

# **Graduate Academic Policies Handbook**

## **State University of New York at New Paltz**

We have made every effort to provide salient and accurate information in this handbook. However, the State University of New York at New Paltz assumes no liability for errors or omissions in this publication and reserves the right to alter existing rules and regulations such as those governing academic programs, academic standards, and organizational structures within its jurisdiction and after appropriate consultation. Students, faculty, and staff are expected to be governed by the information herein published or subsequently altered.

### **Affirmative Action**

SUNY New Paltz supports Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity and does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability, veteran status, marital status, or sexual orientation in education or employment, or in any of its policies or programs. All actions toward employees and students are based upon performance-related criteria. Further, SUNY New Paltz will not tolerate sexual harassment of employees or students.

Any persons alleging discrimination should contact the Affirmative Action Office at 257-3271.

# Academic Policies and Procedures

# Policies

Consistent with its mission as a public institution of higher education, SUNY New Paltz sponsors a broad spectrum of opportunities and services for graduate students in its service region. Although there is a stringent set of criteria for matriculation in a degree program, most students will have access to post-baccalaureate study at New Paltz. Although enrollment in some courses is restricted to matriculated students, many courses have prerequisites, and many others are open and available to students with graduate standing regardless of their field of preparation.

Graduate studies at New Paltz presuppose a rigorous course of study at a higher level and in greater depth than at the undergraduate level. Matriculated students follow a prescribed program, the “plan of study”, and must remain in academic good standing. Other students may register for courses for which they are qualified without regard to a “plan.”

Non-matriculated students who subsequently apply for matriculation are considered in a manner similar to undergraduate transfer students. That is, graduate credits earned prior to matriculation will be evaluated by the department to determine which, if any, may be applied to the degree. Factors to be considered in evaluating these credits include the grade received, the accreditation status of the school, and, for rapidly changing fields, the currency of skills and information covered in the courses.

The non-matriculated classification includes visiting students, students in the last term of their baccalaureate study, and others who do not plan to work toward a degree. On request, the College will provide an official transcript of all graduate courses completed and the grades earned. No official status or obligation pertains to non-matriculated students.

## **DEFERRAL POLICY**

The following deferral policy is applicable to some programs. Please check with your departmental advisor to see if this policy applies to you. Graduate program acceptance and matriculation is for the semester indicated in the student’s acceptance letter. Students who do not enroll in the semester for which they are accepted forfeit their place in the program. Students who have forfeited acceptance into a program have up to one year to request that their acceptance be reinstated. However, granting this request remains at the discretion of the program and the Dean of the Graduate School. After that point, it will be necessary to reapply. The Request for Deferral of Matriculation may be downloaded from our website at: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/graduate/forms.html> .

## PLAN OF STUDY

Once a student receives his/her letter of matriculation from the Dean of the Graduate School, he/she should meet with the assigned advisor to complete a Plan of Study. The Plan of Study is to be signed by the student, the student's academic advisor(s), the department chair, and is approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Secondary Education graduate students must have their plans approved by the Education and Content area advisors. Only two courses below B- (2.67 on the 4.00 scale) will be counted toward a graduate degree. Matriculated students with four or more grades below B- will forfeit their matriculated status. ***Please note that neither undergraduate courses, nor graduate courses with a grade of F may be included on a graduate Plan of Study.***

An official Plan of Study must be forwarded to the Graduate School for final approval by the Dean by end of the student's first semester of coursework following matriculation. Subsequent minor revisions to the plan may be made using the "Request for Change in Plan of Study" form which is available from the academic advisor(s) or from the Graduate School website at: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/graduate/forms.html>. If the student requires more extensive revision to his/her original plan of study, then a replacement plan should be filed with the Dean of the Graduate School.

## ADVISING

Candidates for graduate degrees are assigned an advisor who will assist in developing a plan of study to reflect the student's interests and career plans and to fulfill degree requirements. Students should not select courses without consulting their advisor or developing a plan of study.

Non-matriculated students may contact the Graduate School for advisement.

