

2022 - 2023 GRADUATE CATALOG

ADMISSION & ACADEMIC INFORMATION

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Admission to Graduate College

Individuals who meet the admission requirements listed below may apply to ATU. The University reserves the right to reject the application of any individual. Every student must complete an application for admission.

Priority deadline date for fall admission is March 1 and spring admission is October 1. This will ensure consideration for admissions and assistantships. Students who do not meet this deadline, may submit necessary credentials for admission up to two (2) weeks in advance of the initial date of enrollment. Applicants for admission must submit a completed application form and request from the college or university granting their bachelor's degree an official transcript be sent directly to the Graduate College.

Detailed information regarding graduate student admissions may be obtained by contacting:

Graduate College

1507 North Boulder Avenue Tomlinson 113

Russellville, AR 72801

Email graduateadmissions@atu.edu

Phone (479) 968-0398

Fax (479) 964-0542

Online <https://www.atu.edu/gradcollege/>

Applicants must meet the admission requirements established for a particular degree program. Approved applicants will be notified in writing of their eligibility for admission to graduate study. Application for admission will be valid for one (1) calendar year; applicants who do not enroll during the calendar in which they applied will be required to reapply for admission. Admission to graduate study does not imply admission to a specific program or to candidacy for a degree.

ATU will provide equal opportunity in admission to all persons. This applies to all phases of the admission process. Any demographic information collected through the Admission Application is on a voluntary basis and is to be used in a nondiscriminatory manner consistent with applicable civil rights laws for reporting and statistical purposes only and cannot affect eligibility for admission.

Any student requiring special accommodations in order to complete a course or program of study should contact Disability Services, Doc Bryan, Room 141, or call (479) 968-0302. Disability Services administers programs and services associated with the Americans with Disabilities Act and serves as a liaison for students with disabilities.

Beginning June 1, 2007, all students at ATU will be assigned a permanent, randomly generated, student identification number. Student's social security numbers will be used only on applications for admission and solely for the purposes of State and Federal reporting requirements and determination of eligibility for Federal financial aid.

Persons born after January 1, 1957 must furnish proof of immunity against measles, mumps, and rubella by sending proof of one (1) MMR immunization shot to the ATU Health and Wellness Center prior to enrollment in classes. For more information, contact the Health and Wellness Center at (479) 968-0329.

Unconditional Admission for Entering Graduate Students

Admission applicants must:

- 1 .Applicants must pay a \$40.00 nonrefundable application
- 2 .Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree from an institutionally accredited college verified by an official

3. Applicants must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 on the last 30 hours of undergraduate work or hold a graduate degree from an institutionally accredited institution to be accepted into ATU. Admission to graduate study does not imply admission to a specific program or to candidacy for a degree individual programs may require a higher GPA
4. Applicants must request a complete undergraduate official transcript from their bachelor's awarding institution sent directly to Graduate Admissions. Electronic official transcripts may be emailed to graduateadmissions@atu.edu.
5. Applicants must meet additional admission requirements specified by programs in the graduate catalog.

*The application fee may be applied to defer admission in the same program for up to one (1) calendar year. If an applicant does not complete the admission process within one (1) calendar year, or if the applicant applies to a new program, the applicant is responsible for submitting a new application fee.

Conditional Admission for Entering Graduate Students

Applicants may be admitted conditionally if they do not meet one of more of the requirements of conditional admission:

1. Meet one or more of the requirements for unconditional admission.
2. Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited
3. Meet additional admission requirements specified by programs in the graduate catalog
4. Submit all necessary documentation prior to initial

Applicants who do not meet the grade point requirement specified for admission may be admitted conditionally. Upon completion of twelve (12) semester hours with a grade point average of 3.00 or better the student will be granted unconditional status.

If the applicant does not meet additional admission requirements specified by programs in the graduate catalog the program director may require the applicant to complete up to thirty (30) undergraduate hours in addition to graduate credits required for the degree.

Former Graduate Students

Students who have interrupted their attendance at ATU for more than one calendar year must reapply for admission. Students seeking readmission after suspension or dismissal must undergo a formal review by the program director and the Graduate Dean, who will determine admission eligibility.

Transfer Graduate Students

Transfer students seeking admission to ATU's Graduate College must submit official transcripts from all colleges/universities where they have been officially registered in graduate coursework. Transfer students must meet unconditional admission standards, and be in good academic standing at their previous graduate institution(s). Please see the Transfer of Graduate Credit section regarding transferring credit into an Arkansas ATU graduate program.

Non-Degree Admission

Applicants not pursuing a graduate degree may be admitted as non-degree seeking graduate students, upon submitting a completed application for admission to graduate study and an unofficial transcript from an accredited college or university showing a baccalaureate or higher degree has been earned at that institution. Applicants requesting non-degree admission must meet the same grade point admission criteria as outlined for degree admission. A maximum of twelve (12) graduate hours earned while in non-degree status may apply to a degree program. Students desiring to change from a non- degree admission status to a degree admission status must apply for degree admission.

