



University of Massachusetts

Intercampus Marine Science Graduate Program

Amherst · Boston · Dartmouth · Lowell · Worcester

GENERAL POLICIES
of the
University of Massachusetts
Intercampus Marine Science (IMS) Graduate
Program

June 30, 2016

Contents

Overview of the Intercampus Marine Science Degree Program	1
Graduate Degrees/Credits Required	1
Requirements for the MS Program	2
Summary	2
Core Course Requirements	2
Concentrations and Electives	2
Weekly Seminars	3
Non-Thesis Option	3
Thesis Option	3
Requirements for the Professional Science Master's Degree	5
Summary	5
Core Course Requirements	5
Science and "Plus" Electives	6
Internship	7
Requirements for the Ph.D. Program	7
Summary	7
Core Course Requirements	7
Concentrations and Electives	8
Weekly Seminars	8
Residency Requirement	8
General Comprehensive Examination	9
Dissertation	10
Doctoral Dissertation Committee	11
Doctoral Dissertation Defense	11
Dissertation Proposal	11
Dissertation Credit Requirement	11
Announcement of Dissertation Defense:	12
Dissertation Defense Results	12
Degree Eligibility Form	12
Degree Program Oversight	12
IMS Annual Symposium	13
Waiver of Core Courses	13
Transfer Credit and Advanced Standing	13
Independent Study Credit	13
Maximum Semester Credit Limit	14
Statute of Limitations	14
Academic Grades	15

Retaking Courses	15
Continuous Enrollment	16
Retention Policy	16
Academic Warning	16
Academic Probation	16
Academic Dismissal	17
Academic Integrity	17

Overview of the Intercampus Marine Science Degree Program

The Intercampus Marine Science graduate degree program is a UMass system-wide degree program in marine science. Participating campuses include Amherst, Boston, Dartmouth and Lowell. Students graduating from IMS receive a degree from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Boston, Dartmouth, and Lowell. The degree programs are fundamentally grounded in a broad, integrated, interdisciplinary approach to the study of marine sciences and technology and science management. The programs prepare students for employment opportunities in the private and governmental sectors and academia. Emphasis is placed on the education of researchers and scholars who will contribute not only to research, but also to the application of that research in environmental stewardship, resource management, marine technology, and economic development.

Disclaimer: Note that students should always consult with their home campus Office of Graduate Studies or Graduate School to ensure compliance with academic policies and requirements. Although the IMS program is an intercampus program, the degrees are conferred by the home campus and therefore students generally must comply with home campus graduate academic policies.

Graduate Degrees/Credits Required

IMS offers three graduate degree programs: M.S., Ph.D., and Professional Science Masters (PSM). Students located at the four participating campuses are required to complete “core” courses selected from the natural and social sciences to equip them for interdisciplinary studies and research followed by additional courses in an area of concentration. The course load for full-time graduate students is nine (9) or more credits per semester; part-time graduate student status is defined as eight (8) or fewer credits in a semester. For doctoral candidates, students must spend the equivalent of at least one continuous academic year of full-time graduate work (nine credits per semester) in residence at the University. For loan deferment purposes, half-time is defined as six (6) credits. Immigration law requires that foreign students be enrolled at full-time status. Audited courses do not count toward enrollment status. International students may be enrolled less than full-time for medical reasons or if it is their final semester and they need fewer than full-time credits to complete their program. They must complete paperwork before they are allowed to register for less than full-time credits. They should contact the International Students and Scholars Office of their home campus.

Requirements for the MS Program

Summary

The MS program requires a minimum of 30 credit hours with the thesis option and 33 credit hours with the non-thesis option. MS students are required to take three core courses (9 credits) and choose an additional 15 credits minimum of approved elective courses (not including thesis credits) appropriate to a selected area of concentration, also known as the option area of study. Attendance at a weekly seminar series is required (1 credit each for two semesters, which count towards the elective course credit requirements), and each student must present at least one seminar in their third or fourth semester. Students are guided during their academic experience by an advisor and additional faculty (see thesis and non-thesis options for advising protocol). Full time MS students normally complete their course requirements in four semesters.

Core Course Requirements

Each MS student must successfully complete three core courses, which are defined as:

- Two (2) courses from the biological, chemical, and/or physical oceanography series.
- One (1) course in marine policy or management area (including law and economics).

