a grade of B- or better; certain graduate programs may have additional cognate requirements ([section 4.1](#)).
5. *Preliminary examinations.* A student must pass preliminary examinations to test knowledge of the primary field and all supporting fields. Graduate programs determine the form and content of these examinations and the procedures for administering and assessing them, and inform students in advance about the format, schedule, procedures, and expectations. Students are entitled to specific feedback on their performance.
6. *Additional graduate program requirements.* A student must fulfill all additional requirements specified by the graduate program. These may include, but are not limited to: passing of qualifying exams at the end of the first year or at another time during precandidacy; completing additional cognate coursework; achieving competence in one or more foreign languages; being in residence on the Ann Arbor campus during certain terms; acquiring work experience; and preparation of a research paper or essay.

4.3.2 D.M.A. Candidacy Requirements

In addition to meeting general candidacy requirements for students in Ph.D. programs ([section 4.3](#)), precandidates in D.M.A. programs normally must accumulate a minimum of 36 fee hours ([section 1.4](#)). A student with a relevant non-Rackham master's degree from an accredited institution must accumulate only 18 fee hours. A student who lacks the required fee hours may be allowed to pay for these at the rate published by the Registrar.

4.4 Doctoral Dissertation Requirements

[Rackham's Dissertation Handbook](#) contains information about completing Ph.D. degree requirements and submitting the dissertation, including procedures for the oral defense, responsibilities of the dissertation committee, and steps for submission of the finished dissertation. Students should consult with their program to learn of any supplementary requirements and refer to the Rackham OARD website for more information.

4.4.1 Time Limit for Completing a Doctoral Degree

Students are expected to complete the degree within five years of achieving candidacy but no more than seven years from the date of the first enrollment in their program. Rackham will notify programs when students do not complete their degree within this period. Programs should conduct annual reviews of candidates to assess progress toward the degree. Students who have not completed the degree within the seven year limit should petition Rackham OARD for an extension of time to degree with a plan for completion. The program may require

a student who does not complete the degree after two years of extension to return to precandidacy status and to meet candidacy requirements again.

4.4.2 Candidacy Course Registration

Ph.D. candidates register in the fall and winter terms for eight credit hours of 995/Dissertation Candidate. Part-time enrollment is not permitted. A student who defends in either the spring or summer half term must register for 8 credit hours of 995 for the spring/summer full term, or for both 4 credits in the spring half-term and 4 credits in the summer half-term.

A candidate who registers for a course must seek prior approval from the faculty advisor and also register for 995. A candidate may elect either one course per term, or more than one course for a total of no more than four credits, without paying additional tuition. Courses may be taken for credit or as a visit (audit). A candidate who does not elect a course during a term of 995 enrollment may, in the next term, either register for courses for no more than 8 credits or register for no more than two courses that total more than 8 credits without paying additional tuition. An additional course may not be taken in anticipation of taking none in a future term of 995 enrollment. A candidate who takes courses beyond this limit will be assessed tuition.

When a candidate registers for a course during the fall, winter, or spring and summer half-terms but does not register for 995, the Registrar's Office will add the 995 to the term and assess any required tuition.

4.4.2.1 Course Registration for D.M.A. Candidates

D.M.A. candidates must be registered for 8 credit hours (or a maximum of 8 fee hours) of 995/Dissertation Candidate for any full term (or a maximum of 4 fee hours for a half term) in which they draw university services, including faculty consultation and guidance. D.M.A. candidates must accumulate additional fee hours to reach the Required Fee Total (RFT) of 68 for the degree (50 fee hours for a student with a master's relevant to the doctoral degree) ([section 1.4](#)). A student must register for 995 during the term in which the dissertation and degree requirements are completed. A student who defends in the spring/summer term must register for either 8 credit hours of 995 for the spring/summer full term, or for 4 credits in the spring half-term and 4 credits in the summer half-term.

A candidate who registers for a course must seek prior approval from the faculty advisor and also register for 995. A candidate may elect either one course per term, or more than one course for a total of no more than four credits, without paying additional tuition. Courses may be taken for credit or as a visit (audit). A candidate who does not elect a course during a term of 995 enrollment may, in the next term, either register for courses for no more than 8 credits or register for no more than two courses that total more than 8 credits without paying additional tuition. An additional course may not be taken in anticipation of taking none in a future term of 995 enrollment. A candidate who takes courses beyond this limit will be assessed tuition; these credits will be counted toward the RFT requirement ([section 1.4](#)).

When a candidate registers for a course during the fall, winter, or spring and summer half-terms but does not register for 995, the Registrar's Office will add the 995 to the term and assess any required tuition.

4.4.3 Formation of the Dissertation Committee

The chair/co-chairs of the proposed dissertation committee and the student verify nominations for committee service, which are approved by the graduate chair or director of the program. The graduate school gives final approval of dissertation committee membership. The graduate program should send the graduate school nominations for committee membership at least six months before the defense date. Nominations for dissertation committee service must be approved by the program and the graduate school and are subject to the following:

- Committees must have at least four members, including at least three tenure or tenure-track members of the instructional faculty affiliated with a Rackham doctoral program. Such faculty are those holding a regular or “unmodified” (i.e., not research, clinical, visiting, adjunct, etc.) appointment as Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor.
- At least two of the four committee members must be from the candidate’s home program.
- Committees may include a person holding regular clinical, research professor, visiting, adjunct, instructor, or lecturer appointment. Subject to review on a case-by-case basis, a committee may include other qualified university faculty and staff, or person from outside the university who can provide expertise in the candidate’s research area.
- Persons who do not have an earned doctorate, whether affiliated with a Rackham doctoral program or not, must be approved for committee service on a case-by-case basis.
- Committees must have a cognate member who is familiar with the standards for doctoral research. The cognate member’s role is to broaden the scholarly representation of the committee beyond the candidate’s home program and to provide a perspective on the quality of the dissertation from outside the candidate’s field of specialization. Except for the committee of a student in an interdepartmental program, the cognate member must hold at least a 0.50 appointment in a Rackham doctoral program other than the student’s home department/program, and may not hold a sole appointment as research or clinical faculty, instructor, or lecturer. The cognate member may not serve as chair or co-chair.
- A committee may have a sole chair or two co-chairs. By special arrangement, retired faculty members who were affiliated with a Rackham doctoral program or research professors may serve as sole chairs. Persons who may serve as co-chair, but not sole chair, include:
 - tenure or tenure-track members of the university’s instructional faculty who are not affiliated with a Rackham doctoral program;
 - research faculty;
 - instructors and lecturers;
 - similarly qualified university faculty or staff, or person from outside the university; and
 - former university faculty members who have moved to a faculty position at another university.

For more information on the composition of the committee and roles of the members, see [Guidelines for Dissertation Committee Service](#).

The committee chair, graduate program personnel, or the graduate student may call a meeting of the dissertation committee, as needed.

4.4.4 Human Subject and Other Research Approval

Federal regulations and university policy require that all investigations using humans as subjects of research be reviewed and approved by an [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) before such investigations may begin. No dissertation based on the use of humans as subjects can be accepted without prior review and approval by the

appropriate IRB. The faculty advisor may request the review, but the student should verify that this has taken place and approval has been granted. See the [Use of Human Volunteers in Research](#).

Special approval may also be required for animal research. Visit the [University Committee on Use and Care of Animals](#).

4.4.5 Use of Copyrighted Material

Doctoral students are required to receive written permission from the copyright owner for any material to be used in the dissertation that falls outside the guidelines of “fair use.” See “[The Dissertation Handbook: A Guide to Submitting Your Doctoral Dissertation and Completing Your Degree Requirements](#).”

4.4.6 Dissertations in Languages Other Than English

If the primary literature on a subject matter is in another language and the dissertation addresses a community of scholars who publish in a language other than English, a student may elect to write the dissertation in that language provided that all committee members speak and read the language and support its use in the dissertation. If a reasonably broad English-speaking community of scholars is actively pursuing the dissertation’s general topic, the dissertation should be written in English. See “[The Dissertation Handbook: A Guide to Submitting Your Doctoral Dissertation and Completing Your Degree Requirements](#).”