## ACADEMIC "GOOD STANDING" Note: Revised Academic Standing rules as of 10/12/2007

**Academic Good Standing** is defined as a cumulative GPA between 3.0 and 4.0.

**Academic Warning** is defined as a cumulative GPA between 2.75 and 2.99, after nine credits of graduate coursework. Students placed on academic warning will receive a letter from the Graduate School and must make appointments to meet with their academic advisor and the Dean of the Graduate School. After two consecutive semesters of academic warning, a student's registration is barred and the block is only removed after the student meets with the Dean of the Graduate School. If the student's academic status does not return to good standing after the third consecutive semester, the student may be academically dismissed.

**Academic Probation** is defined as a cumulative GPA between 2.50 and 2.74 after nine credits of graduate coursework. Students placed on academic probation will receive a letter from the Graduate School and must make appointments to meet with their academic advisor and the Dean of the Graduate School. While in this academic status, the student's transcript will be marked with a probation indicator. If a student fails to meet with the Dean, he/she will be blocked from future registration. Students will be academically dismissed after two consecutive semesters of academic probation.

**Academic Dismissal** is incurred once a student has earned a cumulative GPA below 2.5, after twelve credits of graduate coursework. Students will also be dismissed after three consecutive semesters of academic warning or after two consecutive semesters of academic probation. Once a student has been

academically dismissed, the student is deregistered from current coursework and future registration is prohibited. This action also means that the student cannot matriculate into another graduate program at SUNY New Paltz.

<b>GPA</b>	<b>Academic Standing</b>	<b>Comments</b>
3.00-4.00	Good Standing (GS)	
2.75-2.99	Academic Warning—1 <sup>st</sup> semester (W1)	Registration is not affected.
2.75-2.99	Academic Warning—2 <sup>nd</sup> semester (W2)	Registration is prohibited. Student must meet with Dean of The Graduate School before he/she will be allowed to register.
2.50-2.74	Academic Probation (AP)	Future registration is prohibited. A probation indicator will be noted on the student's transcript.
2.49 and ↓	Academic Dismissal (AD)	Registration is prohibited and student is deregistered from coursework.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their college work. Cheating, forgery, and plagiarism are serious offenses, and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action.

Cheating is defined as giving or obtaining information by improper means in meeting any academic requirements. The use for academic credit of the same work in more than one course without knowledge or consent of the instructor(s) is a form of cheating and is a serious violation of academic integrity. Forgery is defined as the alteration of college forms, documents, or records or the signing of such forms or documents by someone other than the proper designee.

Plagiarism is the representation, intentional or unintentional, of someone else's words or ideas without attribution or as one's own. Since words in print are the property of an author or publisher, plagiarizing is a form of larceny punishable by fine. When using another person's words in a paper, students must place them within quotation marks or clearly set them off in the text and give them appropriate footnoting. When students use only the ideas and change the words, they must clearly identify the source of the ideas. Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, therefore, is a violation of the property of the author plagiarized and of the implied assurance by the students when they hand in work that the work is their own. If students have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, it is their responsibility to clarify the matter by conferring with the instructor.

Faculty members must report in writing cases of cheating, plagiarism or forgery to their department chair, academic Dean and Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Faculty members are also responsible for making the initial determination of the academic penalty to be imposed in cases of cheating, plagiarism, or forgery and for informing in writing the department chair, the academic Dean, and the student of the alleged violation and the proposed penalty. The academic penalty may range, for instance, from failure of a specific

piece of work in a college course to failure of the course itself.

Cases requiring disciplinary and/or grade appeal action will be adjudicated in accordance with *Procedures for Resolving Academic Integrity Cases*, a copy of which is available in the office of the Dean of the Graduate School, the office of the Provost for Academic Affairs, and in the academic Dean's office.

## **GRADUATE APPEALS PROCEDURES**

### ***ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT GRIEVANCES***

The State University of New York at New Paltz complies with New York State Education Department regulations requiring that campuses have procedures in place for filing complaints and seeking resolution of perceived academic problems.

**Purpose:** The purpose of these policies is to facilitate the reconciliation of student complaints, including academic and nonacademic issues (e.g., student services, administrative concerns, or matters involving any form of discrimination). Grievances involving academic issues will be limited to final course grades and satisfactory completion of instructional program requirements.

#### **Student Complaints Regarding Alleged Sexual Assault, Harassment, and/or Discrimination**

If the complaint involves allegations of sexual assault or harassment, and/or discrimination based on race, sex, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or marital status, the student should use procedures administered through the Office of Compliance and Campus Climate, Haggerty Administration Building, Room 602A. Allegations of sexual assault, harassment, and/or discrimination should be reported immediately to the Office of Compliance and Campus Climate for confidential discussion.