Non-Academic Rejection

Please note that academic performance is not the sole criterion for admission to the university. The university may evaluate a person's behavior and background to determine their ability to maintain the standards of academic and professional conduct expected at the university. An evaluation may take into consideration current behavior and performance as well as past experiences and actions. Simply qualifying for admission does not guarantee admission.

Transient Admission

Applicants who are pursuing a graduate degree at another institution may be admitted as transient graduate students upon submission of a completed application for admission to graduate study and an official statement from their institution verifying they have been admitted to its graduate program and are in good standing.

International Graduate Student Admissions

The International Admissions is pleased to assist international students who wish to study at ATU. Any student who is not a United States citizen or a permanent resident of the United States is considered an international student. International students are subject to out-of-state tuition rates and an international student services fee, as well as, additional admission requirements. The application for international admission and all supporting documents should be submitted by March 1 for the fall semester and October 1 for the spring semester for priority consideration. Application deadlines for regular admission are June 1 for fall semester and November 1 for spring semester. Admission will not be granted until all supporting documentation as listed above has been received and evaluated. Upon acceptance, notification will be sent to the student along with an I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility).

Any deferral of admission requires updated evidence of financial support. The application fee may be applied to defer an application for admission in the same program for up to one (1) calendar year from the original application date. However, the applicant is responsible for paying a \$25 USD fee for each deferral within the calendar year. If an applicant does not complete the admission process within one (1) calendar year from the original

application date, or if the applicant applies to a new program, the applicant is responsible for submitting new application and Graduate College fees. Please send a written request for deferral imsso@atu.edu within 60 days of the start date of your last admission.

Full payment of tuition and fees must be paid at registration each semester. International students are required to purchase a health insurance policy provided by the university. ATU receives no remuneration as a result of international student enrollment in the health insurance plan.

More detailed information regarding international student admissions may be obtained by contacting International Admissions, Brown Hall, Suite 104, ATU, Russellville, Arkansas, 72801-2222, USA; telephone (479) 356-2217; fax (479) 880-2039; <https://www.atu.edu/imsso>.

Transfer of Graduate Credit

Graduate Credit Taken Prior to Admission to ATU

A maximum of 25% of the coursework required for a graduate degree (e.g., six (6) semester hours of graduate credit in a 30-hour program and nine (9) semester hours of graduate credit in a 36-hour program) with a grade point average of "B" or better may be transferred from an accredited graduate school if deemed appropriate to the graduate program by the head of the student's major department and the Graduate College Dean. A maximum of three (3) semester hours of graduate credit with a grade point average of "B" or better may be transferred from an accredited graduate school for a graduate certificate program if deemed appropriate to the graduate program by the head of the student's major department and the Graduate College Dean. No more than 25% of graduate coursework can be earned through PLA and/or transfer hours.

Students must send a written request to the head of their major department to petition an acceptance of the transfer credit prior to requesting admission to candidacy to the graduate program. Graduate credit earned six (6) years prior to the completion date of all degree requirements may not be applied toward the degree without the approval of the appropriate program director and the Graduate College Dean. Credits earned by correspondence courses or for remedial purposes will not apply toward the graduate degree. No undergraduate course may be repeated for graduate credit.

Graduate Credit Earned Six Years' Prior to Degree Completion

The maximum timeframe for which a student's previous academic credits can be counted toward a graduate degree is six years. Effective May 1, 2020, the Graduate College will only approve, in rare circumstances, a deviance from the requirement for all program courses to be completed within a six- year timeframe if the affected student submits documented proof of being current in the subject matter(s) of the course(s) outside of the six-year window. Currency can be documented via professional practice, continuing education, or other appropriate means. This documentation must be endorsed by the program director and approved by the Dean of the Graduate College.

Graduate Credit Taken After Admission to ATU

If after admission to graduate study, a student wishes to take a course at another institution to count toward degree requirements at ATU, the student must (in advance of enrollment) obtain written approval from the program director and the Dean of Graduate College.

Prior Learning Assessment

The term "Prior Learning Assessment" (PLA) is the process by which an individual's experiential and extra-institutional learning is assessed and evaluated for purposes of granting college credit. Supporting documentation that demonstrates learning outcomes, competencies, and professional skills gained through prior learning must be submitted.

Students may be awarded credit for prior learning not to exceed 25% of the coursework required for a graduate degree (e.g., 6 hours for a 30 or 33 credit hour program or 9 hours for a 36-credit hour program). No more than 25% of coursework can be earned through PLA and/or transfer hours.