4.4.7 Dissertation Formatting Requirements

The style and format of the dissertation must meet Rackham’s style and formatting requirements. See “[The Dissertation Handbook: A Guide to Submitting Your Doctoral Dissertation and Completing Your Degree Requirements](#).”

4.4.8 Oral Defense Preparation

A candidate must [register online with Rackham OARD](#) to schedule either an in-person or remote pre-defense meeting at which staff and the candidate review steps to complete the degree. The pre-defense meeting must take place at least 10 working days before the oral defense. Candidates are encouraged to bring a copy of the dissertation for a format review.

Oral defenses are public, and a candidate must provide Rackham OARD with the date, time, and location of the defense so it can be announced publicly.

As soon as possible but no later than 10 working days before the oral defense, the candidate should distribute copies of the dissertation and abstract to all committee members. A committee member who does not receive a copy of the dissertation and abstract at least 10 working days before the defense may ask Rackham OARD for a postponement.

Committee members should send dissertation evaluations to Rackham OARD at least 3 working days before the oral defense so the entire committee may review the evaluations before the final defense.

4.4.9 Oral Examination Report and Approval

The committee chair should submit the Oral Examination Report to Rackham OARD within 48 hours of the oral defense, but no later than the deadline with which the student is working. The student should confirm with the chair that the report has been submitted. The Certificate of Dissertation Committee Approval must be submitted online by the chair no later than the deadline with which the student is working ([section 4.4.13](#)).

Any disagreement over the acceptability of a dissertation will be reported to the Dean of the Graduate School, who will act as final arbiter in consultation with the Dissertation Committee members.

4.4.10 Post-Defense Meeting and Dissertation Revisions

After the committee chair has submitted the Oral Examination Report and the online Certificate of Dissertation Committee Approval to Rackham OARD, the candidate must complete the [Rackham OARD post-defense meeting](#), either in-person or online, and submit the final revised dissertation and other materials, including:

- a final, correctly formatted PDF of the dissertation and abstract which will be submitted electronically to the university's Deep Blue digital archive as the official copy of record
- an application for graduation via Wolverine Access
- the NSF Survey of Earned Doctorates (Ph.D. only)
- an exit survey of Rackham Doctoral Recipients (optional)

To avoid registering for another term and having the degree awarded in a later term, the candidate must submit these materials by the [published deadline](#) for the final term of enrollment. A candidate who fails to submit the final dissertation and all materials within one year from the date of the oral defense will be required to defend the dissertation again.

4.4.11 Submitting the Dissertation to the University Library

Candidates must submit final digital copies of the dissertation to Deep Blue, the permanent digital repository of the University Library, as the official copy of record. More information is available in "[The Dissertation Handbook: A Guide to Submitting Your Doctoral Dissertation and Completing Your Degree Requirements](#)".

4.4.12 Dissertation Embargo

Doctoral dissertations and abstracts are normally made publicly available upon degree conferral when they are deposited electronically in Deep Blue. In limited circumstances, a doctoral student may wish to delay, or embargo, the public release of the final dissertation of record that is deposited in Deep Blue, the permanent digital repository of the University Library.

Students may choose to delay public release of the dissertation for a period of two years, renewable, to protect intellectual property during the patent application process; to maintain confidentiality agreements protecting third-party proprietary information; to provide sufficient time to publish their dissertation in book form or as journal articles; or to protect informants at risk of identity exposure.

The embargo may be extended for a fifth and final year only for purposes of protecting the ability to publish the dissertation in book form. This request must be made in writing and must be approved by the graduate school.

A student who is considering a dissertation embargo should discuss this option with the faculty advisor and the dissertation committee. The student is responsible for requesting a dissertation embargo. The request must have the approval of the dissertation committee chair (and co-chair, if any).

Students may choose one of two levels for restricting accessibility on Deep Blue during the first two years in which public release is delayed:

- Complete restriction: the author, title, abstract, and dissertation will not be listed or accessible to anyone.

- Partial restriction, limited to those with U-M Kerberos access: the author, title, and abstract will be listed; the dissertation will be accessible only with permission of the student.

Only partial restrictions are allowed for extensions of the embargo beyond the initial two years. Students will be contacted via email at least one month before the expiration of the embargo period. The dissertation will be publicly released if the student does not request an extension and provide a reason for this request.

Students may lift an embargo and make their dissertation publicly accessible at any time.

A student may independently choose among several levels of embargo for the copy of the dissertation that is deposited electronically with UMI/ProQuest.

Embargo requests must be submitted before the final dissertation submission deadline with which the student is working.

4.4.13 Final Dissertation and Degree Requirement Deadlines, and Commencement Eligibility

Degrees are awarded three times a year, at the end of the fall, winter, and summer terms. Commencement exercises are held at the end of the fall and winter terms only. Students completing in spring/summer may participate in a future commencement. Rackham OARD publishes [annual deadlines for students to apply for degree conferral and commencement eligibility](#). Students who meet these deadlines may participate in commencement in either the same or a following term.

Final deadlines for dissertation requirements to be completed so the degree can be conferred at a given commencement are firm dates and extensions are not permitted. A candidate who does not meet the final deadline cannot be listed among the degree recipients for that particular term, nor participate in commencement, and will be required to register for at least another full term.

A student may not participate in a commencement ceremony unless Rackham OARD has approved and confirmed degree conferral.

4.5 Student-Initiated Ph.D. Programs

A student may propose to the graduate school a course of study and research for a Ph.D. that combines different disciplines and fields from two graduate programs and results in a doctoral degree with a single designation. Because of the breadth and depth of study required, only students of exceptional preparation and focus should consider this option.

Only students admitted to a regular Rackham doctoral program who have completed at least one term of coursework may request a Student-Initiated Doctoral Program. Students must consult with advisors from both programs and [submit an application to the graduate school](#) that includes a statement of purpose and describes the proposed courses, other requirements, and the qualifying and preliminary exams. The proposed course of study should reflect the majority of requirements of both participating programs and specify all courses the student has taken and/or plans to take to satisfy these requirements. The proposal should also state how the student will meet the preliminary examinations of both programs necessary to achieve candidacy. Advisors and graduate chairs of both programs must approve and sign the application, which must include a year-by-year agreement approved by both programs for arrangements to provide full funding and be approved by the graduate school. The application should be submitted no later than the term before the student becomes a candidate. A student who is a candidate will be returned to precandidacy if the application is approved, and both programs must recommend re-establishing candidacy status.

The proposal should be submitted to Rackham OARD with a completed "[Request Form for Student-Initiated Degree Program](#)".

A student in a Student-Initiated Doctoral Program should have advisors from both programs who supervise pre-candidacy work; determine and conduct preliminary exams; and recommend the student for candidacy. A minimum of two faculty members from each program are required for the dissertation committee, but a cognate member is not required.

Student-initiated degree programs may use only the authorized names of the graduate programs that have been combined. For example, a student interested in the history and philosophy of science may work toward a Ph.D. in the graduate programs of History and Philosophy. In this case, the degree program, and the degree citation, would be "History and Philosophy" and not "History and Philosophy of Science."

5 Master's Degrees

5.1 Residency Requirement

Students must complete a minimum of 24 credit hours (30 hours in engineering) of graded graduate coursework (including the grade of S – Satisfactory) registered as a Rackham student. Students in on-campus master's programs must earn these credits while in residence on the Ann Arbor campus. Students in online (distance learning) master's programs may earn these credits while not in residence on the Ann Arbor campus.

5.2 Credit Hours

A minimum of 24 credit hours (30 credit hours in engineering) of graded graduate coursework (including the grade of S – Satisfactory) registered as a Rackham student while in residence on the Ann Arbor campus. Courses elected as visit (audit) do not meet this requirement, or courses designated as 990, 995, or with “doctoral,” “dissertation,” or “preliminary” in the title. Credits earned before admission will not automatically be applied toward requirements and must be approved by both the program and Rackham OARD ([section 5.1](#)). These credits will be listed on the university transcript.

