GRADUATE ACADEMIC POLICIES

Program Curriculum Requirements

Upon acceptance into a graduate program, students will be e-mailed a letter of acceptance indicating the program to which they have been accepted; their advisor and the advisor’s contact information; and the curriculum planning guide outlining the course of study that the student needs to complete to meet graduation requirements. Students are required to notify Admissions of their acceptance and their anticipated start term. The student’s acceptance indicates the student’s plan to enter the program designated in the acceptance letter, the student’s agreement to follow the curriculum planning guide enclosed with the letter (aligned with the most current catalog), and the student’s agreement to follow through with the required initial advising meeting.

All admitted students are required to meet with their advisor in their first term of study. Advising meetings are available in person, online, and by phone. Some programs require students to meet with their advisors before beginning their first course and this requirement will be indicated in the acceptance letter. Admitted graduate students have an obligation to show progress toward earning a degree and the student’s curriculum must be completed within the original six-year program period. Students who do not complete requirements within six years of admission must petition their academic department using the Student Request form to request a waiver of the six-year time limit. Student Request forms are available on the Registrar’s Office website, campus.plymouth.edu/registrar. If the waiver is granted, students will be required to complete the program requirements outlined in the most recent curriculum planning guide and academic catalog, which may result in additional course or fieldwork requirements. The required curriculum planning guide will be included with the notification letter granting an extension of time to graduation. Students requesting such a waiver must meet with their advisor to review program changes and any additional requirements. Students being granted a waiver will need to submit an Academic Program or Catalog Change Form so their program reflects the current program requirements.

Changing Programs

Students who want to change programs must notify their advisor and submit a request to change programs using the Academic Program or Catalog Change form. Forms are available on the Registrar’s Office website, campus.plymouth.edu/registrar. Students will be advised of any additional admission requirements and once these requirements have been completed the student will be notified of an admission decision, issued a current curriculum planning guide, and notified of any required advising meetings. The University reserves the right to add, change, or delete curricular offerings.

Graduate Course Scheduling

All courses at PSU are identified by a discipline code and a four-digit course number. Graduate courses are identified by a number 5000 or above, (e.g., Research Design (ED 5030)). Mathematics courses numbered MG 3XXX or MG 4XXX may be taken for graduate credit.

The structure allows students to register for multiple courses in a year. The majority of graduate courses are scheduled during evenings, weekends, weeklong institutes, or online. Some degree programs, such as counseling and athletic training, and educator certification options, have specific residency and undergraduate course requirements unique to these areas of study.

Course offerings are posted online in myPlymouth or on the Registrar’s Office website, campus.plymouth.edu/registrar prior to the semester start date.

Earning Credits

Students may earn credit applicable to Plymouth State University degree programs by taking courses at PSU or by taking approved courses at other colleges/universities and transferring the earned credits as outlined below. Alternately, students may earn credit through independent study or individual enrollment.

Individual Enrollment

If extenuating circumstances exist, students may be permitted to register for an individual enrollment. This option only applies to required courses on the student’s curriculum planning guide. To register, an application for individual enrollment (on the Registrar’s Office website, campus.plymouth.edu/registrar) must be completed and submitted with the registration form. Individual studies are only available to admitted graduate students.

Transfer Credits

Grades for transfer courses must be a B or higher and appropriate to the program attempted at PSU. Only credits may be transferred, not grades; therefore, the grade for transfer courses does not count toward the required 3.0 grade point average for program completion. Generally, up to nine graduate-level credits from other regionally accredited institutions may be accepted in degree or certification programs, but not certificate programs. Courses cannot be transferred for credit if used in earning another degree. MBA, MS in Accounting, and EdD students should refer to the transfer credit policy in the respective catalog sections for more information.

An official transcript must be on file before credits can be considered for transfer to a PSU program. Course descriptions or course outlines or both may be requested in order to determine credit consideration.

Students should be aware that decisions about acceptance of credit in transfer are up to the receiving institution.

Grading System

All graduate students must maintain at least a 3.0 (B) grade point average. The graduate grade range is A through C– and F. There are no D grades as C– is the lowest passing grade in graduate classes.

Letter grades, with pluses and minuses noted, are used to assess the relative extent to which students achieve course objectives in the vast majority of PSU courses. Grade point average is calculated on a term and a cumulative basis that takes into account all grades earned by a
student during their academic career at PSU, including those earned prior to starting coursework toward a degree or certification program.

**Grade Point Average**
The following grade point system is used to determine grade point average:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points per Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A−</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B−</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C−</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Administrative Failure**
An Administrative Failure (AF) notation is placed on a student's transcript when an instructor does not have sufficient information to assign a letter grade in a graded course. Frequently, administrative failure stems from failure to formally drop a course. An AF counts as an F grade in grade point average calculation and is not a reason for a course withdrawal.