Students may be awarded up to 3 credit hours for prior learning for a graduate certificate.

The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board sets credit limits for experiential/prior learning assessment. Not all programs provide the PLA credit option. Every student requesting credit for prior learning must submit the required documentation or complete an examination (as required by the degree program) to demonstrate the graduate-level learning that has resulted from experiences outside a formal academic framework. Faculty from the program will evaluate the PLA request to determine if the student qualifies for PLA credit. PLA credit must be earned for a specific course, and cannot be earned for generic credit toward a graduate degree or certificate.

Eligibility

A student must be admitted to and enrolled in an Arkansas Tech University graduate certificate or graduate degree program to be eligible to apply for PLA credit.

Application

An application form must be completed and submitted to the student's graduate program director. The application must be evaluated by program faculty and, if recommended for approval, be signed by the program director, department head, college dean, and graduate college dean. Application for PLA and listing of current approved credit is available on the Arkansas Tech University Graduate College website.

Second Master's Degree

Subject to the approval of the advisor, program director, and Dean of Graduate College a graduate student may be allowed to apply six (6) or nine (9) semester hours toward a second master's degree. If the second master's degree requires 30 hours, a maximum of six (6) hours may be applied to the second degree. If the second master's degree requires 36 hours or more, a maximum of nine (9) hours may be applied to the second master's degree.

Any courses applied to the second master's degree must meet the requirements for the degree and must not be more than six (6) years old at the time of completion of the second master's degree. All remaining courses applied to meet the requirements for the second master's degree must be taken in residence at ATU. Approval for applying these courses must be received at the beginning of the second master's degree program.

Accelerated Bachelor to Master Degree Programs

Colleges with existing Master's degree programs may offer an accelerated undergraduate to graduate degree program (designated as an Accelerated Bachelor's Plus Master's Degree Program) allowing qualified undergraduate students to register for graduate level credit hours as undergraduates and receive dual credit toward both undergraduate and graduate degrees within the designated programs that comprise the Accelerated Bachelor's Plus Master's Degree Program. Accelerated Bachelor's Plus Master's Degree Programs are designed as continuous combined programs with a seamless transition from the Bachelor's degree program into the Master's degree program.

Each Accelerated Bachelor's Plus Master's Degree Program will establish the number of credit hours to receive dual credit subject to approval by Academic Affairs and the Graduate College through the normal University curricular approval process. A maximum of twelve graduate level credit hours can be double-counted towards the Bachelor's degree and the Master's degree. AB2M students may enroll in no more than six graduate-level credit hours in any given semester.

Each Accelerated Bachelor's Plus Master's Degree Program will establish the selection criteria for students to qualify; these criteria are subject to approval by Academic Affairs and the Graduate College through the normal University curricular approval process. These criteria may vary by program. The criteria stated here are the minimum required by the university; the student is responsible for referring to each program's specific criteria to ensure eligibility.

The curriculum will follow the existing curriculum in the undergraduate and graduate degree programs comprising the Accelerated Bachelor's Plus Master's Degree Program. Selected 5000 and 6000 level courses in the graduate program will be eligible for dual credit both in the undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

Students in Accelerated Bachelor's Plus Master's Degree Programs will apply for graduation with the Bachelor's degree on the schedule delineated in the undergraduate catalog and will receive their bachelor's degree upon completion of all the requirements for the undergraduate degree. The Master's degree will be awarded when the student has completed the remaining requirements for the graduate degree.

Admission Requirements

Students may apply for admission into the Accelerated Bachelor's Plus Master's Degree Program in their Junior year if the following conditions are met:

- complete a minimum of 90 credit hours towards their Bachelor's degree connected to the AB2M program
- earn a minimum grade point average of 3.0 or better in those undergraduate courses (and maintain the 3.0 GPA throughout their time as an AB2M student)
- Complete an [official application](#) for admission to accelerated programs

Applicants who complete the requirements above along with their respective departmental requirements will be conditionally accepted to the accelerated graduate program as an undergraduate student.

Military students should work with their academic advisor to review their transcript for consideration for an AB2M program.

Program Requirements

Upon the completion of Bachelor's degree requirements, students will be accepted into the Graduate College at a status consistent with the Graduate College and individual program guidelines. Students must meet all the graduate requirements for dual credit courses to receive graduate credit for these courses to contribute toward their Master's degree. Only grades B or better will count toward graduate credit. Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA while completing the accelerated program.