5.3 Cognate Requirement

Rackham recognizes the value of intellectual breadth in graduate education and the importance of formal study in areas beyond the student's field of specialization. Cognate courses are those in a discipline or area different from a student's field of study, but which are related or connected with some aspect of this field.

Continuing master's students who matriculated in their program before the 2018 fall term are required to earn 4 credit hours of cognate coursework. This coursework must be approved by the graduate program, and may be satisfied by:

- Completing 4 credit hours of cognate coursework in approved graduate-level courses with a grade of B- or better (graduate programs may have additional cognate requirements).
- Taking a course within a subfield of the department or program other than the student's own which Rackham has approved as meeting the requirement.
- Completing a course that is cross-listed or a meet-together with another program; the student's program should notify Rackham OARD.
- Using credit officially transferred from another institution ([section 5.1](#)) in another field of study.
- Completing graduate coursework at another institution that meets the expectation of the cognate requirement without officially transferring the credit to the transcript. The student must provide Rackham OARD with an official transcript, including the courses and credit hours, and the graduate program should notify Rackham OARD. These courses do not apply toward the minimum requirement for the degree and do not appear on the university transcript.

The graduate school's cognate requirement will end for students who enter Rackham master's programs starting with the 2018 fall term, but programs may require cognate coursework for a specified number of credits.

The cognate requirement also remains in effect for students admitted to Ph.D. programs who may be eligible to receive an embedded master's or who exit the program after fulfilling the master's requirements but before completing the doctorate.

5.4 Additional Program Requirements

Programs may specify additional requirements including graduate-level coursework, reading knowledge of a foreign language, work-experience or practicums, preparation of a thesis, or research essay, and/or a final oral or written examination.

5.5 Time Limit

A student is expected to complete all work within five years from the date of first enrollment in the master's program. A student who fails to complete requirements within five years may be withdrawn and required to apply for readmission ([section 3.5](#)). Students exceeding this limit must [submit a petition to Rackham OARD](#) requesting additional time to complete the program. Petitions must describe in detail the amount of work remaining and a timeline for completion.

5.6 Application for Degree

To have the degree awarded, a student must use Wolverine Access to apply for graduation. [Deadlines for each term are published by Rackham OARD](#). Students must apply for graduation by the deadline to have their names published in the commencement program. A student who does not complete all requirements during the term in which the degree application is submitted must reapply to be considered for the degree in a subsequent term. Master's diplomas are not distributed at commencement but are mailed.

The graduate school permits students to apply for dual master's degrees, dual master's and doctoral degrees ([section 6](#)), and certificates of graduate study programs ([section 7](#)), but students may not propose a degree program that combines two master's programs.

5.7 Transfer of Credit

In accordance with the criteria below, graduate credits from outside the graduate school or the university may be transferred to a master's program for up to half the credits required for the degree. Requests for transfer of graduate credit must be approved by the program and by Rackham OARD.

To be eligible to transfer credit, a student must be in good standing and have completed 8 or more credit hours of graduate-level, letter-graded courses in residence in the graduate school with a cumulative GPA of B (i.e., 3.0 on a 4.0 scale) or higher. All conditions for admission must be met, including submission to the graduate school of an official undergraduate transcript and record of bachelor's degree.

Criteria for transferring credit:

- Students may transfer credits for graduate-level courses taken while pursuing an undergraduate degree only if these were not used to fulfill requirements for a degree or certificate. Rackham OARD must have confirmation from the undergraduate institution that the credits were graduate courses that required graduate-level work.
- Credit may be transferred from other accredited degree-granting universities with graduate degree programs for up to a maximum of 6 credit hours from institutions that use the semester system, or up to 9 credit hours from institutions that use the quarter system (the equivalent of 6 semester credit hours).
- Credit may be transferred from U-M non-Rackham graduate programs, including those on the Flint or Dearborn campuses, for up to half the credits required for the Rackham degree.

Graduate credits may not be transferred:

- if they are used or will be used, in whole or in part, to fulfill requirements for a bachelor's or other degree or certificate;
- for courses taken at an exclusively undergraduate institution or community college;
- for courses taken more than five years before admission to the current Rackham master's program; or
- for courses where a letter grade of less than "B" has been awarded.

A doctoral student who is also enrolled in a master's degree program may request transfer of credit for the master's program.

Transfer course numbers and credits appear on the university transcript, but grades will not be listed and will not be computed in calculating the cumulative GPA, except for courses transferred from Rackham programs at other campuses.

Students use "[Transfer of Credit Request](#)" and can direct questions to OARD.questions@umich.edu.

5.8 Accelerated Master's Programs

Through special arrangements in certain fields of study, undergraduates with an exceptional academic record may apply in their junior or senior year to work toward a master's degree while fulfilling the remainder of their requirements for a bachelor's degree. A student who is close to completing undergraduate requirements in 3 or 3 1/2 years may apply to start a graduate program while concurrently finishing the undergraduate degree. Students earning dual bachelor's degrees are not eligible to apply. [Additional information is available from Rackham OARD.](#)

Students may double-count and/or transfer up to half the credit hours required for the master's degree. No courses used to meet the requirements of the undergraduate major may be double-counted. Students do not enroll in Rackham until they have completed their undergraduate degree requirements or are within 6 hours of completing. Students must enroll in Rackham for two full terms (9 or more credits each term) within 12 months of completing the undergraduate degree. Student must complete the bachelor's degree within one calendar year of enrolling in a dual undergraduate/graduate program. Students who apply for a second master's degree may not double-count credits for the second master's with either the undergraduate or master's degrees of the accelerated program.

Proposals in LSA may follow the Concurrent Undergraduate/Graduate Studies (CUGS) model, in which students have an undergraduate and graduate registration in the same term for courses that count towards both the undergraduate and master's degrees. CUGS programs must require a minimum of 15 graduate credit hours and at least one full term of Rackham-only registration, with a term defined as 9 credit hours. A student in a CUGS program is enrolled in both an undergraduate school or college and the graduate school. The student will pay the higher tuition rate for all credits elected and is ineligible for undergraduate-only financial aid. [Additional information is available from Rackham OARD.](#)

Students admitted to an accelerated master's program are considered Rackham students and master's degree policies apply.

6 Dual Degree Programs

A number of arrangements exist for students to pursue two U-M graduate degrees simultaneously. Dual degree programs allow a student to combine two graduate or graduate-professional programs, at least one of which is a Rackham master's or doctoral program, and may include a non-Rackham professional degree program. Students undertake complementary and simultaneous programs of study through streamlined curricular arrangements that allow limited double-counting of credits ([section 6.2](#)). Dual degree programs lead to two different degree citations on the transcript and two separate diplomas. [Information about dual degree programs is available online.](#)

A student in a Rackham doctoral or master's program must complete at least one term of coursework in good academic standing before requesting admission to a dual degree program. Students pursuing any combination of master's degrees must complete an "[Dual Admission Application \(formerly called Add a Degree or Certificate Application\)](#)", and, in accordance with the policy for double-counting credits ([section 6.2](#)), [submit the appropriate "Dual Degree Course Elections" form.](#)

6.1 Student-Initiated Dual Degree Programs

A student may seek approval for an individualized U-M dual degree program that is not among those already approved by the graduate school. A dual degree program may not include a student-initiated single degree program which already combines study in two programs. Student-initiated dual degree programs are reviewed on an individual basis and must be approved by both graduate programs and the graduate school.