The policy/management course should address topics in marine-related issues. IMS offers some core courses via distance learning, which provides greater access for students at the different campuses. The core courses will ensure that all IMS students master key concepts and skills central to an interdisciplinary marine sciences and technology graduate program. Many of the core courses are taught via distance learning. Students normally complete the core courses in the first two semesters.

Successful performance in the core courses is required for advancement to degree status. Grades of B- (i.e., course GPA of 2.75) or better in each core course and an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0 are required. Students have the option of retaking **one core course** for which the student received a grade of less than a B- in order to improve the course grade. Some campuses may have additional minimum grade requirements and students should consult with their Office of Graduate Studies or Graduate School for the standards pertaining to their home campus.

Concentrations and Electives

To build on the core courses, each IMS student is encouraged to choose an area of concentration and select elective courses appropriate to the chosen concentration, as approved by their faculty advisor and thesis committee (in the case of thesis option students). Elective courses

covering technology and quantitative skills are generally subject to the student's choice and advisor/committee approval, though there may be expectations for a particular option area. A list of option areas and recommended electives is provided on the IMS web site. These are intended as guidelines, and students may, in consultation with their advisor, select other concentrations and elective courses as appropriate to their specific area of study, although these are expected to fall within the general scope of marine science and technology.

Students typically take most of their elective courses on the campus where they and their major faculty advisor are in residence. Some elective courses, however, may also be taken via distance learning. In addition, students may choose to be in residence at different campuses for a period of time during their course of study, in order to take certain courses or to take advantage of research opportunities. International students should check with the appropriate office at their home campus regarding restrictions to establish residency at another campus.

Weekly Seminars

Weekly seminars presented by visiting speakers are intended to broaden the scope of each student's experience and to provide experience in verbal communication. Each MS student is expected to present at least one seminar usually in the third or fourth semester. Attendance at the weekly seminars is required, for which students receive elective credit. The number of credits and seminar requirements vary among the campuses and students should consult with their graduate coordinator for policies specific to their home campus.

Non-Thesis Option

Each student electing the non-thesis option must complete a substantial research paper that is to be read and approved by the major advisor and at least one other faculty member. Non-thesis students must also take nine credits of coursework beyond the twenty-four specified above. Three credits of which can count toward a directed study used to write the substantial research paper.

Thesis Option

MS Thesis Committee:

Each MS student electing the thesis option is required to form a thesis committee, chaired by the student's major advisor. In consultation with the major advisor, the student selects additional faculty (2 minimum) who constitute the student's thesis committee. Committee members may be selected from IMS faculty, other departments, and/or other institutions. However, there is a general requirement that the majority of the committee members be permanent faculty from the home institution. Committees are encouraged to include at

least one member from a campus or institution other than the student's home campus. The selection of committee members is subject to the approval of the department chair and the graduate program director, along with other approvals as required by the home institution's academic policies (e.g., approval of dean, graduate studies office or graduate school, etc.). Students should be reminded that many faculty are on nine-month contracts and may not necessarily be available during the summer months for consultation.

Working with their advisor and thesis committee, the student selects a topic for their thesis research. A thesis proposal is not required at the M.S. level.

Thesis Credit Requirement:

MS thesis students must register for six thesis credits, which count towards the 30 (33) credit requirement. Students may register for continuation credits to maintain enrollment status during the completion of their thesis work if they have already satisfied their thesis credit requirements in prior semesters. MS candidates will not be recommended to the Board of Trustees for the MS degree unless they have the requisite number of thesis credits.

Thesis:

A scholarly thesis based on original research is required of thesis option M.S. candidates. Thesis research may be done in the laboratory or the field, or may be carried out in part during residence with an appropriate private business or government agency. Presentation and defense of a satisfactory thesis, normally to be completed within two years for full time M.S. students. The thesis defense consists of a public lecture on the thesis with questions by the public and the candidate's thesis committee.

The thesis must be typed in a university-prescribed style. The thesis must be approved and signed by all members of the thesis committee and the Department Head/Chair. **The home campus Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School is the final and only arbitrator of what is an acceptable thesis.** Students should consult the guidelines for thesis preparation and final submission for their home campus.

Announcement of Thesis Defense:

Written public notice and notification of the IMS Coordinating Committee must be done at least 15 days prior to the defense. In addition, campus specific regulations should be followed.