If an AB2M student earns a "C" grade (or lower) in a graduate level course, they will be removed from the AB2M program, which means the student will no longer be able to take graduate-level courses that count toward an undergraduate degree AND the student will no longer be automatically accepted into a graduate program (and thus must apply to a graduate program via the traditional pathway upon completion of the Bachelor's degree). Further, if an AB2M student earns a 'C' grade (or lower), the "C" grade will appear on both the undergraduate and graduate transcripts. For graduate programs, a maximum of six (6) hours of courses with the grades of "C" may be applied to the graduate degree requirements. Graduate students must have a grade point average of 3.0 or better in order to be admitted to candidacy. Upon graduation with their undergraduate degree, an AB2M student who earned a "C" grade may apply to an associated Master's program for admission consideration; in the application, the former AB2M student can make a case to the graduate program director regarding the possibility of retaking the course to better their "C" grade OR to not have the "C" grade count toward the graduate degree by taking another course instead (if this is an allowable possibility in a given program's approved curriculum).

All other general requirements for the Bachelor's and Master's degree programs that comprise an Accelerated Bachelor's Plus Master's Degree Program apply and must be satisfied.

Until the Bachelor's degree is obtained, AB2M students must abide by the undergraduate policies for financial aid, probation, suspension, and clemency. Once the Bachelor's degree has been conferred, the student must abide by the graduate policies for financial aid, probation, suspension, and clemency.

These guidelines represent a minimum standard. Individual graduate programs may establish more stringent guidelines as well as additional requirements not specifically precluded in this document with the approval of the Graduate College and Academic Affairs.

The curriculum will follow the existing curriculum in the undergraduate and graduate degree programs comprising the Accelerated Bachelor's Plus Master's Degree Program for more information on the course listing click on the approved programs below:

[BA History to MA History](#)

[BA Journalism Broadcast Option to MA Multi-Media Journalism](#)

[BA Journalism Print Option to MA Multi-Media Journalism](#)

[BA Journalism Public Relations Option to MA Multi-Media Journalism](#)

[BA English to MA English](#)

[BA English for Teacher Licensure to MA Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages](#)

[BFA Creative Writing to MA English](#)

[BA World Languages with Concentration in Spanish for Teacher Licensure to MA Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages](#)

[BSBA Accounting to MBA Master of Business Administration](#)

[BSBA Business Data Analytics to MBA Master of Business Administration](#)

[BSBA Finance to MBA Master of Business Administration](#)

[BSBA Business Management to MBA Master of Business Administration](#)

[BSBA Digital Marketing to MBA Master of Business Administration](#)

[BS Emergency Administration and Management to EMHS Emergency Management and Homeland Security](#)

[BSEE Electrical Engineering to MENG Electrical Engineering](#)

[BSEE Electrical Engineering Biomedical Option to MENG Electrical Engineering](#)

[BSCMPE Computer Engineering to MENG Electrical Engineering](#)

[BSME Mechanical Engineering to MENG Mechanical Engineering](#)

Undergraduate Senior Admission

An undergraduate senior, registering the semester prior to graduation in a baccalaureate degree program at ATU, who does not need a full load of undergraduate courses to complete requirements for graduation, may request special permission from the Dean of Graduate College to enroll in no more than six (6) hours of graduate course work. The student's course load is not to exceed a total of fifteen (15) semester hours of graduate and undergraduate work combined during a fall or spring semester. The combined course load for a summer term is six (6) semester hours. The student must have a 3.00 cumulative grade point average to be eligible for admission as an undergraduate senior. Failure of a student to complete the bachelor's degree during the semester/term in which the graduate courses are taken will preclude the student from enrolling in additional graduate classes in subsequent semesters until the bachelor's degree is awarded. The form requesting approval to enroll as an undergraduate senior can be obtained at the Graduate College online at [Request by Undergraduate Senior to Enroll in Graduate Classes](#).

Graduate courses do not count toward retention of undergraduate scholarship requirements. Prior to taking a mixed course load, students are encouraged to investigate the effects that graduate courses may make on institutional and/or state funded scholarship awards.

Catalog Privilege

Candidates for a master's degree may choose to complete requirements under the regulations published in the ATU graduate catalog for the year of initial enrollment in the graduate program at ATU or a subsequent year, provided they were enrolled in the graduate program at the University during the year the catalog was in effect. The catalog chosen must not be over six (6) years old when requirements for the degree are completed.

Academic Advising

Upon entering the graduate program, the student should develop a planned program of studies (including determined prerequisites) under the supervision of their designated faculty advisor. Subsequent modifications must be approved by the advisor and program director.

Graduate Student Enrollment Status

The minimum credit hour load for classification as a full-time graduate student in any term is 9 graduate credit hours. Classification as a three-quarter time is 7-8 graduate hours; half time is 5-6 graduate hours; and less than half time is 1-4 graduate hours.

Graduate Student Load

Graduate students may enroll for a maximum of twelve (12) hours of credit during each of the three semesters (Fall, Spring, and Summer) during the academic year. A one-credit-hour overload may be authorized by the program director of the student's major department. A graduate student will be considered full-time if enrolled for nine (9) or more hours of credit during each of the three semesters. Graduate Assistants will be considered full-time if carrying six (6) or more hours. Students receiving financial aid should check with the Financial Aid office for requirements necessary to be considered a full-time student. Permission to take more than the maximum loads stated above requires the written approval of the student's advisor, program director, and Graduate College Dean.