Students may request dual degree programs in the following combinations:

- a doctoral degree in one field of specialization and a master's degree or certificate in another field (a dual degree course election form is not required);
- two master's programs;
- a master's and a Rackham certificate of graduate studies program (students may overlap a certificate of graduate studies program with no more than one master's degree program); or
- a degree in the graduate school and a post-baccalaureate degree in a professional school of the university (e.g., M.A. and J.D.). Students must meet all requirements of both programs. If the units assess different tuition and fees for a term in which a student is taking courses in both units, the student will be charged at the higher rate.

6.2 Double-Counting Credit Hours for Dual Degree Programs

Students in dual degree programs may ask to double-count a limited number of credits toward the requirements of both degrees by submitting a “[Dual/Joint Degree Election Form](#)” no later than the third week of the term in which the second degree will be completed. [Double-counting rules specific to each dual degree program are found on the Rackham website](#). For double counting credits for certificates, see [section 7](#). The following general rules apply for double counting credits between two master's programs.

- Double-counted courses must be taken within five years of the first date of enrollment of the current degree program.
- At least half of the minimum required credits for each Rackham degree must be earned in the Rackham program under a Rackham registration and counted solely for that degree. For example, a student enrolled in a 36-hour Rackham master’s program may not apply more than a combination of 18 transfer and/or double-counted credits toward the degree requirements.
- A program may overlap with only one other program for the purpose of double- counting credits. Credits may never be used for three or more programs; if a student seeks a third certificate or degree, it must stand alone.
- Programs may limit credit double-counting below the maximum set by the graduate school, but may not allow credit double-counting above this limit. Some programs do not allow credit double-counting.

The maximum number of credits that may be double-counted is determined by adding the minimum number of credits required for each program and dividing by six, rounding any fraction down to the nearest whole number. For example:

| | Credits |
|--|----------------|
| Minimum credit hours required for Degree A | 30 |
| Minimum credit hours required for Degree B | 36 |
| Total | 66 |
| Maximum number that may be double-counted | 11 |

For a doctoral student who wishes to use some credits toward a master’s in another program, faculty in the master’s program will decide how many may apply toward the master’s degree. No course numbered 990, 995, or with “doctoral,” “dissertation,” or “preliminary” in the title may be counted toward a master’s degree.

Credits for a single course may not be split; a course must be double-counted in its entirety or not at all.

7 Certificates of Graduate Studies Programs

A Rackham certificate of graduate studies is a non-degree credential for study and participation in a scholarly community around a focused topic of special academic interest. A certificate requires a specified set of courses and activities that supplement and enrich a student's primary program of study.

A student in a Rackham or non-Rackham degree program may apply to the graduate school for a certificate program after having completed at least one term. Some certificate programs, however, are open to admission of persons who are not university graduate students but who have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. Such applicants apply directly to the certificate program through Rackham Admissions.

Certificates require a minimum of 9 credits of coursework plus an additional requirement equivalent to 3 credits, for a total of 12 credits. The additional 3 credit equivalent requirement is defined and approved by the certificate faculty. This may take the form of an internship, practicum, research project, professional development activity, or similar experience. Alternatively, the certificate may require additional coursework of at least three credits of coursework. Certificates may require no more than 19 credits.

The following general rules apply:

- Only graduate level courses eligible for Rackham credit may be used to meet certificate requirements; no transfer credit may be applied. All credits must be completed on the home campus on which the degree program is administered.
- The student must have a minimum cumulative GPA of B (3.0 on a 4.0 point scale) in courses counted for the certificate program.
- Not more than one-sixth of the credits required for a master's degree may be double-counted with a certificate.
- If a certificate requires 9 credits of coursework, only 3 credits may be double-counted. Double-counted credits may not be used for a third master's or certificate program.
- A non-Rackham student who has been admitted to a free-standing certificate program must complete all requirements within four years from the date of first enrollment in the program.

[Information is available from the programs about specific certificate requirements.](#)

8 Rackham Academic and Professional Integrity Policy

Integrity in research and scholarship is a fundamental value of the University of Michigan. It is the responsibility of all students to conduct research and scholarly activities in an ethical manner at all times. An indispensable part of graduate education is for students to become knowledgeable about the responsible conduct of research and scholarship appropriate to their discipline or field of study. Students are responsible for understanding and observing the graduate school's academic and professional integrity policy. Students are also expected to understand and maintain standards of integrity and professional conduct endorsed by their program that are particular to their field of study and research.

This policy defines serious violations of academic integrity. Allegations of violations will lead to inquiries conducted under the authority of the graduate school or other schools and colleges, and may result in the imposition of disciplinary actions. Procedures for these inquiries are described below ([see section 9.3](#)).

Other units in the university maintain campus-wide policies and procedures concerning [personal conduct](#) including [sexual harassment](#) and [misconduct; assault, theft, cyber-misconduct, and other violations; discrimination and harassment in the workplace; conflict of interest; use of information technology resources; misconduct in sponsored research](#); protocols for the conduct of [research involving human subjects](#) and [animal use](#); and [requirements concerning export controls and access restrictions for certain technologies](#). Students engaged in research are expected to understand and follow the policies and regulations that apply to their investigations.

8.1 Forms of Academic and Professional Misconduct

Offenses against the standards of academic integrity include the following categories of misconduct. These categories are not limited to the violations listed below, but may include other forms of misconduct.

8.1.1 Cheating or Obtaining an Improper Advantage

Includes:

- Copying from another's exam or other evaluative assignment
- Using notes, books, digital devices or resources, or other materials for an exam or other evaluative assignment without explicit permission of the instructor
- Submitting work that was previously used for another class without the informed permission of the instructor
- Discussing or sharing information about questions or answers on an exam or other evaluative assignment without explicit permission of the instructor
- Giving, taking, or receiving a copy of an exam without explicit permission of the instructor
- Allowing another person to take an exam or complete an assignment for the student
- Attempting to change the result of an exam or other evaluation

8.1.2 Plagiarism

Includes:

- Representing the words, ideas, or work of others as one's own in writing or presentations, and failing to give full and proper credit to the original source
- Failing to properly acknowledge and cite language from another source, including paraphrased text
- Failing to properly cite any ideas, images, technical work, creative content, or other material taken from published or unpublished sources in any medium, including online material or oral presentations, and including the author's own previous work

8.1.3 Research Misconduct

Includes:

- The falsification of data, including the dishonest reporting of investigative results: i.e., tampering, manipulating, omitting, selective editing, or altering of laboratory or field data and research notes or records in a way that is deceptive and misrepresents investigative results
- The fabrication of data, including deception by inventing and misrepresenting laboratory or field data and research notes or records
- Data theft, including taking or using any data, methods, or procedures that are the work or property of others without permission and proper acknowledgment
- Interfering, inhibiting, or damaging the research of others
- Misuse of human subjects, including failure to obtain prior review and approval by the proper Institutional Review Board and failure to safeguard the well-being and private information of persons who participate in research
- Misuse of laboratory animals, including failure to secure prior review and approval by the University Committee on Use and Care of Animals and failure to provide humane care, handling, and treatment in accordance with university policies
- Material failure to comply with legal requirements governing research

8.1.4 Dishonesty in Publication

Includes:

- Knowingly attempting to publish information or research that is false, fabricated, deceptive, or misleading, or contains the plagiarized work of others
- Attempting to publish work without the permission and full and proper credit of others who have collaborated or contributed to the research, and to deny joint authorship, when appropriate
- The listing as authors of persons who did not contribute to the work
- Abuse of the peer review process, including simultaneous submission of a manuscript or abstract to more than one journal without approval from the respective editors; submission of previously published material without clarifying the extent of the previously published material; submission of a manuscript without the permission/agreement of all authors; and other actions and conflicts of interest that undermine the integrity of the peer review process

8.1.5 Abuse of Confidentiality

Includes unauthorized sharing or releasing information of others, including public or private sponsors, concerning ideas, data, research, grant proposals, manuscripts, patent applications, proprietary information, or other projects or activities that were given with the expectation that these would not be disclosed.

8.1.6 Misuse of Computer Facilities

Includes violations of the university's Technology Policies for [proper use of information resource infrastructure, sharing of information, privacy and security, data management, and digital copyright](#).