Transition to Ph.D. Track:

Students who have successfully completed their MS degree and wish to continue for a Ph.D. degree need to re-apply to the IMS. Since the Admissions Office has most of the needed documents this should be a relatively easy procedure and the fees are waived. Once the application is complete, it will be processed by the Admissions Committee. Recommendations should be from the student's "would-be" Advisor and other appropriate references.

Under special circumstances, MS degree candidates may request transition to the Ph.D. program track, without completion of an MS thesis. Students should consult with their campus Graduate Program Director and Graduate Studies Office for required procedures. The IMS Coordinating Committee should be notified of change in status of students' transition to the Ph.D.

Requirements for the Professional Science Master's Degree

Summary

The PSM program requires a minimum of 34 credit hours. The typical PSM student normally completes their degree requirements in four semesters. It is the student's responsibility to check with their advisor or campus coordinator to ensure that classes chosen will count toward the degree's credit requirement. The student must achieve an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher in the PSM degree program. The PSM is designed to give students the necessary scientific training in their field, as well as help develop the skills necessary in the professional world.

Core Course Requirements

Each PSM student must successfully complete three core courses, which are defined as:

- Two (2) courses from the biological, chemical, or physical oceanography series. A course in geological oceanography may also be selected as one of the required core courses for the PSM degree only.
- One (1) course in marine policy and/or management area (including law and economics). The policy/management course should coincide with the student's selected option area of study.

The IMS course list identifies the core courses and their respective areas. The core courses are intended to provide a common grounding in the biological, chemical, physical, and geological oceanographic areas of marine sciences and technology, as well as the marine policy and/or management disciplines. Courses covering technology and quantitative skills are generally

subject to student choice and faculty advisor approval, though there may be requirements specific to each option area.

At least two core courses are offered each semester using the University's distance learning facilities and technology. Students normally complete the core courses in the first two semesters. These courses will ensure that all IMS students master key concepts and skills central to an interdisciplinary marine sciences and technology graduate program. All of the core courses are taught via distance learning, and may be team taught in some cases.

Successful performance in the core courses is required for advancement to degree status. A grade of B- or better in each core course and an overall average of cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher are required. Students have the option of retaking **one core course** for which the student received a grade of less than a B- in order to improve the course grade. Some campuses may have additional minimum grade requirements and students should consult with their Office of Graduate Studies for the standards pertaining to their home campus.

Science and "Plus" Electives

The COAST track of the PSM degree program provides an opportunity for marine business professionals to further their education by offering coursework in the marine sciences, engineering, business management, resource management, and public policy, among other subjects.

The program requires completion of 11 courses plus an internship or project. The 11 courses include 3 core courses, detailed above, and 8 elective courses. The 8 elective courses include:

- 4 science electives – 12 credits
- 2 elective "Plus" courses – 6 credits (includes management, policy, and law)
- 2 elective courses, either science or "Plus" courses, selected to fit the student's area of concentration – 6 credits

Within these guidelines, there is considerable flexibility for the student to design a suite of courses that meet their specific interests and professional needs. A Program Director is available to help students select clusters of courses under a variety of themes. Course offerings are structured so that you may attend the program part-time while working full-time at local marine-related businesses and agencies. IMS endeavors to offer courses in late afternoon or early morning time slots to work around the business day.

Students typically take most of their elective courses on the campus where they and their major faculty advisor are in residence. Some elective courses, however, will also be taught via distance learning. In addition, students may choose to be in residence at different campuses for a period of time during their course of study, in order to take certain courses.

Internship

Students are required to complete an internship or project, which may be conducted at an area business or public-sector enterprise. Students should consult with their Graduate Program Director for the internship requirements at their institution. At the conclusion of the activity, the student must write a reflection or final report and make a presentation of their experience.

Requirements for the Ph.D. Program

Summary

The Ph.D. Program requires a minimum of fifty-four credit hours. Each IMS student must complete four core courses; one in each of four core areas: biological oceanography, chemical oceanography, physical oceanography, and marine policy and/or management areas (including law and economics). Work in the concentration area includes a minimum of 24 credit hours of formal courses (in addition to the core courses and which includes elective and seminar courses and does not include dissertation research) and helps the student prepare for the written and oral candidacy examinations. Students may be able to transfer credits or petition for advanced standing from prior graduate coursework to waive some of the course and credit requirements and should consult with their Graduate Program Director for policies applicable to their home campus.

As part of the 54 credits, students are required to take a minimum of 18 credit hours toward dissertation research. Ph.D. students are not normally accepted as part-time students. Courses may be taken at any IMS-affiliated program on the four campuses, in other departments, and may be included in a student's program of study as determined by the student's major advisor and/or dissertation committee.