Change of Major

Subject to the approval of the advisor, current program director, new program director, and Dean of Graduate College a graduate student may be allowed to change their major or add an additional certificate or master's degree.

Adding and Dropping Courses

Changes in the class schedule must be made on official forms available at the Registrar's Office, Suite 307, Brown Hall. Failure to follow the correct procedure for making changes in the class schedule may result in the grade of "F" being recorded for the courses involved. Deadlines for adding courses, dropping courses, or changing sections are listed in the graduate calendar in this catalog. Please note: A student accumulating an excessive number of unjustifiable absences in a course may be dropped from the course by the instructor with a grade of "WN."

Repeating a Course

No graduate student may repeat a course for graduate credit except with the written permission of the advisor. The grade from such a repetition as well as the original grade will be counted in computing the grade point average.

Withdrawing

To withdraw officially, the student must report to the Graduate College and the Office of the Registrar to complete a "Withdrawal Application." Failure to follow this procedure may result in a grade of "F" being recorded.

The deadline for officially withdrawing from the University with grades of "W" is the same as the last day for dropping courses. Withdrawing after this date, which is listed in the graduate calendar in this catalog, will result in grades of "F" being recorded for the semester/term. If circumstances justify special consideration, appeals should be directed to the Graduate College Dean.

Courses for Audit

Enrollment in courses for audit requires admission to graduate study at the University, approval of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the instructor involved, and payment of the regular fee for the course. Audit will be on a "space-available" basis. Students auditing courses are subject to the same regulations as other students with regard to registration, but they do not take examinations nor receive credit for the course. Students may change from taking a course for credit to audit by following the procedure for adding and dropping courses.

Independent Study Courses

Independent study courses are intended for graduate students who have the interest and the ability to investigate a topic not covered in the graduate courses available in their major field of study. The topic, format, and specific requirements of each independent study project must be approved in writing by the supervising instructor, graduate advisor, program director, and Graduate College Dean prior to enrollment for independent study credit. The original copy of the independent study approval form will be kept in the student's file in the Registrar's Office as part of the student's official graduate record. A student may not enroll in an independent study course before completing twelve (12) hours of graduate credit.

Limit on Workshop and Independent Study Credit

No more than six (6) semester hours of graduate course work completed in workshops and/or independent study may be applied to the master's degree.

Portfolio/Capstone Projects

Candidates for the Master of Education in Educational Leadership, School Counseling and Leadership, and Teaching, Learning and Leadership, and candidates for the Educational Specialist in Educational Leadership are required to submit a portfolio for completion of requirements of the degree

demonstrating evidence of the candidate's competencies required by the specific program standards. A satisfactory portfolio is a requirement for completion of the program.

The candidate must enroll in two (2) hours of portfolio study after completion of 28 hours of course work. The portfolio is to be completed at the end of course work during the last semester of enrollment.

Incompletion of Capstone Projects

Students enrolling in capstone projects such as the project in educational research, the liberal arts project, or thesis research maybe given a grade of "R" if requirements are not completed by the end of the semester. The grades of "R" or "CR" do not affect hours or grade point. Students receiving the grade of "R" will be required to enroll in the course the following semester(s) until the requirements are completed. The grade of "CR" gives credit only for the hours enrolled.

Master's Thesis

Candidates who prepare a thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a master's degree must exhibit the capabilities of gathering, organizing, evaluating, and reporting data which are pertinent to the topic of investigation.

The candidate's thesis committee will be appointed by the program director in consultation with the student's department head which will include at least one other qualified member of the graduate faculty. In addition to the regular graduate faculty members, a person having no official relationship with ATU may be appointed to serve with prior approval of the graduate faculty in the program. The program director will have final approval of the dissertation chair and committee. Total composition of all thesis/dissertation committees shall be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Dean.

Once the general area of research is determined through conference with the advisor(s), the student begins the process necessary for preparation of the thesis. Under the direction of the committee, the student prepares and submits a Topic Approval Request for approval by the Dean of Graduate College via the program director along with IRB approval letter (if applicable). The Topic Approval Request form is found under Student Resources at [Thesis Topic Approval Form](#). All thesis must be written in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the thesis writing guide "Thesis Preparation Guide." This guide may be obtained at the Graduate College website under [Student Resources](#).

The thesis may be started at any time after the student has been admitted to candidacy for the degree. However, the thesis committee must receive the thesis by October 1, if graduating in the fall term, and by March 1 if graduating in the spring term. An oral defense, conducted by the thesis committee, of the thesis is required. The Dean of Graduate College will be notified by the committee, in writing, when the student has passed the oral defense. The oral defense of the thesis must be passed at least three (3) weeks before the degree is conferred.