8.1.7 Misuse of Hazardous Substances in Research-Related Activities

Includes unauthorized possession, use, or distribution to others of dangerous or legally restricted chemical, biological, or radiological materials.

8.1.8 Fabrication, Falsification, or Unauthorized Modification of an Academic Record

Includes alterations to transcripts, grades, letters of recommendation, or other evaluations by or for any current or former student.

8.1.9 Obstruction of the Academic Activities and Research of Another

Includes harassment, intimidation, or tampering with experimental data, research records and notes, written documents, creative products, technical equipment or chemicals, or with any object of study.

8.1.10 Illegal or Unauthorized Use of University Resources

Illegal or unauthorized use of university resources for the procurement, use, distribution, or sale of supplies, equipment, or other material.

8.1.11 Other Forms of Academic Misconduct and Attempted Academic Misconduct

Engaging in other forms of academic misconduct that seriously deviate from standards of scholarly and scientific community. Attempted academic misconduct, or any effort to aid or encourage the academic misconduct of others, is a violation of this policy

8.1.12 Professional Misconduct

Includes:

- Misrepresentation of one's credentials or status, or failure to correct others' inaccuracies or misrepresentation of one's credentials, including professional experience and positions held (paid or unpaid) and timeframe
- Unethical consulting activity, including misrepresentation of one's status, credentials, or expertise to secure a consulting assignment; unauthorized disclosure of confidential information; and knowingly taking on an assignment without the necessary knowledge or expertise
- Conflicts of interest, including conflicts that promote, benefit, or protect one's self, family, friends, or business colleagues, unless these conflicts have been disclosed and have an approved management plan
- Failure to protect confidential records in accordance with relevant professional standards
- Other fraudulent behavior, including actions that the appropriate dean believes to call into question the student's ability to ethically and competently join the profession
- Attempting professional misconduct or aiding or encouraging misconduct by others

Other violations of State or Federal laws or university policies brought to the attention of the graduate school that are not explicitly mentioned in this policy will be evaluated to determine if they will be investigated as a violation of this policy.

8.2 Handling Allegations of Misconduct

8.2.1 Inquiries Concerning Non-Academic Misconduct

Criminal misconduct must be reported to the Division of Public Safety and Security. Allegations of other kinds of non-academic misconduct should be referred to the offices responsible for enforcing these university regulations and policies. These offices will inform the Rackham Resolution Officer when complaints involve Rackham students, and will consult with the Resolution Officer to determine how to proceed. These offices will inform the Resolution Officer in writing of the resolution of any case involving a Rackham student.

- The [Office of Student Conflict Resolution](#) has policies and procedures for allegations of personal misconduct involving other students in violation of the [Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), including sexual harassment and misconduct.
- The Office of the Vice President for Research conducts inquiries concerning violations of the university's Policy Statement on the [Integrity of Scholarship and Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Misconduct in the Pursuit of Scholarship and Research](#). This includes misconduct in externally-sponsored research and training; violations of protocols for the conduct of research involving [human subjects](#) and [animal use](#); abuse of guidelines that govern [conflict of interest](#); and violations of other federal compliance requirements such as [export control regulations](#) and access restrictions for certain technologies.
- The Office of Institutional Equity is responsible for enforcing policy concerning [discrimination and harassment in the workplace](#).
- The Office of the Chief Information Officer investigates allegations of [misuse of information technology resources](#).

When a complaint involves both academic and non-academic misconduct, the non-academic complaint(s) will be resolved first and then the Resolution Officer will determine if additional action should be taken.

8.2.2 Who Conducts Investigations into Allegations of Academic and Professional Misconduct

The following schools and colleges maintain and use separate procedures for handling academic and professional misconduct by their students, including those who are in Rackham programs. The schools and colleges listed below also will use their procedures when students from other academic units, including students in dual degree programs, are alleged to have committed misconduct in a course that has its primary academic home in these units.

- [Ross School of Business, Academic Honor Code](#)
- School of Dentistry, Honor System Policy for Students Enrolled in Advanced Dental Education Programs (master's degree students only; cases involving Ph.D. students will be adjudicated under Rackham's procedures)
- [College of Engineering, Honor Code](#)
- School of Information, Academic Misconduct Policy
- [School of Music, Theatre, and Dance, Code of Academic Conduct](#)
- [School of Nursing, Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct](#)

- [School of Public Health, Student Academic Conduct Standards](#)
- Ford School of Public Policy, Program Handbooks

Schools or colleges that use their own procedures will inform the Resolution Officer when an inquiry is initiated into possible misconduct by a Rackham student.

The graduate school is responsible for fair and consistent enforcement of sanctions for offenses committed by Rackham students. Schools or colleges that use their own procedures will inform the Resolution Officer when a Rackham student has been found responsible for a violation and will consult before assessing a sanction.

Schools or colleges may recommend certain sanctions to Rackham that can only be authorized by the graduate school, including the suspension or expulsion of a student or the withholding or retraction of a Rackham degree.

The graduate school will handle allegations involving Rackham students in all other programs, including all programs involving more than one school or college.

For an incident that occurs in a laboratory, library, computer facility, or other research unit, the head of the unit will notify the Resolution Officer who will consult with the student's academic program and the Office of the General Counsel, if necessary, to determine where the allegation shall be investigated.

8.2.3 Reporting Allegations of Misconduct to Rackham

With exceptions indicated above in [section 8.2.2](#), Rackham's Resolution Officer oversees procedures for managing allegations of academic and professional misconduct by Rackham students.

This policy applies to Rackham students who are alleged to have violated Rackham's Academic Integrity Policy or the honor code or academic integrity policy of their school or college. It also applies to former students who were enrolled in a Rackham program or course at the time of the alleged infraction, including those who have completed a Rackham degree.

A faculty member or other reporting witness who finds evidence of academic misconduct must notify Rackham's Resolution Officer and provide evidence in writing as soon as possible.

8.2.3.1 Preliminary Inquiry

- The Resolution Officer will review the allegation with the reporting witness to determine if the complaint merits further consideration by Rackham or referral to other offices responsible for university policies and regulations.
- If no basis is found for proceeding with further consideration, the case may be dismissed or resolved informally and no record will be kept. If the reporting witness or program representative objects to informal resolution, he or she may ask the Dean or the Dean's designee to reconsider this decision.
- When the assessment determines that there is a basis for further consideration by Rackham, the Resolution Officer will give written notice to the student with details of the alleged violations. The Resolution Officer will meet with the student to review the allegations and ask for an explanation. The student will respond to the allegations within ten business days of this meeting.
- Based on interviews and the information that has been gathered, the Resolution Officer will recommend whether or not the preliminary inquiry has established grounds for a formal hearing. With the concurrence of the Rackham Dean, the Resolution Officer will notify the student in writing of the outcome of the preliminary inquiry.

- If no basis is found for proceeding with formal consideration, the case will be dismissed or resolved informally and no record will be kept.
- If it is found that grounds exist for a formal hearing, the Resolution Officer will notify the student in writing of the charges and refer the case to a Rackham Hearing Board. Copies will be sent to the student's program and the reporting witness.

8.2.4 Procedures for Academic Misconduct Hearings

8.2.4.1 The Hearing Board

A Hearing Board will be convened to adjudicate a complaint. It gathers information, holds a formal inquiry, determines if misconduct occurred, and submits findings and recommendations for sanctions (if appropriate) to the Rackham Dean. The Board members are drawn from a pool of faculty and students appointed to the Rackham Integrity Panel. A full Board consists of two faculty members and one graduate student. No one will serve who has a conflict of interest. One faculty member serves as Chair. The Resolution Officer will advise the Board, the reporting witness, and the student about this policy and procedures to be followed.

8.2.4.2 Graduate Program Representative

The academic unit where the alleged misconduct occurred may select a graduate program representative to participate in the hearing. The representative may be the reporting witness, a department chair or program director, a faculty administrator, or other faculty member. The representative may make an opening statement; respond to the student's opening statement; introduce evidence; call witnesses; question the student and all witnesses; and make a concluding statement.