#### **Student Complaints Regarding Nonacademic Issues**

If the complaint involves nonacademic issues, the student should follow the procedures set forth by the Department of Student Affairs and administered by the Dean of Students, Haggerty Administration Building, Room 702. However, students are encouraged to seek resolution of the perceived problem directly in the unit in question before initiating processes that are more formal.

#### **Student Complaints Regarding Academic Competence and/or Disposition**

If the complaint involves failure of a course, placement/practicum, or suspension or dismissal from a program for reasons related to competence or disposition, the student should contact the department chair or coordinator of the program in which the course is offered. The chair or program coordinator will assist you regarding these kinds of grievances.

#### **Student Grade Appeals**

The following procedures pertain to a student's grade appeal and reflect the College's commitment to a fair and prompt resolution of such appeals.

#### **Grade Appeal Procedures**

The procedures begin with an informal process (see Step I below) and proceed to a formal process (see Steps 2-5 below) that includes hearings and investigations that are intended to render an impartial solution.

The student may only appeal a final course grade (i.e., the grade submitted by the instructor at the end of the course.) The grades on individual course assignments may, however, serve as the primary evidence for a grade appeal.

### **Basis for Student Grade Appeals**

1. The student may not base a grade appeal on disagreement with the grading policy as established and published by the course instructor.
2. Only the final grade submitted by the course instructor at the conclusion of the course can be appealed. Grades on individual course assignments cannot be appealed separately in this process although demonstration of instructor's error on the grades for individual assignments may serve as the primary evidence for a successful appeal of the final course grade.
3. The student may base a grade appeal on the instructors' (a) failure to follow a published grading policy in calculating grades for the course as a whole or in calculating the grade for the complainant and/or (b) erroneous or unfair application of the published grading policy or standards in determining the complainant's grade in the course.

### **Time Limits**

At the informal level (Step 1), the student must file a grade appeal by the **second** week of the following semester. At the formal level (Steps 2), the grade appeal must be submitted to the department chair by the **fifth** week of the following semester.

### **Guidance Regarding Documentation**

The burden of proof in the grade appeal is always on the student. Therefore, the student must substantiate the grievance. Retention of all documentation from a course, including but not limited to the syllabus, tests, papers, and any other graded evaluations is strongly recommended.

### **Grievance Resolution Process**

The grade appeal process includes the possibility of hearings at the Department, School, Graduate Dean/Graduate Council, and Provost levels.

It is imperative that the student recognizes the responsibility for taking the initiative in the appeal and for processing the appeal. It is the student's decision whether or not to proceed to each step of the process.

Step 1: A student grade appeal can be filed only if the student has first attempted to resolve the complaint informally with the instructor involved. As previously stated, the contact must be initiated by the **second** week of the following semester. If the instructor is not available, the student should contact the department chair for assistance in contacting the instructor. It sometimes is the case that instructors are not available after the spring semester ends and during the summer months.

If a satisfactory resolution of the problem is not achieved and the student wishes to initiate a formal grade appeal, the instructor must provide the student a signed acknowledgement stating that the consultation took place, and that the student's attempt to resolve the appeal was unsuccessful. If a student wishes to initiate a formal appeal, see Step 2.

Step 2: The student who is unable to achieve resolution with the instructor may initiate a formal grade appeal, with the department chair (by the **fifth** week of the semester), by preparing a written statement. **If the chair is the party against whom the grade appeal is brought, the student may appeal at the dean's level (i.e., the dean of the School/College offering the course).** The appeal to the chair (or dean if the chair is by-passed) should include:

- A statement of the case in detail, including the reasons the student believes the grade should be reconsidered.
- All information about the consultation with the instructor.
- All relevant supporting materials, which should be identified and listed in an appendix.

The department chair will notify the instructor of the student's decision and, if deemed necessary, will advise the instructor to prepare a written statement explaining his/her position on the case. In attempting to resolve the grievance, the chair may consult with the student, instructor, and program coordinator. The chair's response to the student must be made within **ten** days of the date of the student's appeal. It should briefly state the nature of the appeal and the reason for its approval or denial. If a satisfactory resolution of the problem is not achieved, the student may appeal at the dean's level (i.e., the dean of the School/College offering the course).