The thesis, in its defended and committee approved form, along with corresponding Graduate College forms must be electronically submitted to the Graduate College via the Online Research Commons @ATU no later than two (2) weeks prior to the date of graduation; if revisions are required graduation may be deferred to the following semester.

Students working on thesis and other master's projects beyond the term in which coursework for the degree has been completed, will be required to enroll in at least one (1) hour of coursework each ensuing semester until all requirements for the degree have been met. Students who fail to continuously enroll will be dropped from the master's program.

The grade for the course will generally be CR (Credit) or NC (No Credit), with the understanding the person(s) supervising the thesis or project can assign a letter grade to explicitly indicate a student is making good (A or B) or unsatisfactory (C or lower) progress toward graduation.

A student who has been dropped for failure to continuously enroll as stipulated by this policy (excluding summer, unless the student is planning to graduate in the summer) may be readmitted to a master's program by reapplying to Graduate College with written approval of the person(s) supervising the thesis or project and the Program Director. Readmitted students will be required to reapply for graduation and enroll in a number of hours of coursework equal to the number of semesters that have lapsed since the last time they were enrolled, up to a maximum of three (3) hours.

Dissertation

As a formal research paper, the dissertation should reveal the candidate is able to produce original research that meets the professional standards of the discipline. Preparation for writing a dissertation should include careful and wide reading of professional journals and texts of involved disciplines, including the most recent scholarly work in the academic field. Students must exhibit capabilities of gathering, organizing, evaluating, and reporting data which are pertinent to the topic of investigation, as well as exhibiting their ability to use technology appropriate to the discipline.

Dissertation Committee Composition

The graduate student who plans to write a dissertation is responsible for determining the content area of the projected study in consultation with the dissertation chair. The dissertation chair must have doctoral faculty status and expertise in the selected topic area. Together they will decide upon the other members of the dissertation committee, which will include at least one other qualified member of the graduate faculty. In addition to the regular graduate faculty members, a person having no official relationship with ATU may be appointed to serve with prior approval of the graduate faculty in the program. The program director will have final approval of the dissertation chair and committee. Total composition of all thesis/ dissertation committees shall be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Dean.

If more than three members are appointed to the dissertation committee, a majority of the members must hold regular graduate faculty status. A Graduate Faculty member holding non-regular graduate faculty status may serve on a dissertation committee, with prior approval of the program director and written approval by the Graduate College dean.

If a dissertation committee makes a change in its membership, a “**Dissertation Committee Member Change**” form must be submitted to the Graduate College dean for approval.

Responsibilities of the Dissertation Committee

The committee will approve the dissertation proposal, and ensure particulars of the proposal are carried out. Other responsibilities include: reading the dissertation for content, style, and standard English usage; ensuring mechanics are followed according to departmental and university guidelines; affirming proper research techniques are followed, an in-depth review of the literature is completed, and the conclusions reached are both legitimate and supported by data; and ensuring plagiarism does not occur. The committee should make certain the dissertation is of quality and reflects high standards of scholarly writing. The dissertation committee chair is responsible for the initial reading and initial corrections of the student’s paper. The chair is then responsible for submitting the dissertation to the committee members for their review. Please use the “**Graduate College Dissertation Timeline**” that governs this process. The committee and chair will meet with the student as needed during the time the student is engaged in the Dissertation process.

Dissertation Committee Appointment Form

Students must submit a “**Dissertation Committee Appointment Form**” with all Committee Members signatures to the Graduate College dean for final approval of the dissertation committee. The form is available on the Graduate College website.

Dissertation Proposal Defense Form

A dissertation proposal must be prepared and defended by the student and approved by the dissertation committee before work on the dissertation continues. A “**Dissertation Proposal Defense Form**” is available on the Graduate College website. After the dissertation proposal has been defended successfully and signed by the dissertation committee and the program director, it is then submitted to the Graduate College dean for final approval. After the oral defense, the student may make no change to the dissertation, unless authorized by the dissertation committee.

Request to Schedule Dissertation Defense Form

The dissertation student and their committee chair must work together to determine a date and time to schedule the dissertation defense. A “**Request to Schedule Dissertation Defense Form**” is available on the Graduate College website. The form must be signed by the dissertation committee and the program director, it is then submitted to the Graduate College dean for final approval.

Dissertation Defense Final Report

An oral defense of the dissertation is required. It will be conducted by the dissertation committee, which will then notify the Graduate College dean, in writing, the student has passed the final oral defense. The “**Dissertation Defense Final Report**” form is available on the Graduate College webpage. The oral defense of the dissertation be successfully completed at least six (6) weeks before the degree is conferred for fall or spring graduates. After the oral defense, the student may make no changes to the dissertation, unless authorized by the Dissertation Committee.