8.2.4.3 Student Advisor

The student may bring an advisor to the Board hearing. The advisor may be a faculty member, administrator, friend or counselor, or an attorney. The student must notify the Resolution Officer in advance that an advisor will be present and if the advisor is an attorney. The advisor is not an advocate, but may provide personal support for the student. The advisor may not participate directly in the proceedings and may not address the Board.

8.2.4.4 Preparation of Evidence

Before the hearing, the reporting witness(es) and the student will provide the Resolution Officer with any documents to be offered as evidence. All information will be provided in advance to all parties. With the unanimous agreement of the Board, however, documents may be introduced for the first time at the hearing.

8.2.4.5 Witnesses

The student, the graduate program representative, and the Board itself may present information and call witnesses. A list of witnesses must be made available to all parties before the hearing. Witnesses may wish to make an opening statement but need not do so. The student, the graduate program representative, and members of the Board may question all witnesses. Witnesses are expected to tell the truth, and shall be present at the hearing only during their testimony.

8.2.4.6 Procedures of the Hearing Board

The Resolution Officer will provide all parties with advance written notice of the date and location of the Hearing Board meeting and a statement of the general format and procedures that will be followed, including the student's rights. During the hearing the Resolution Officer will serve as a resource to the Board and to all parties. The meeting of the Hearing Board is closed to the public.

- The Chair may postpone a hearing if the student can establish, in advance and to the satisfaction of the Resolution Officer, that circumstances beyond his or her control make an appearance impossible. If after receiving proper notice the student fails to appear, the Chair may conduct the hearing without the student's participation.
- The student may make an opening statement; respond to all statements made during the hearing; introduce evidence; call witnesses and question all witnesses; examine additional evidence provided during the hearing; and make a concluding statement. The student is expected to tell the truth in all dealings with the Resolution Officer and the Board. Intentionally providing false information or attempting to mislead the Resolution Officer or the Board will be taken into account in determining any sanction.
- The Chair will conduct an orderly and expeditious proceeding and may discourage and exclude repetitious or irrelevant evidence and testimony; bar any person who disrupts a hearing or fails to adhere to hearing guidelines; and adjourn a hearing that has become disorderly.
- If the student withdraws from the university while allegations are under review, the Board will proceed with or without the student's participation.
- Except when the student willfully chooses not to appear, no evidence will be heard or shared in the absence of the student, the graduate program representative (if designated), or any Board member.

8.2.4.7 Recording of the Hearing

Proceedings of the hearing are audio-recorded except for deliberations. Failure to produce or preserve an audible tape is not grounds for setting aside any determinations of the Board.

8.2.4.8 Deliberative Session

The Board deliberates in closed session and uses the preponderance of evidence as a standard of proof. That is, the Board will find a student to be culpable if it determines that the student is more likely than not to have committed an offense. It reaches a decision and recommends any sanctions by consensus, if possible, or by majority vote if consensus cannot be reached.

8.2.4.9 General guidelines for sanctions

The Hearing Board will recommend sanctions to the Rackham Dean that are commensurate with the violation(s) found to have occurred. In making its recommendations, the Board will weigh mitigating circumstances and take into account aggravating factors that include, but are not limited to, past misconduct by the student; failure of the student to comply fully with previous sanctions; the degree of intent of the student in committing the violation; the severity and pervasiveness of the misconduct; and conduct during the hearing.

The Board may recommend the following sanctions, singly or in combination. This list is not restrictive; the Board may recommend other penalties that it determines are appropriate to the circumstances of the misconduct.

8.2.4.9.1 Restitution

Compensation for loss, damage, or injury paid to the appropriate party in the form of service, money, or material replacement.

8.2.4.9.2 Educational Project

Completion of a class, workshop, or project on the responsible conduct of research and scholarship.

8.2.4.9.3 Service

Performance of one or more tasks designed to benefit the community and help the student understand why her or his behavior was inappropriate.

8.2.4.9.4 Corrective Action

Specific actions to redress the misconduct by retraction or correction of research or writing that has been published or presented, resubmission of an assignment, notification to publishers of improper research or authorship credit, or other steps.

8.2.4.9.5 Formal Reprimand

A written reprimand to the student with a warning that future violations will be dealt with more severely.

8.2.4.9.6 Grade Change

With the approval of the course instructor, assigning a grade record of No Report or Incomplete for a course or project; reduction of points/letter grade for an assignment or course; or assigning a lower or failing grade for an assignment or course. If a student drops a course after being notified of allegations of academic misconduct, and the student is subsequently found to have committed misconduct for which the Board recommends a sanction of a failing or reduced grade for the course, the course will be restored to the transcript and the new grade will be assigned.

8.2.4.9.7 Course Repeat

The requirement that a course be repeated.

8.2.4.9.8 Disciplinary Probation

Designation of a period of time during which the student is not in good standing. This may involve restrictions of privileges, the setting of behavioral expectations or other requirements, and the prescription of consequences for failing to meet probationary terms. The Registrar will note probation on the student's transcript.

8.2.4.9.9 Restriction from Employment at the University

Prohibition or limitation on university employment.

8.2.4.9.10 Removal from Specific Courses or Restriction from Particular Activities, Services, or Locations

8.2.4.9.11 Suspension

Separation from the university for a specified period of time or until stipulated conditions are met and suspension is lifted. The Registrar will note suspension on the transcript and place an academic hold on the student's record for the duration of the suspension. The Rackham Dean will consult with the Dean of the student's school or college in imposing this sanction.

8.2.4.9.12 Expulsion

Permanent dismissal from the program and separation from the university, which will be noted on the transcript. This sanction may only be authorized by the graduate school; schools or colleges that use their own academic integrity procedures may recommend this sanction to the Rackham Dean.

8.2.4.9.13 Withholding a Degree

Withholding a degree for a determined period of time or until the student has met certain conditions to comply with sanctions. This sanction may only be authorized by the graduate school; schools or colleges that use their own academic integrity procedures may recommend this sanction to the Rackham Dean.

8.2.4.9.14 Revoking a Degree

The Board may recommend that a degree that has been awarded be revoked if it determines that the facts of misconduct, if known before the awarding of the degree, would have resulted in a decision not to confer the degree. This sanction may only be authorized by the graduate school; schools or colleges that use their own academic integrity procedures may recommend this sanction to the Rackham Dean.

8.2.5 Findings and Decision

8.2.5.1 Advisory Report

The Hearing Board will submit a written advisory report notifying the Rackham Dean of its decision, including a summary of findings of fact and the decision of the student's culpability. If the student is found to have violated academic integrity policies, the report will recommend sanctions and the rationale for these. If the Rackham Dean has a conflict of interest or any other substantial reason that would prevent impartiality, an Associate Dean will receive the report. The report will be shared with the student, the reporting witness, and the Resolution Officer.

8.2.5.2 Review of Recommendations for Sanctions

To maintain consistency and fairness, the Rackham Dean or designee may consult with the Resolution Officer, the Dean of the student's school or college, and other persons with experience to review the recommended sanctions. The Rackham Dean, at the recommendation of the Resolution Officer, will determine sanctions to be applied, and will communicate the decision in writing to the student. Copies will be provided to the graduate program representative and to other offices and parties at the university directly involved in the hearing.

8.2.5.3 Records

The Resolution Officer will preserve all written and recorded notifications, reports, correspondence, and other materials, together with the recording of the hearing, and maintain a case file that includes attendance, date(s), location(s), and other basic information. The case file will be kept as part of the student's educational record for at least six years after the student's final term of enrollment.

8.2.6 Appeal

The student may appeal a decision on grounds that:

1. procedural error compromised the proceeding;
2. significant new evidence has become available that was not considered during the hearing; or
3. the sanctions are excessive or inappropriate relative to the violation. The appeal must include a statement of the grounds for appeal and the supporting facts.