Step 3: The student who decides to appeal to the School/College dean must inform the department chair of the decision, and must file the appeal with the dean within **two** weeks of receiving the department chair's decision. The chair will notify the instructor of the student's decision and will forward to the dean any correspondence pertaining to the case, as deemed necessary. The documentation that the student submits to the dean includes those described in Step 2, along with the correspondence from the instructor and the department chair.

Upon receiving the student's grade appeal, the School/College dean or his/her designee will examine the documentation and determine whether a hearing is needed. If the dean/dean's designee finds that there are no valid grounds for the grade appeal, s/he will inform the student and the course instructor (with a copy to the chair) of the finding. However, if the dean/dean's designee finds valid grounds for the grade appeal, the dean/designee will notify the student, the chair, and the instructor that a hearing will be held. The student and instructor may seek the dean's/dean's designee permission to bring to the hearing witnesses to support their position. The dean/dean's designee will hold the hearing as quickly as possible.

If the dean/dean's designee finds that the student has not proven that the course grade should be changed, the instructor's grade will stand, and the student will be notified of the decision within **one** week of the hearing. However, if the dean/dean's designee finds grounds to uphold the appeal, the dean/dean's designee, in consultation with the course instructor, will determine what the correct grade should be, and the dean/dean's designee will inform the student of the decision within **two** weeks of the hearing. The dean/dean's designee will require the course instructor to change the grade by submitting a grade change via [my.newpaltz.edu](http://my.newpaltz.edu). A record of this decision will be kept on file in the dean's office for six years.

Step 4: The student who is unable to achieve resolution at the School/College dean's level may appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School, and must inform the dean/dean's designee of the decision. The student must file the appeal with the Graduate Dean within two weeks of receiving the dean/dean's designee decision. The documentation that the student submits to the Graduate Dean includes those described in Step 2, along with the letters from the instructor, department chair, and School/College dean/dean's designee.

The Graduate Dean and Graduate Council will examine the documentation and determine whether a hearing is needed. If the Graduate Dean and Graduate Council find that there are no valid grounds for the grade appeal, the Graduate Dean will inform the student, course instructor, and School/College dean of the finding. However, if the Graduate Dean and Graduate Council find valid grounds for the grade appeal, the

Graduate Dean will notify the student, instructor, chair, and dean that a hearing will be held. The student and instructor may seek the Graduate Dean's permission to bring to the hearing witnesses to support their position. The Graduate Dean and Graduate Council may also call witnesses. The Graduate Dean and Graduate Council will hold the hearing as quickly as possible. If the Dean and Graduate Council find that there are grounds to uphold the appeal, the Graduate Dean, in consultation with the course instructor and School/College dean will determine what the correct grade should be. The Graduate Dean will require the course instructor to change the grade by submitting a grade change via [my.newpaltz.edu](http://my.newpaltz.edu). The Graduate Dean will notify the student of the decision, copied to the instructor, chair, School/College dean, and Provost. A record of this decision will be kept on file in the Graduate School for six years

Step 5: The student who is unable to achieve resolution at the Graduate Dean/Graduate Council level may appeal to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. The student must inform the Graduate Dean of the decision to continue the appeal, and must file the appeal with the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs within two weeks of receiving the Graduate Dean's decision. The documentation that the student submits to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs includes those described in Step 2, along with the letters from the instructor, department chair, School/College dean/dean's designee, and the Graduate Dean.

The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee will examine the documentation and determine whether the appeal will be granted or denied. In deciding the appeal, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee may consult with one or more of the following: student, instructor, chair, dean, and/or Graduate Dean. The Provost will notify the student of the decision, copied to the instructor, chair, School/College dean, and Graduate dean. A record of this decision will be kept on file in the Provost's Office for six years.

The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs' decision on the student's grade appeal is final. In other words, there is no appeal of this decision beyond the Provost's Office or in the future—with one exception. Only *new evidence* on the student's or course instructor's part will reopen an appeal. Any subsequent request to reactivate the appeal must be brought within one calendar year of a decision by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and would be addressed to the School/College Dean's office.