Core Course Requirements

Each Ph.D. student must successfully complete four core courses, which are defined as:

- Three (3) courses including the biological, chemical, and physical oceanography series.
- One (1) course in marine policy and/or management area (including law and economics).

The core courses are intended to provide a common foundation in the biological, chemical, and physical oceanographic areas of marine science and technology, and in related marine policy and management disciplines. IMS has developed core courses that are taught via distance learning, one in each of the core areas, which will satisfy the core requirements of IMS students. At least two core courses are offered each semester. These courses will ensure that all IMS students master key concepts and skills central to an interdisciplinary marine sciences graduate

program. Students normally complete the core courses in the first two semesters.

Successful performance in the core courses is required for advancement to degree status. Grades of B- or better in each core course and an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher are required. Students have the option of retaking **one core course** for which the student received a grade of less than a B- in order to improve the course grade. Some campuses may have additional minimum grade requirements and students should consult with their Office of Graduate Studies or Graduate School for the standards pertaining to their home campus.

Concentrations and Electives

To build on the core courses, each IMS student is encouraged to choose an area of concentration and select elective courses appropriate to the chosen concentration, as approved by their faculty advisor and thesis committee. Elective courses covering technology and quantitative skills are generally subject to the student's choice and advisor/committee approval, though there may be expectations for a particular option area. A list of option areas and recommended electives is provided on the IMS web site. These are intended as guidelines, and students may, in consultation with their advisor, select other concentrations and elective courses as appropriate to their specific area of study, although these are expected to fall within the general scope of marine science and technology.

Students typically take most of their elective courses on the campus where they and their major faculty advisor are in residence. Some elective courses, however, will also be taught via distance learning. In addition, students may choose to be in residence at different campuses for a period of time during their course of study, in order to take certain courses or to take advantage of research opportunities.

Weekly Seminars

Weekly seminars presented by visiting speakers are intended to broaden the scope of each student's experience and to provide experience in verbal communication. Each Ph.D. student will present at least one seminar each year after the first year. Attendance at the weekly seminars is expected, for which students receive elective credit. The number of credits and seminar requirements vary among the campuses and students should consult with their graduate coordinator for policies specific to their home campus.

Residency Requirement

A doctoral candidate must spend the equivalent of at least one continuous academic year of full-time graduate work (nine credits per semester) in residence at the University. The residency year must be either in a Fall/Spring or Spring/Fall sequence. During this year, the student must spend

a substantial part of each week physically on campus.

General Comprehensive Examination

The purpose of the qualifying examination is to determine whether a student has acquired sufficient mastery of the field of concentration to warrant admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree.

The academic activities of each IMS doctoral degree candidate are guided during his/her first four semesters by an advisor and, in some cases, a guidance committee. The relevant IMS graduate program director (Coordinating Committee member) monitors the student's progress. By the end of their 5th semester, doctoral candidates are expected to have taken a general examination to determine their suitability to proceed. During their fourth semester, a general comprehensive examination committee is formed. The comprehensive examination committee can consist of the candidate's guidance committee members, but it should include faculty who may be part of the Dissertation Committee.

Generally no later than the sixth semester, the student's committee administers the general comprehensive examination, which has a written and oral component. The general comprehensive examinations cover the core areas and the student's area of concentration. Examinations are designed to test the intellectual competence and maturity of the student in the broad area of marine sciences and in the selected area of concentration.

Examination Guidelines:

- The candidate's general examination committee constructs a general exam, with both written and oral components, that examines the candidate's mastery of material from their core and formal courses as well as knowledge and skills needed for their dissertation work.
- The written comprehensive exam is generally given over a two day period, consisting of two 4-hour sessions, one closed book and the other open book. Approximately 25% of the exam will cover the core-course material and the other 75% should be related to the research area of the student. The exam should include one or more interdisciplinary "super-problems" that require the candidate to integrate material from several disciplines. The exam will test the students on core concepts as well as material from the candidate's formal course work.
- The core-course exam problems may be provided by the professors of the core courses and be graded by them. Professors will return the graded core-course question to the exam committee who consider this along with performance on the other questions to determine whether the student successfully satisfied the requirements for passing the exam.