Dissertation Approval

The dissertation committee, program director, Graduate College reader, and Graduate College dean must approve the dissertation before it is reproduced in its final form.

Credits and Grades

A grade of **R** is given on all dissertation enrollments until the dissertation is accepted, and then appropriate credit is granted. The mark **R** gives neither credit nor grade points toward a graduate degree. The mark **CR** gives credit for hours only. Departments may choose to assign a letter grade or only give credit for hours.

Grading

The letters A, B, C, D, F are used in grading to indicate the quality of a student's work: A - Excellent, B - Good, C - Fair, D - Unsatisfactory, and F - Failure. The letters AU, W, WN, R, CR, and I are also used: "AU" indicates that the student was enrolled in the course as an "auditor"; "W" is used to indicate that a course was dropped without penalty; "WN" is used to indicate withdrawn for unjustifiable absences/non-participation. The letter "R" indicates that the student registered for the master's thesis. The mark "R" gives neither credit nor grade points toward a graduate degree. The mark "CR" gives credit for hours only.

A final grade of “I” may be recorded for a student who has not completed all the requirements of a course only in situations where the student has an illness or other circumstances beyond the student’s control, and has completed seventy-five percent of the course requirements provided work already completed is of passing quality. If a grade of “I” is assigned, the instructor will set a reasonable time limit within the following semester in which the work must be completed. Beginning the first summer term, 1990, and thereafter, a grade of “I” will not be computed in the grade point average for the semester recorded; however, the “I” will be automatically changed to a grade of “F” for grade and grade point purposes at the end of the next regular semester (fall or spring) unless course requirements are completed and the final grade is reported before the end of the semester. A grade of “I” recorded prior to the first summer term, 1990, will be computed as an “F” for grade point purposes. No grade other than “I” may be changed after it is

recorded except if an instructor finds that a grade has been erroneously recorded. The instructor may correct the grade by submitting a written request and explanation of the error to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

If a student needs to repeat a course or a significant portion of a course, a "W" or "F" will be assigned according to regulations governing the assignments of such grades.

Academic Probation and Suspension

Academic Probation

Means a student has not meet the minimum threshold to be in good academic standing. It is intended as a corrective measure to help students improve their academic performance.

All students who receive one letter grade of "C" will be cautioned by the Graduate College. A student who receives a second "C" in their graduate curriculum must meet with their advisor and have their advisor/program director submit an approved academic plan to the Graduate College prior to registering for the subsequent semester. A student who has a semester grade point average below 3.0 must meet with their advisor and have their advisor/program director submit and approved academic plan to the Graduate College prior to registering for the following semester. Students who have received their second "C" or have a cumulative grade point average below 3.0 will not be eligible to participate in early registration.

A student who is admitted conditionally or on a non-degree basis will be subject to suspension from Graduate College after attempting twelve (12) semester hours with less than a 3.0 grade point average.

Academic Suspension

Academic suspension means the student is dismissed from their graduate program and may not enroll in any classes at ATU, earn credits at ATU, receive fin-aid at ATU during the suspension period or one calendar year. ATU for one academic year. A student suspended from Graduate College may reapply for admission after one year. Reinstatement to the Graduate College will not necessarily mean reinstatement to a particular graduate program. Readmission does not reestablish financial aid eligibility, nor does it change the maximum timeframe for which a student's previous academic credits can be counted toward a graduate degree six (6) years.

Students who do not clear their conditional admit, students who are not able to raise their GPA to a 3.0 after being on probation consecutively,

A students' lack of Academic Progress may result in dismissal with no option to be reinstated.

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Graduate Clemency Policy

In accordance with Act 1000 of 1991, a student who has previously attended Arkansas Tech University may apply to have the grades and credits earned for one or more consecutive semesters^[1] removed from his/her grade point average provided the following criteria are met.

A graduate student who has previously attended Arkansas Tech University and whose attendance has been interrupted for a period of at least one calendar year may qualify for academic clemency provided they were not found guilty of academic dishonesty. A graduate student may apply to have the graduate credits and grades earned at Arkansas Tech University prior to the separation removed from their grade point average for a maximum of two consecutive semesters.

Academic clemency may be granted only one time, is irreversible, and includes all credits earned during the semester/s for which it is requested. The student's complete record will remain on the transcript with the added notation of "academic clemency granted" and the effective date. If the student and/or the Graduate Program Director elect to appeal the decision of the Graduate Council ad hoc clemency committee, their appeal should be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College for review and final decision. Academic clemency does not restore eligibility for student financial aid, scholarships, or athletic eligibility nor does it change the six-year completion time-line.