If a student grade appeal submitted by a graduate student in his/her last semester is successful after the student graduated, the College Registrar is authorized to make any grade change to the student's final transcript as directed by the School/College dean. A student must file a grade appeal by the mid-point of the following semester or forfeit his or her right to appeal the grade.

### **Confidentiality**

All individuals involved with a grade appeal are required to maintain the confidentiality of the proceedings and of all materials presented.

## **COURSE-NUMBERING SYSTEM**

The first three letters identify the department of origin of the course; the first digit denotes the level; the last two digits identify the course in the department's course taxonomy.

### **500-Level Courses.**

These are graduate courses designed to build upon the knowledge and skills achieved in an

undergraduate field of specialization.

**700-Level Courses.**

These are advanced courses designed specifically to extend in depth and specialization the knowledge and skills of the student who has an extensive background in the subject area. Appropriate prerequisites are indicated for these courses.

Graduate students do not receive credit for any course below XXX5XX.

## GRADING SYSTEM

Student performance in most courses is evaluated by letter grades according to the following scale: grades of A, A- which is outstanding work of consistently high order; B+ for work which is distinctly above average; B which is average work; B-, C+ for below average work; C, C-, D+, D, or D- for less than marginal work; F is failing.

The computation of grade point average is based upon the following point values:

A.....4.00	C.....2.00
A-.....3.67	C-.....1.67
B+.....3.33	D+.....1.33
B.....3.00	D.....1.00
B-.....2.67	D-.....0.67
C+.....2.33	F.....0.00

The mark of I (Incomplete) is awarded at the discretion of the instructor and at the request of a student, only when the student has completed at least three-quarters of the required work for a course, and where a personal emergency prevents the student from finishing the work on schedule. A student who receives an incomplete grade must complete the course work by the midterm (or by the date indicated on the campus calendar) of the next semester or the I will be converted to an F.

A student who does not register for one calendar year after the semester or summer session in which the incomplete was awarded will have the incomplete converted to a "permanent incomplete" (I\*) if the course is not completed, or an extension not granted, and the instructor does not change the grade within a calendar year of granting the incomplete. The "permanent incomplete" can never be changed, but a student may graduate with the mark on his/her record.

The mark of H (Hold) is used only in those few courses for which it has been approved, such as where the work begun for a Thesis in a given semester is continued into the following semester. The grade given at the end of the second semester automatically replaces the H given for the first semester. The mark of H is also frequently assigned, instead of an I, when the coursework in "Thesis" is incomplete.

Students may not graduate with an H or an I on their record. There is one exception to this rule. A student with an incomplete in a course which was taken in his/her last semester at New Paltz and which is not needed to fulfill any college, curriculum, major, or minor requirement may request a permanent incomplete (I\*). This request must be made in writing to the Registrar, HAB 13, and, if the permanent incomplete is granted, the mark can never be changed. This exception does not apply to the mark of H.

### Calculation of Grade Point Average

All SUNY New Paltz graduate courses on the student's graduate transcript regardless of matriculation status are used to calculate the GPA.

## **S/F Option**

Graduate students may not elect the S/F Option (formerly listed as the S/U Option) for graduate classes.

Graduate students who take an undergraduate class outside of their disciplinary area may petition the Dean of the Graduate School for the S/F option (formerly listed as the S/U Option) for this class. This option will be granted once for any graduate student.

## **Replace Course Grading Option**

Matriculated graduate students may elect to repeat a course under the "Replace Course Grading Option." The "Replace Course Grading Option" is available to matriculated graduate students as a *one-time*, single course option, subject to the approval of their advisor or department chair, and the Dean of the Graduate School. Under this option, when the course is repeated, only the second grade will be calculated in a student's cumulative grade-point average.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM A COURSE**

A student may withdraw from a course until the date specified in the academic calendar, with the payment of a fee. The relevant dates are specified in the academic calendar which appears in the Schedule of Classes. A course withdrawal after that date will be permitted only for compelling non-academic reasons; students should consult with the office of the appropriate Dean of the faculty for detailed information. No record of course enrollment will appear on the transcript if a course is dropped during the course-change period. A grade of W will be recorded for withdrawals from courses after the course-change period and until the course withdrawal deadline date. A grade of F\* will be recorded for any student who informally drops a course without following the procedure outlined above. The signature of the instructor and last date of attendance must be on the withdrawal form.