**Incompletes**
An instructor may decide to enter a grade of incomplete (IC) on a student's record if unusual circumstances prevent completion of the course on time, and a minimal portion of the total class work needs to be completed. The course must be completed by the date specified by the instructor that cannot exceed one year beyond the original term of course completion. If the course is not completed by this date, the grade specified by the instructor will be recorded. If no grade is specified, a default grade of F will be recorded. The instructor is responsible for documenting and notifying the student of the work to be completed and the deadline. A student may not graduate with an incomplete on his or her transcript. Note: A student with an outstanding incomplete in a course may not register again for that course.

**Academic Standing Policy**
An admitted graduate student is in good academic standing when the following conditions are present:
- The student has an academic program grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher
- The student has no more than one grade of incomplete (IC)

An admitted graduate student is not in good academic standing if either of these conditions is present:
- The student has an academic program grade point average (GPA) below 3.0
- The student has two or more incompletes (IC)

**Academic Probation**
Students are in academic probation if their credits and their academic program GPA falls in these ranges:
- \(< = 10\) attempted credits \(2.66 \rightarrow 2.99\)
- \(> = 21\) attempted credits \(2.85 \rightarrow 2.99\)

Students and their advisors are notified if they are not in good academic standing, and they must develop a corrective plan with their advisor. Students have one calendar year or two consecutive terms to raise their GPA to at least a 3.0. Students may not enroll in more than six credits if they are not in good academic standing.

Students with more than one incomplete will be prevented from registering for additional classes until all but one incomplete is resolved. If the student does not achieve good academic standing within the time frame, dismissal from the degree program will occur.

If the student wishes to appeal the dismissal, he or she should do so by submitting an appeal request to the Academic Affairs Committee. After dismissal, should the student want to continue, he or she must reapply and be accepted into the program.

**Academic Severance (or Dismissal)**
Students are dismissed from their degree program if their credits and their academic program GPA falls in these ranges:
- \(< = 10\) attempted credits \(< = 2.65\)
- \(< = 11 \rightarrow 20\) attempted credits \(< = 2.74\)
- \(> = 21\) attempted credits \(< = 2.84\)

If the student is dismissed and wishes to appeal the dismissal, he or she should do so by submitting an appeal request to the Academic Affairs committee. After dismissal, should the student want to continue, he or she must reapply and be accepted into the program.

*Please note that academic standing may impact financial aid status and veterans' and eligible dependents' receipt of veterans educational benefits.

* Other degree programs may have more stringent policies for maintaining academic standing in their degree program. See individual department program descriptions for further information.

**Graduate Capstone**
Students may elect to complete a culminating one- to 12-credit supervised project or practicum experience in a work environment, cooperating institution, or agency. Graduate students may participate in a variety of learning experiences arranged in conjunction with their program of study and with the approval of their advisor. Field and University supervisors work with graduate students to determine specific learning outcomes that will result from this experience, as well as procedures to meet those outcomes. Students will construct a learning portfolio to document specific outcomes of this experience and present this portfolio at the end of the term. A student self-evaluation and curriculum vitae detailing accomplishments to date should be included in the portfolio. Students in the master of science degree programs will present their research findings and may have other additional requirements.

PSU has limited funding for honoraria for supervisors, and therefore relies on professional partnerships with the community to assist graduate students in this apprenticeship learning model. Typically, students spend
40 hours per credit hour during a capstone experience, depending on the discipline.

**Graduate Internship or Practicum**

PSU’s teacher education programs are renowned in New Hampshire and throughout New England, and PSU’s graduates are actively recruited for teaching positions. Beginning as early as the first year, teacher education candidates have many opportunities to teach and learn in public elementary, middle, and high school settings. The certification program culminates in an intensive internship or practicum. The field experience is typically 12 weeks for a single-level endorsement (K-6, K–8, 5–9, 7–12) and two eight-week experiences (one at the primary level and one at the secondary level) for K–12 certification.

A student is required to have a 3.0 GPA to enter his or her internship, practicum, or final field experience. The student must achieve a B or better (or Pass in the case of Pass/No Pass courses) in his or her internship or practicum in order to be endorsed for NH educator or professional certification.

All teacher certification candidates who interact with students in public school settings through course-related field experience are subject to New Hampshire state legislation that requires all persons who regularly come into contact with pupils on a daily basis to undergo a full-disclosure criminal records check that may include fingerprinting. The criminal records check is conducted at the site school before the field experience begins. The fee for this processing is the responsibility of the teacher candidate and is paid directly to the school district. Inquiries should be directed to the Office of Educator Preparation.