- Alternatively or in addition, the portion of the written general exam covering the candidate's formal course work *may be* derived from questions generated by the general examination committee and solicited from the course instructors, where possible. These questions *may be* "stand alone" or *may be* integrated into the "super-problems" part of the exam.
- Generally within *three months* of passing the general examination, the candidate should publicly present and defend the Ph.D. dissertation proposal as part of their oral exam. The rest of the oral exam on more general topics is held at the same time as the dissertation proposal defense. Written public notice and notification of the IMS Coordinating Committee must be done at least 15 days prior to the oral exam.
- If student fails the written or oral part of the general examination, he/she must formally petition the general examination committee to retake the examination. At the discretion of the general examination committee, students may be allowed to retake the written exam one time and the oral exam one time.

Upon successful completion of the Ph.D. general comprehensive examinations, the student can be awarded an M.S. degree if the required course work has been completed. This work includes the M.S. core courses as well as electives amounting to 30 credits total with the comprehensive examination as a capstone experience. The student must make a formal request in writing to IMS Coordinating Committee to be awarded the M.S. degree and must submit a graduate degree application for approval to their Graduate Program Director.

Dissertation

A scholarly dissertation based on original research is required of all Ph.D. candidates. Dissertation research may be done in the laboratory or the field, or may be carried out in part during residence with an appropriate private business or government agency. Presentation and defense of a satisfactory dissertation, normally to be completed within five years from the date of advancement to candidacy, fulfill the degree requirements. The dissertation defense consists of a public lecture on the dissertation and a subsequent oral examination by the candidate's dissertation committee.

The dissertation must be approved and signed by all members of the dissertation committee and the Department Head/Chair. **The Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School of the student's home campus is the final and only arbitrator of what constitutes an acceptable dissertation.** The original dissertation and one copy are required, and the student is responsible for any fees related to binding and archiving the dissertation. Students should consult the Graduate Office of their home campus for guidelines for the dissertation style and format as well as other requirements.

Doctoral Dissertation Committee

Generally at the end of the fourth semester, and preferably no later than the end of the sixth semester, the student and major faculty advisor select additional faculty (a minimum of two faculty members in addition to the faculty advisor) who constitute the student's dissertation committee. The student's faculty advisor serves as chair. Committee members may be selected from IMS faculty, other departments, and/or other institutions. Committees are encouraged to include at least one member from a campus or institution other than the campus where the student resides. The student and his/her advisor select committee members subject to the approval of the department chair, the graduate program director, and other approvals as required by the home campus (e.g., college dean, etc.). Members of the dissertation committee must agree to not only assist in the supervision of the dissertation project, but also conduct the final oral examination. The dissertation committee, working with the graduate program director, guides the student toward completion of his/her dissertation, with a target date of the end of the 10th semester in the case of full time students.

Doctoral Dissertation Defense

The Ph.D. student's dissertation committee administers the dissertation defense. The defense is also given publicly. Students should be reminded that most faculty are on nine-month contracts and should not necessarily assume that committee members will be available during the summer months.

Dissertation Proposal

Generally within three months of passing the written portion of the general comprehensive examination, the graduate degree candidate should prepare a dissertation proposal describing the research to be conducted, analyzed, and presented in the dissertation. The Ph.D. dissertation proposal will be publicly presented to the dissertation committee as part of the oral portion of the comprehensive exam. A passing grade is obtained by simple majority vote of the committee. The cover sheet must be signed by each member of the dissertation committee to indicate approval of the topic and its plan of execution. Students should consult with the home campus Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School for requirements related to the review and approval of the dissertation proposal.

Dissertation Credit Requirement

The minimum number of dissertation credits required is 18. There is no maximum number of dissertation credits required; however, a student can register for only a maximum of nine (9)

dissertation credits per semester or academic session. Doctoral candidates will not be recommended to the Board of Trustees for the doctoral degree unless they have the requisite number of dissertation credits.

Announcement of Dissertation Defense:

Written public notice and notification of the IMS Coordinating Committee must be done at least 15 days prior to the defense. In addition campus specific regulations should be followed as well. Students should consult with the Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School for other requirements related to announcement of the dissertation defense.

Dissertation Defense Results

The result of the dissertation defense should be forwarded to the IMS Coordinating Committee following the examination. Students should consult with the Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School of their home campus for requirements for notification of results of the dissertation defense.

Degree Eligibility Form

Students should consult with their Graduate Program Director and Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School of their home campus for required forms for degree completion and associated deadlines.