## **SECOND DEGREE AT THE SAME LEVEL**

Under certain conditions, students may earn a second degree at the same level. Students may pursue a second master's degree once the first degree has been awarded. Petitions for a second degree are referred to the Dean of the Graduate School by the Department Chair of the discipline in which the second degree is proposed. The following regulations apply:

1. The plan of study of the second degree must be substantially different from the plan of study of the first degree so as to constitute, in the judgment of the faculties concerned, a new discipline.
2. At least two-thirds of the credits of the second degree, or a minimum of 24 credits, whichever is greater, must be credits that were not included in the first degree.
3. All relevant degree requirements, including residency requirements, must be satisfied for both degrees.

In addition, we have three approved concurrent programs:

- The MAT in Biology and the MA in Biology
- The MAT in English and the MA in English
- The MAT in Mathematics and the MA in Mathematics (This program has been temporarily placed on hold.)

## **FIELDWORK/SELECTED TOPICS COURSES**

Selected topics courses are regularly scheduled courses that focus on a particular subject. They may be offered by any department. Descriptions of selected topics courses are printed in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Fieldwork courses are approved experiences offered by individual academic departments to enable students to enrich their academic program with applied work in their field of study. Fieldwork courses may be offered by any department. Permission of the instructor, the chair, and the Dean of the Faculty are required to enroll in a fieldwork course. The Fieldwork request form may be downloaded from the Registrar's website at: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/registrar/forms.html>.

## INDEPENDENT STUDY

The primary purpose of an independent study is to enable the student to pursue knowledge and understanding in an area not covered by a regularly offered course or to a greater depth than is possible through an existing course. Independent study places the major responsibility for learning directly upon the student, who must have sufficient maturity to identify and resolve a problem through extensive and rigorous research, to search for and to integrate information from a variety of sources, to interpret the data, and to express clearly the meaning of the whole. It is essentially a tutorial course involving close and frequent contact between the student and an instructor.

Because an independent study presupposes a serious interest on the part of the student to study and to research a particular problem or area, it is expected that the instructor and student will devote sufficient time to consider the project in advance to ensure that it is both worthwhile and feasible.

Any single independent study may be offered for 1, 2, 3 or 4 semester credit hours. Up to 6 semester credit hours in independent study may be applied to graduate degrees. All independent study requests must be approved in advance by the instructor, the advisor, the department chair and the Dean of the School or College. The Independent Study request form may be downloaded from the Registrar's website at: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/registrar/forms.html> .

## NON-MATRICULATED STUDENT CREDIT LIMIT

Registration is blocked for any non-matriculated student after six to nine graduate credits. The student is required to sign a waiver in the Graduate School in order to remove the block. He/She must obtain the permission (through signature) of the department chair or the appropriate academic dean before registering for courses beyond the 6-9 credit limit. Should the student be accepted for matriculation, only 6-9 graduate credits may be transferred to the graduate degree program. The Non-matriculated Student Waiver may be downloaded from our website at: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/graduate/forms.html>

## RESIDENCE AND TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY

Residence credit is defined as credit earned in courses offered by New Paltz full-time or adjunct professors in a regular or summer session. Twenty-four semester hours of graduate study normally constitute the minimum residence credit requirement for graduate degrees.

On the recommendation of the department, up to nine transfer credits (some departments may accept fewer) may be applied to the degree at the time of matriculation, subject to the following conditions:

- The course was taken at the graduate level at an accredited institution.
- A grade of B or better was earned in the course.
- The course was taken **before** matriculation at New Paltz.
- Courses may be no older than seven years.

For transfer credits to be posted to the New Paltz transcript, these conditions must be met. The Graduate School requires an **official** copy of the transcript, the course must be listed on an approved Plan of Study (or amended Plan of Study) and a New Paltz equivalent course must be assigned by the department. The Graduate Credit Transfer Request form may be downloaded from our website at: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/graduate/forms.html>

- *Transfer credits may be given after matriculation under special circumstances with permission of the Dean of the Graduate School.*