8.2.6.1 Filing an Appeal

An appeal must be made in writing to the Resolution Officer within fifteen business days after receipt of the decision. Requests for exceptions to this deadline must be made within this period. If the appeal includes new evidence, the appeal will be shared with the reporting witness who will have the opportunity to provide a written response.

An Associate Dean of the graduate school will review the request for reconsideration. If the Associate Dean finds that the appeal provides insufficient grounds, the decision will stand with no further appeal. If the Associate Dean finds that the case warrants reconsideration, the Resolution Officer will select an Appeals Board to review the case and make recommendations to the Dean.

8.2.6.2 The Appeals Board

The Appeals Board consists of two faculty members and one graduate student drawn from the Rackham Integrity Panel, and will not include members of the original Hearing Board. No one will serve who has a conflict of interest.

The Appeals Board will evaluate the appeal in the context of the case file. The Appeals Board will see all materials used during the original hearing and all new evidence introduced by either party. The Appeals Board will not re-hear the case or call witnesses except when the members of the Board decide that new evidence is necessary. After reaching a conclusion by consensus, if possible, or by majority vote if consensus cannot be reached, the Appeals Board will make a written recommendation to the Rackham Dean. The recommendation may let stand the original decision and sanctions; revise the sanctions; or reverse the decision of the Hearing Board.

8.2.6.3 Decision and Communication

After receiving the recommendation of the Appeals Board, the Rackham Dean or the Dean's designee may decide to let the original decision stand; to alter the earlier decision and/or sanctions; or to reverse the original decision.

The Dean or the Dean's designee will prepare a letter to the student outlining the decision. Copies of the letter will be provided to the representative of the graduate program and to other offices and parties at the university directly involved in the hearing. The decision is final; no further appeal will be heard in the university.

9 Academic Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedures

Rackham's Academic Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedures are available to Rackham students who have a dispute or disagreement with faculty or staff about the equity and fairness of decisions or procedures that affect their academic standing, the conduct of their research, and progress toward the degree. Such issues may arise regarding fair and equal treatment in the conduct of a class, in the pursuit of the student's research, and in the grading or evaluation of academic work and research. Other issues may concern the equity and fairness of program, department, or Rackham policies.

Academic dispute resolution is a means for resolving disputes and achieving a workable outcome for all parties, within the integrity policies of the university. Resolutions are not imposed, but result from agreement of all parties.

The Rackham Resolution Officer, Darlene Ray-Johnson, is responsible for managing this policy and may be reached at RackResolutionOfficer@umich.edu.

Special note on extended time to degree allowances for doctoral students (see section 9.8) due to disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic.

9.1 Scope of the Policy

The Rackham Academic Dispute Resolution policy applies to disputes Rackham graduate students may have with faculty or staff regarding equity and fair treatment that may have an impact on grading or evaluation, on research activities related to or required by the graduate program, or other treatment that affects academic standing. This policy may not be used to appeal grade-related or other academic sanctions imposed as a result of any action taken under any honor code or academic integrity policy.

Other university policies and procedures apply to allegations of faculty and staff misconduct; such matters will be governed by appropriate policies administered under other university units:

- Complaints that a member of the faculty or staff has engaged in research misconduct will be handled by the Office of the Vice President for Research.
- Complaints that a member of the faculty or staff has violated the university's non-discrimination and harassment policies will be investigated by the university's Office of Institutional Equity. Faculty and staff who are also students, or a student who also has a staff appointment, may be subject to procedures described in the "Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities."
- Claims that a member of the faculty or staff has violated employment contracts will be investigated by Academic Human Resources.

A graduate student who alleges misconduct by a faculty or staff member must pursue the complaint in the most appropriate forum; a student may not pursue the same allegation in different venues. Students who agree to have a dispute mediated under this policy agree not to pursue the same matter in any other forum within the university. Students should consult the Resolution Officer in their school or college to decide which avenue is best for their circumstances, and about counseling and university resources that may be appropriate.

9.2 Resolution Board

Schools and colleges participating in this dispute resolution process designate a member of the faculty or senior administrative staff to serve as the unit's Resolution Officer. This person, in accordance with the principles and processes described below, oversees the mediation of disputes or disagreements covered under this policy. The Resolution Officers of the schools and colleges constitute the Resolution Board, which is convened by the Rackham Resolution Officer. The Rackham Resolution Board also includes four to five Rackham students who serve as Resolution Counselors for students. The Resolution Board keeps current with best practices for dispute resolution, provides mutual advice and support in the handling of disputes, and shares lessons learned with the Rackham Dean and the graduate programs about ways to improve policies, practices, and communication. The Resolution Board may seek advice from faculty and other university offices with expertise on mediation and conflict resolution.

9.3 Dispute Resolution Principles and Responsibilities

Adherence to principles of impartiality, confidentiality, timeliness, and effective communication are important to successful dispute resolution. The Rackham Graduate School works with the schools and colleges to ensure that these principles are understood and observed in the dispute resolution process.

9.3.1 Impartiality

A Resolution Officer will remain impartial. A Resolution Officer will recuse him/herself for a conflict of interest. Such circumstances include if the Resolution Officer has a personal or professional relationship with any party in the dispute that would impede his or her impartiality. In such instances, the Dean of the school or college may ask another impartial and qualified staff or faculty member to handle the dispute resolution process, or may ask the Rackham Resolution Officer to ask another member of the Resolution Board to provide this service. A student with concerns about the impartiality of a resolution process within his or her school or college should seek advice from the Rackham Resolution Officer. If the Rackham Resolution Officer, in consultation with the Resolution Board, concludes that such concerns about the substance or appearance of impartiality are substantial, another member of the Board may be asked to take the case.

9.3.2 Confidentiality

- A student may meet informally to discuss an issue with any Resolution Officer or Resolution Counselor. While these discussions will remain confidential to the extent permitted by law, confidentiality will not be maintained if the Resolution Officer or Resolution Counselor believes that disclosure is necessary to avoid an imminent risk of serious harm or is required by law.
- All parties implicated in the complaint have the right to know the details of the issues that give rise to the dispute. A student may not anonymously request a formal dispute resolution process.
- The Resolution Officer or Resolution Counselor may consult with the Rackham Resolution Officer and the Resolution Board, who will maintain confidentiality. Parties involved in a formal dispute resolution process are expected to maintain confidentiality so the process can be effective.
- When the resolution process suggests how academic policies and their implementation may be improved, the Resolution Board may share this information as appropriate with other graduate programs, while maintaining the confidentiality of personal information.
- Records summarizing the resolution of disputes will be archived by the Resolution Board and the Dean(s) of the relevant school or college. These records will be a resource for the Board. Personal information in these records will be kept confidential.

9.3.3 Timeliness

Timely address to disputes is important for successful resolution. Normally, resolution conferences will be held within ten business days from the time the Resolution Officer receives the case. The academic calendar may make it difficult to always adhere to this schedule, but the conference should be convened within a reasonable time.

9.3.4 Communication

Schools and colleges should maintain and make public dispute resolution procedures. Schools and colleges should also publicize these procedures to students, faculty, and staff. Resolution Officers are available to speak with a student about the purpose and principles of these procedures, and the implications of proceeding with a formal dispute resolution conference, including potential outcomes. The student must be kept fully informed at every step and participate in reaching a resolution.

9.4 Resolution Conference

While prompt informal discussion within the unit where the parties are enrolled or appointed can often resolve most disputes, a more formal process may be necessary to address disagreements that may have greater complexity and consequence. The formal resolution of dispute takes place in a resolution conference. Through the resolution conference, the parties seek to reach a mutual understanding of the causes of the dispute and to produce a solution guided by academic policies. The purpose of the resolution conference is to allow parties to a dispute to present their viewpoints, to share information, to clarify concerns and issues, to resolve misunderstandings or interpersonal difficulties that may contribute to an issue, to evaluate options for resolving the problem, and to reach a formal agreement on an outcome intended to resolve the dispute.