Degree Program Oversight

To provide oversight and program assessment, the campus graduate program director (Coordinating Committee member) leads an assessment of every student's progress every year. The assessment usually consists of a review by the student's advisor and campus graduate program director (Coordinating Committee member) and may include the student's M.S. thesis committee or Ph.D. dissertation committee members, depending on circumstances. The campus graduate program director (Coordinating Committee member) is responsible for clearly communicating the results of that review to the student. If the decision is not to allow the student to continue in the program, the campus graduate program director (Coordinating Committee member) makes that recommendation to the appropriate chairs and/or dean of the student's home campus.

IMS Annual Symposium

To help develop a sense of community across the IMS campuses, graduate students and faculty are encouraged to make a short presentation on their research at an annual faculty-student symposium.

Waiver of Core Courses

Students who have taken one or more of the core courses at another university prior to enrolling in the IMS may request to have the core course(s) waived. The student must send electronically a written request for a waiver, along with the syllabus of the course(s) taken at the other university and the grade(s) they received in the course(s), to the IMS Coordinating Committee. The request is then sent to the IMS faculty who teach the core course in question and they evaluate if the course taken is of similar content and quality as the IMS core course. The faculty will then make a recommendation to the IMS Coordinating Committee. The IMS Coordinating Committee, based on the recommendations, will either approve or deny the request. Waiver of core courses does not affect the number of credits needed to obtain a degree. Students wishing to transfer core courses must follow this procedure subject to the transfer credit requirements.

Transfer Credit and Advanced Standing

Applicants who have completed graduate course work at other accredited institutions may, depending on the policies of their home campus, transfer credit towards the completion of an IMS graduate degree. Some campuses may also allow students to apply for advanced standing. Students should consult with their Graduate Program Director for policies and procedures related to transfer credit and advanced standing. **Transfer credit is subject to the final approval of the IMS Coordinating Committee and the Registrar of the home campus.**

Independent Study Credit

Substitution of an independent study course for credit for thesis or dissertation research towards the degree should generally not be used except under truly exceptional circumstances. However, if a student wants or needs to receive special training in an area of expertise his or her advisor cannot provide, and there is no suitable course in which the student can take in a timely fashion to satisfy that need, then a request for an independent study course might be justifiable.

For example if a student is conducting a multidisciplinary research topic and would benefit from an independent study course from a faculty member with expertise appropriate to the need, and to repeat, no formal course offering is available to satisfy that need, then it might be justified. Generally this is rare and will only occur with the strong endorsement of the student's advisor and committee. A written compelling argument stating why the independent study would have to be substituted,

rather than added to, the student's program of study must be made and signed by your advisor and committee and sent to the IMS Coordinating Committee for final approval.

Maximum Semester Credit Limit

The usual course load for full-time graduate students is 9 credits/semester. The absolute maximum number of total credits (undergraduate + graduate) for which a graduate student will be allowed to register is 16 credits/semester. Any student who wishes to register for more than the maximum credit load must secure written permission from the graduate program director of their home campus.

Statute of Limitations

(Time Limit for Degree Completion) A graduate degree, at either the master's or doctoral level, implies a significant mastery of a discipline within a specified time period. A well-designed curriculum is not a mere collection of classes that add up to a set number of credits. It is, rather, a coherent selection of courses with an overall educational achievement that is greater than the sum of its parts. However, this coherence is lost if the program is completed over a long time span. Consequently, degree requirements must be completed within specified time periods from the semester of admission. These time periods are:

MS degree with thesis option	5 years
MS degree with non-thesis option	5 years
PSM degree	5 years
Ph.D. degree with or without a M.S. at the start	8 years

A student may obtain an extension of one year by filing an Academic Petition signed by his or her graduate program director, department chair, and the IMS Coordinating Committee. In exceptional cases, an additional extension may be granted. In this case, the student is required to submit an additional Academic Petition along with a letter of explanation accompanied by a detailed plan for degree completion and a letter from the student's graduate program director or faculty advisor indicating their concurrence with the request.

Academic Grades

The grading system adopts the scheme used at the campus where the course is being offered.