### **Graduate credits taken while an undergraduate at New Paltz, but not required for the undergraduate degree**

On the recommendation of the department and with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, SUNY New Paltz graduate students may transfer to their graduate program up to nine (9) graduate credits taken as an undergraduate at SUNY New Paltz, that were not used to fulfill requirements for their undergraduate

degree. These courses must be listed on the Plan of Study as approved transfer credits. Courses may be no older than seven years. The Graduate Credit Transfer Request form may be downloaded from our website at: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/graduate/forms.html>

## **TIME LIMIT FOR COMPLETION OF DEGREE**

All requirements for a graduate degree, including transfer credits, must be met within seven years of the completion date of the first course listed on the plan of study. After that date, students' matriculation status may be cancelled. Some departments may specify a shorter period. If the time limit expires, students must write to the department with a request, and a projected completion date. If the department recommends approval, the coordinator sends this request to the Dean of the Graduate School for consideration. The Request for Extension of Time form may be downloaded from our website at: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/graduate/forms.html>

*NOTE: Students are expected to consult college publications to determine deadlines for various procedures related to their academic programs. These include course withdrawals, graduation notification, registration, and payments.*

## **AUDIT PRIVILEGES**

Some academic courses may be audited. Registered students at the State University of New York at New Paltz, faculty and staff of New Paltz, and persons over 60 years of age may audit courses without paying a registration fee. For all others, a non-refundable registration fee of \$50.00 will be charged and payable to Student Accounts. Persons who would like to audit a course must obtain an Audit Form from the Office of Records and Registration. The completed form must have the signatures of (a) the chair of the department offering the course and (b) the course instructor.

The Audit Form must be returned to the department offering the course by the end of the "course add" period. Persons required to pay the registration fee must submit proof of payment with their completed Audit Forms.

The audit privilege permits the auditor to attend a course, providing there is room in the course and the necessary approvals have been granted, and to do assignments, but it does not permit the auditor to take examinations in the course or to have his or her work evaluated in any other way. The auditor receives no grade for the course, nor is any record of course attendance kept in the Office of Records and Registration. Students may not change their enrollment status from audit to credit, or from credit to audit.

Audit privileges are not ordinarily available in studio, laboratory, fieldwork, or performance courses, or courses where class participation of students is of major importance, nor are they available in credit-free courses offered by the institution or in any foreign study program or course.

## **CULMINATING ASSESSMENTS**

The requirements for a master's degree may include at least one of the following: passing a comprehensive exam, writing a thesis based on independent research, giving an oral defense of the thesis, or completing an appropriate special project or internship.

## **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS**

Students who fail the comprehensive examination may petition the department for permission to take it a second time. The petitioner must outline what additional study is planned to prepare for the second attempt. In some cases, students may not repeat the examination earlier than one calendar year after the first attempt. Failure of the examination on the second attempt results in forfeiture of matriculation.

Comprehensive examinations are required for the following curricula:

**Master of Science in Education Adolescence Education**

*Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, English, Mathematics, Social Studies:*

Liberal arts subject matter only. Morning test of 150 minutes. Earth Science also requires an oral examination. The Biology program requires an oral examination based on course work.

*French, Spanish:* Liberal arts subject matter only.

## **Master of Arts in Teaching**

Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, English, French, Mathematics, Social Studies, Spanish: Liberal Arts subject matter only. Consult with the advisor or the chair of the Department of Secondary Education.

## **Master of Arts**

Biology, Chemistry, English, Geology, Mathematics, Psychology (oral defense of the thesis), Sociology: (Consult with the advisor or the department chair).

## **Master of Science**

Communication Disorders: Written and oral examination based on the student's course work and clinical practica.

Computer Science: A comprehensive examination based on graduate course work is required.

Electrical Engineering: A comprehensive examination is required for students pursuing the non-thesis option. The examination will cover several subjects.

Please consult the advisor or the department chair about the comprehensive exam.

# **THESIS**

Theses are required for some masters' programs. After approval by the thesis committee and the department chair, all theses are submitted to the Library for binding and/or for cataloging. Only after the Library accepts the thesis and provides the student with the necessary acceptance letter for the Registrar's Office may the degree be granted.

There is a \$25 binding fee for M.A. and M.S. theses and a \$10 fee for M.F.A. theses, which become part of the permanent collection and do not circulate. The procedure must be completed before awarding of the degree.

Guidelines for the submission of a master's thesis to the Sojourner Truth Library are available on the Library's web site: <http://lib.newpaltz.edu/policies/masters.html>.