Academic Dishonesty/Academic Misconduct

A university exists for the purpose of educating students and granting degrees to all students who complete graduation requirements. Therefore, ATU requires certain standards of academic integrity and conduct from all students. ATU expects an academic atmosphere to be maintained in all classes regardless of their format and delivery, such as in-person classrooms or online classroom settings. This atmosphere is created by both the professor and the students in order to enable all students enrolled in a class to reach their academic potential. All students, regardless of the format and delivery of their classes, are expected to: attend class (attendance policy is defined by the professor); conduct themselves in a non-disruptive manner; and refrain from cheating, plagiarism, or other unfair and dishonest practices. Students should also realize the class is under the control of the professor who will give students a statement of his or her class policies in a syllabus at the beginning of the semester.

Academic offenses involving dishonesty and misconduct are defined in the Definitions section below. These definitions are not all inclusive, and conduct not expressly set forth in the definitions may also be considered academic dishonesty or academic misconduct.

Definitions

Academic Dishonesty. Academic dishonesty refers to the various categories of cheating and plagiarism in a class, regardless of the class format and delivery.

- Cheating on an examination, quiz, or homework assignment involves any of several categories of dishonest Examples include but are not limited to: a) copying from an examination, quiz, or any other assignment of another student; b) utilizing notes, messages, or crib sheets in any format which gives the student extra help on an exam or quiz, and which were not approved by the professor of the class; c) obtaining advance copies of exams or quizzes by any means; d) hiring a substitute to take an exam or bribing any other individual to obtain exam or quiz questions;
- 1 .e) buying term papers or other assignments from the Internet or any other source; and f) using the same paper to fulfill requirements in several classes without the consent of the professors teaching those classes.
- Plagiarism is stealing the ideas or writing of another person and using them as one's This includes not only passages, but also sentences and phrases that are incorporated in the student's written work without acknowledgement to the true author. Any paper written by cutting and pasting from the Internet or any other source is plagiarized. Slight modifications in wording do not change the fact the sentence or phrase is plagiarized. Acknowledgment of the source of ideas must be made through a recognized footnoting or citation format. Plagiarism includes recasting the phrase or passage in the student's own words of another's ideas that are not considered common knowledge. Acknowledgment of source must be made in this case as well.

Academic Misconduct. Academic misconduct concerns a student's inappropriate behavior in a class regardless of the class format and delivery. Such behavior includes interacting with the professor and other students in a manner that disrupts the learning environment of a class. Examples include but are not limited to: a) engaging in a discussion with other students that is not beneficial to the class or acceptable to the professor; b) interrupting class unnecessarily; c) attempting to monopolize the professor's time and attention; d) being chronically late to the class; and e) failing to engage in a class in a manner that is required by the professor, such as chronically late submission of assignments. Misconduct also covers verbal or nonverbal harassment and threats in relation to classes. Student behavior must not infringe on the rights of other students or faculty during a class.

Academic Grievance/Appeals Procedures

Appeal of an Academic Course Grade

The assessment of the quality of a student's academic performance is solely and properly one of the major responsibilities of university faculty members. A grade appeal is not appropriate when a student simply disagrees with the faculty member's judgment about the quality of the student's work. Grade appeals should be based on problems of process and not on differences in opinion concerning academic performance. A student who is uncertain about whether or not a grade should be appealed or who needs additional information about the grade appeal process can contact the department head's office (or dean's office should the instructor be the department head). This policy is implemented within the college that administratively houses the department through which the course was offered, irrespective of a student's major or class standing.

Appeal of Academic Dishonesty/Misconduct

The Graduate Academic Appeals Committee is an official committee of ATU and will be formed each academic year as a pool of qualified faculty and students to hear graduate student academic dishonesty and academic misconduct appeals.

Appeal of an Academic Graduate Program Dismissal

Appeal of a program dismissal must be made by the student directly affected and must be made immediately, within 10 calendar days, following the departmental decision to the department head.

Assessment Program

Assessment is conducted university-wide to measure student progress toward educational goals, to improve teaching and learning, and to evaluate institutional effectiveness. A number of instruments and techniques are used in the assessment process. In addition to the normal procedures for grading, graduate students may be asked to complete surveys, participate in focus groups, or participate in other assessment activities designed to ensure the continued improvement of the quality of learning. Additional details concerning the University's assessment efforts can be obtained by contacting the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford eligible students certain rights with respect to their education records. (An "eligible student" under FERPA is a student who is 18 years of age or older or who attends a postsecondary institution.) To review these rights click [here](#).

University Policy

While every effort will be made to conform to catalog announcements, the University reserves the right to adapt its program as may be necessary.

Graduation

Please refer to the section entitled [Graduation Requirements](#) for information pertaining to candidacy, application for graduation, payment of graduation fees, and other graduation requirements.