<i>Letter Quality Point</i>	<i>Grade Equivalent (UMB)</i>	<i>Grade Equivalent (UMA, UML)</i>	<i>Grade Equivalent (UMD)</i>
A	4.00	4.00	4.00
A-	3.75	3.70	3.70
B+	3.25	3.30	3.30
B	3.00	3.00	3.00
B-	2.75	2.70	2.70
C+	2.25	2.30	2.30
C	2.00	2.00	2.00
C-			1.7
D+			1.3
D			0.7
F	0.00	0.00	0.00

The quality points for each grade are multiplied by the number of credits for the course, and the totals for all courses are added; this result is the student's cumulative quality point figure. The cumulative quality point figure is divided by the number of cumulative credit hours carried; this result is the student's cumulative quality point average.

Note that there are a number of other grades used on the campuses for incompletes, grading thesis work, seminar, etc. For such grades, IMS defers to the system of the home campus of the course being graded.

The grade of C (not C-) is the lowest grade acceptable for graduate credit; however, all grades will be averaged into the student's record.

No graduate degree will be awarded to a student whose cumulative average for course work in his or her program is below 3.0.

Retaking Courses

There is a one-time per course retake option with grade replacement for a course for which the student receives a grade of B- or less, but the course credits may only be counted once toward degree requirements. Students have the option of retaking **one core course** for which the student received a grade of less than a B- in order to improve the course grade.

Continuous Enrollment

Graduate students are required to maintain continuous enrollment each semester by registering for course, thesis, or dissertation credits or by paying the Program Fee. Failure to be properly enrolled will result in a student's withdrawal at the end of the Late Registration Period.

Retention Policy

In general, students must maintain an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better to be allowed to continue in the program. However, students should consult with the Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School of their home campus for retention policies.

Academic Warning

Any graduate student whose cumulative or semester grade point average (GPA) falls below 3.0 should receive a warning notice as per the policies of their home campus. In such cases, the student should meet with their graduate program director (Coordinating Committee member) or a designee and develop an academic plan to bring the GPA to a level above 3.0. Some campuses may have additional or more stringent requirements and students should consult with their Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School for the policies pertaining to their home institution.

Academic Probation

Any graduate student whose cumulative or semester GPA falls below 3.0 **for a second time**, will automatically receive a letter of probation. Copies of the letter will be sent to the faculty advisor, graduate program director (Coordinating Committee member), chairperson, college dean, dean/director of the Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School of the home campus, and also placed on file with the student's record. Within 30 days, the student's guidance committee, chaired by the graduate program director or a designee, should meet with the student and decide whether to recommend loss of degree candidacy. Such a decision or other course of action will be fully documented in writing with copies sent to the chairperson, college dean, and the Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School of the home campus. A recommendation of loss of degree candidacy and dismissal is subject to the approval of the IMS Coordinating Committee. Some campuses may have additional or more stringent requirements and students should consult with their Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School for the policies pertaining to their home institution.

Academic Dismissal

Any student whose semester GPA falls below 3.0 **for a third time**, and whose cumulative GPA is below 3.0, will automatically be dismissed from his or her graduate program and the University. Reinstatement will be considered if the student provides a detailed justification and academic plan concerning how he or she will correct this academic deficiency. The plan must be attached to a Graduate Academic Petition and approved by the faculty advisor, graduate program director (Coordinating Committee member), chairperson, the college and the graduate deans or directors, and the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs or his /her designee. **If any of the above individuals disapproves of the reinstatement, the dismissal will remain in effect and no subsequent appeals will be considered.** Independent of the above warning/probation/dismissal system, the Dean or Director of the Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School of the home campus may at any time examine the performance of any student not meeting the academic standards expected of graduate students and recommend to the appropriate graduate committee a course of action including dismissal. Some campuses may have additional or more stringent requirements and students should consult with their Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School for the policies pertaining to their home institution.

Academic Integrity

The integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in all aspects of its endeavor. Academic integrity is therefore required of all faculty, staff, and students at the University of Massachusetts.

Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Students should consult with their Graduate Studies Office or Graduate School for the specific academic integrity policies for their home campus. However, in general academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

Cheating - use, or attempted use, of trickery, artifice, deception, breach of confidence, fraud, or misrepresentation of one's academic work.

Fabrication - falsification or invention of any information or citation in any academic exercise.

Plagiarism - representing the words or ideas of another as one's own work in any academic exercise. This includes submitting without citation, in whole or in part, prewritten term papers of another or the research of another, which includes but is not limited to commercial vendors who sell or distribute such materials and electronic sources such as the internet.

Facilitating dishonesty - helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty, including substituting for another in an examination, misrepresenting oneself, or allowing others to represent as their own one's papers, reports, or academic works.

Students who commit academic dishonesty are subject to dismissal.