## **Basic Requirements for Theses**

### **1) Thesis Basics**

- a. A thesis is generally intended to be a capstone experience for graduate students.
- b. Theses involving the participation of or the collection of data from or about human subjects require prospective review and approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to recruitment of or interaction with human subjects. An application must be submitted to the IRB in a timeframe that allows adequate time for review and approval prior to the anticipated start of the research project.
- c. Each program must develop its own written thesis guidelines, which it should disseminate to students and faculty in a systematic and clear way. These guidelines must be reviewed by the Graduate Council and should be consistent with the basic requirements described below.
- d. Graduate programs can:
  - i. Require a thesis of all students
  - ii. Make a thesis optional for all students
  - iii. Not offer a thesis

### **2) Thesis Credits and Registration**

- a. The Graduate School permits theses of 3 or 6 credits.
- b. Each program determines which of these credit options are available to its students.
- c. Each program must have a clear procedure that indicates when a student is eligible to register for thesis. Further, programs must differentiate requirements for completing thesis course requirements from requirements for completing the thesis itself.

### **3) Thesis Advising**

- a. A thesis advisor is required for every thesis.
- b. Each program must clearly inform students how to solicit and select a thesis advisor.
- c. In some programs, advisors may be assigned to students. In others, students may solicit advisors.
- d. If a student encounters difficulty obtaining a thesis advisor, the department chair and program/graduate coordinator must work with the student to resolve the issue.

### **4) Thesis Committees and Oral Defenses**

- a. The incorporation of thesis committees and oral defenses of thesis are up to individual programs.

- b. The composition of a thesis committee (if any) and the planning, meeting, and review/defense schedules pertaining to the thesis are at the discretion of individual programs. These details must be communicated in writing, in a timely fashion, to the student, the advisor, the department chair, and filed with the Dean of the Graduate School.
- 5) **Thesis Grading**
  - a. Theses are graded using traditional A-F letter grades.
  - b. Thesis advisors assign thesis grades, though it is expected that in doing so they will listen to the input of the thesis committee (in programs where there is one).
- 6) **Thesis Credits**
  - a. Students can register for 3 or 6 credits of thesis at a time; for a 6-credit thesis, students may divide their credits into 3 or 6 credits per term, as necessary.
  - b. Thesis credits are graded on an "A-F" basis.
  - c. The "H" grade is assigned when the student is making good progress on the thesis, but is not finished within the semester the credits were taken.
  - d. Students with an "H" grade who are not taking any other classes must register for 1-credit of Continued Registration for every fall and spring semester that follows until the thesis is completed. If the student is working on the thesis during a summer session, the student must register for the 1-credit Continued Registration for that summer session, as well.
- 7) **Thesis Completion Deadline**
  - a. Students have until their degree deadline to complete their theses.
  - b. Students are urged to work with their advisors to devise a schedule that allows them to complete theses in a reasonable time period. Though individual situations vary, it is anticipated that in most cases theses will not take more than one academic year to complete.
- 8) **Thesis Submission and Storage**
  - a. Theses must be submitted to the library in accordance with its submission standards. It is the student's responsibility to submit the thesis with original signature page prior to graduation.
  - b. Programs should keep their own copies of student theses, or at least have online access to them once the library switches over to electronic thesis submission.
  - c. Students and advisers must insure that any "H" grades are changed to a credit-bearing letter grade; until this is done, the student cannot graduate.

## CONTINUED REGISTRATION

Some graduate students may be required to register for a one (1) credit "Continued Registration" course. See your advisor for further information.

### Continued Registration for Non-Completers of Comprehensive Exams:

- 1) Students who wish to devote the semester immediately following the completion of their coursework to prepare for their comprehensive exams, must obtain approval from their graduate program coordinator or chair. These students must register for a zero credit (no fee) workshop in the semester immediately following the completion of their coursework. This Comprehensive Exam Workshop is only offered for one semester.
- 2) Students who have completed their coursework, the Comprehensive Exam Workshop and have failed to complete the comprehensive exam at the end of the semester, must register for a one credit continued registration course each subsequent semester until they pass the comprehensive exam or maximize the 7-year years allowed for the completion of their degree. There will be no extensions beyond this 7-year time limit.