9.5 Academic Dispute Resolution Process

In many cases, academic disputes can be quickly and effectively resolved when addressed informally at the local level. Misunderstandings, miscommunications, and disagreements often can be resolved through such conversations.

1. A student may talk with the Graduate Chair as an initial step. The student may also consult informally with the Resolution Officer of the school or college who can offer impartial advice and suggest steps to resolve the issue.
2. Students in LSA, which does not have a Resolution Officer, may consult with the Rackham Resolution Officer.
3. All students are encouraged to seek information and advice from a Rackham student Resolution Counselor, who can offer neutral advice about how to address and resolve disputes.
4. If informal discussion does not resolve the disagreement, the student may seek a formal resolution conference within the school or college. With the exception of the LSA, each school and college has a dispute resolution process and designates a faculty or staff member to serve as a Resolution Officer who will conduct this process according to the procedures of the school or college.
5. Some LSA departments have dispute resolution processes; students in these departments should seek a formal dispute resolution conference within these programs. For LSA students whose programs do not have formal procedures, the Rackham Resolution Officer will organize a dispute resolution conference.
6. The Resolution Officer of the school or college will notify relevant parties and the Resolution Board and include a summary of the issue at disagreement.

7. When an academic dispute arises between a Rackham student and a faculty member of another school or college, the Rackham Resolution Officer, in consultation with the Resolution Board and the relevant Deans, will determine where the resolution conference process will be held.
8. Through the dispute resolution process, the parties will develop a resolution plan to which the parties consent. The Resolution Officer will summarize the key points of the agreed resolution in a memo of understanding. The parties to the dispute will sign the memo of understanding, signaling their consent to the terms of the resolution. Copies of the memo will be shared with the relevant Deans and the Resolution Board.
9. In the event that the parties are unable to reach an agreed resolution, the Resolution Officer will notify the relevant Deans and the Resolution Board in writing that a resolution could not be reached. The Dean of the school or college will refer the matter to the Rackham Resolution Officer within five business days of receiving the school/college's Resolution Officer's report.

9.6 Reconsideration

A student may ask the Rackham Resolution Officer to reconsider the dispute if he or she believes that the resolution process at the school or college level did not meet standards of fundamental fairness or if substantial relevant new evidence or information has become available after the resolution conference.

1. The student must make this request in writing within ten business days after receipt of written notification of the outcome of the resolution conference process in the school or college.
2. The Rackham Resolution Officer will ask the Resolution Officer of the school or college to provide a written report of the resolution process, and may talk individually with the parties to the dispute.
3. If the Rackham Resolution Officer and the Resolution Board find that the grounds for reconsideration have been established, they may recommend to the Rackham Dean that the school or college be asked to consider the dispute again or, if circumstances make it difficult to ensure an impartial inquiry, ask that the Resolution Board convene a new dispute resolution conference.
4. If the Rackham Resolution Officer and the Resolution Board determine that the grounds for reconsideration have not been established, they will recommend to the Rackham Dean that the school/college outcome be upheld. The Rackham Dean will notify the student of the outcome. This ends the reconsideration process.

9.7 Rackham Dispute Resolution Process

At the request of the Dean of a school or college, or if a school or college does not have a dispute resolution process, or as the result of a request by a student for reconsideration, the Dean of Rackham may agree to convene a dispute resolution process.

1. Resolution conferences for new cases or reconsiderations will be held usually within ten business days of the initiation of the case.
2. The Rackham Resolution Officer will invite all parties to submit written statements. The Rackham Resolution Officer may interview other persons who may be able to contribute to an understanding of the dispute, or ask them to provide written statements.
3. For new cases only (i.e., not reconsideration cases), the Rackham Resolution Officer may determine that, on the basis of this inquiry, the claims of the student are without merit. In this case, no further action will be taken.

4. A resolution conference will be conducted for the purpose of understanding the causes of the dispute and for producing a solution.
5. The parties in the dispute have the right to respond to claims made by others, either in writing or at the conference itself.
6. The conference will not be recorded.
7. The parties will be encouraged to seek a resolution to the dispute by agreeing on a course of action. The Rackham Resolution Officer will summarize the key points of the agreed resolution in a memo of understanding. The parties to the dispute will sign the agreement, signaling their consent to the terms of the resolution. Copies of the agreement will be shared with the relevant Deans and the Resolution Board.
8. If the parties are unable to reach a resolution through the conference process, they will be asked to submit a summary statement no more than two pages in length. Upon review of the Rackham Resolution Officer's report and of statements submitted by the parties, the Rackham Dean will determine a resolution outcome based on the preponderance of the information presented, and will communicate this to all parties and the Dean and Resolution Officer of the school or college.

9.8 Rackham Dispute Resolution Process (Expedited Process for extended time to degree of doctoral students due to the COVID-19 pandemic)

This expedited procedure is applicable to the resolution of disputes involving the provision of additional time to degree funding for doctoral students whose research and scholarship has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic as described in Rackham guidance and the plans of individual doctoral programs.

The Rackham dispute resolution procedures have been simplified to result in the quick and efficient resolution of extended time to degree disputes when students have concerns about the fairness of decision-making or procedures in making these decisions. The expedited process provides fewer procedural steps to ensure a rapid outcome.

In general, decisions at each stage of the process will be made within ten business days from the time the Resolution Officer receives case materials. Although case volume and/or the academic calendar may make it difficult to strictly adhere to this schedule, decisions will be made in as timely a manner as possible.

9.8.1 Rackham Dispute Resolution Process

1. Rackham's expedited dispute resolution process is available to doctoral students who have received written notification of the extended time to degree funding decision from their program and have exhausted all program appeal processes.
2. Students must submit their complaint (no more than two pages) within five (5) business days of receipt of the program's written decision. The complaint should include a copy of the program notification.
3. Upon receipt of the student's complaint, the Rackham Resolution Officer will invite the two parties to submit written statements. The parties in the dispute are the doctoral student and the doctoral program. The parties will have five (5) business days to submit materials.
4. Within two (2) business days of receipt of written statements by all parties, the Resolution Officer will forward the materials to a Rackham Ad Hoc committee drawn from staff and deans of the Rackham Graduate School. No one will serve who has a conflict of interest.
5. Within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written statements, the Ad Hoc committee will provide a written decision to the student, DGS/Program Director, and school/college Dean.

6. Either party—doctoral student or doctoral program—may appeal the Ad Hoc committee decision by contacting the Rackham Resolution Officer. Appeals must be submitted within five (5) business days of receipt of the Ad Hoc committee decision.

9.8.2 Rackham Appeal Process

1. To initiate the appeal process, either party may contact the Rackham Resolution Officer. The Rackham Resolution Officer will ask each party to submit a summary statement (no more than two pages in length). The parties will have five (5) business days to submit summary statements.
2. Upon review of the Ad Hoc committee decision and summary statements submitted by the parties, the Rackham Dean or the Dean's designee will determine a resolution outcome based on the preponderance of the information presented.
3. The Rackham Dean or the Dean's designee will provide written notification of the decision to all parties and the school/college Dean within 10 business days of receipt of case materials. This ends the Rackham Resolution process.

Appendix: University Policies on Rights, Integrity, and Conduct

- [Academic Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [Statement on Freedom of Speech and Artistic Expression](#)
- [University of Michigan Student Rights and Student Records](#)
- [Information for Students Regarding Religious-Academic Conflicts](#)
- [Policy Statement on the Integrity of Scholarship & Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Misconduct in the Pursuit of Scholarship & Research](#)
- [Sexual Assault Policy](#)
- [Sexual Harassment Policy](#)
- [Faculty-Student Relationship Policy](#)
- [Employee-Student Relationship Policy](#)
- [Use of Human Subjects in Research](#)
- [Policy Statement on Animal Research](#)
- [Academic Laboratory and Research Safety Policy](#)
- [University Ombuds](#)