



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*

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## **Graduate Degrees/Credits Required**

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 additional formal courses (15 credits minimum, which does not include 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), 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 if desired a Guidance Committee made up of their advisor and several other IMS faculty. Full time MS students normally complete their degree requirements in four semesters. Part-time MS students are encouraged to take two courses per semester. Each student electing the non-thesis option must complete a substantial research paper that must 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.

### **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 and/or management area (including law and economics). The policy/management course should coincide with the student's selected option area of study.

Courses covering technology and quantitative skills are generally subject to student choice and guidance committee approval, though there may be requirements specific to each option area. IMS offers at least two core courses each semester via distance learning. These 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- or better in each core course and an overall average of 3.0 in the core courses are required. There is one retake option with a grade replacement on a course for which the student receives a grade of B- or less.

### **Concentrations and Electives**

To build on the core courses, each IMS student selects an option area and chooses electives appropriate to this concentration, as approved by their faculty advisor and/or thesis committee. Option areas, which are intended as guidelines are listed on the UMIMS web site, which describes the specific areas of study as well as the electives associated with each.

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. 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 must present at least one seminar in the third or fourth semester. Attendance at the weekly seminars is required during all four semesters, for which students receive 1 credit for each of the first two semesters but no credit for the second two semesters.

### **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 faculty 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. Committees are encouraged to include at least one IMS faculty member from a campus or institution other than the campus where the student resides. The selection of committee members is subject to the approval of the department chair and the Graduate Program Director (coordinating committee member). 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.

Working with their advisor and thesis committee, the student selects a topic for their thesis research. Note, there is no thesis proposal at the M.S. level.

**Thesis Credit Requirement:**

MS Thesis students must register for a minimum of six thesis credits. There is no maximum number of thesis credits; however, only six are counted toward the thirty credit requirement. 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 proscribed style and format on acid-free paper. The thesis must be approved and signed by all members of the thesis committee and the Department Head/Chair. The local Graduate School where the student resides is the final and only arbitrator of what is an acceptable thesis. The original thesis and one copy are required, and fees must be paid to cover binding and microfilming costs.

**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 as well.

**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 apply to the IMS Coordinating Committee requesting transition into the Ph.D. program track, without completion of an MS thesis. This request must be accompanied by letters of recommendation from the student's major advisor(s) and members of the MS Thesis Committee. Additionally, the student must present a preliminary research plan for the PhD to justify the changeover. The Admission Committee will base their decision on original credentials supplied at the time of admission, subsequent performance in their MS program, and the recommendations from the student's advisor and Thesis Committee. Admission Committee recommendations are forwarded to the IMS Coordinating Committee for action.

## **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 average of 3.0 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, physical, and/or geological oceanography series.
- 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 3.0 in the core courses are required. There is a retake option on a course for which the student receives a grade of B- or less.

### **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. 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 course, 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 a semester-long internship at an area business or public-sector enterprise. There is a minimum of 250 hours required at the internship. At the conclusion of the internship, the student must write a reflection of their experience, worth 1 course credit.

### **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. It is also required that students apply 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 studies 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: biological, chemical, and physical oceanography.
- One (1) course in marine policy and/or management area (including law and economics).

The core courses are intended to provide a common grounding in the biological, chemical, and physical oceanographic areas of marine sciences 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 average of 3.0 in the core courses are required. There is one retake option on a course for which the student receives a grade of B- or less.

## **Concentrations and Electives**

To build on the core courses, each IMS student selects an area of concentration and chooses electives appropriate to this concentration, as approved by their faculty advisor and/or thesis committee. Option areas and courses on the IMS web site describe the concentrations and list the electives associated with each area of study.

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 required, for which students receive 1 credit for each of the first two semesters but no credit after the first year.

## **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 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.

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 given over 2 days, each in a 4-hour block. The first day is closed book and the second day is open book. 25% of the exam will be on core-course material and the other 75% will be in 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 both core concepts in biological, chemical and physical oceanography and material from the candidate's formal course work.
- The core-course exam problems will be provided by the professors of the core courses and will be graded by them. Professors will return the graded core-course question to the exam committee who will add this to the other questions to determine the final exam grade of the student.
- 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.

- Within *three months* of passing the general examination, the candidate should publicly present and defend the Ph.D. dissertation proposal part of their oral exam. The rest of the oral exam on more general topics is held at the same time as the thesis 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 and/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 MS degree if the appropriate course work has been completed. This work includes the MS 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 MS degree.

#### **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 typed in a proscribed style and format on acid-free paper. The dissertation must be approved and signed by all members of the dissertation committee and the Department Head/Chair. The local Graduate School where the student resides is the final and only arbitrator of what is an acceptable dissertation. The original dissertation and one copy are required, and fees must be paid to cover binding and microfilming costs.

**Amherst** - Refer to the handout “Typing Guidelines for Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations”, available in the Office of Degree Requirements and on the Web at [www.umass.edu/gradschool/students.students\\_typing\\_guidelines.htm](http://www.umass.edu/gradschool/students.students_typing_guidelines.htm).

**Boston** – Refer to Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations at the University of Massachusetts Boston at [http://www.geront.umb.edu/dept/docs/Guidelines\\_for\\_the\\_Preparation\\_of\\_Theses\\_and\\_Dissertation21.pdf](http://www.geront.umb.edu/dept/docs/Guidelines_for_the_Preparation_of_Theses_and_Dissertation21.pdf)

**Dartmouth** - Refer to Requirements for Theses and Dissertations at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, available at <http://www.umassd.edu/graduate/currents/welcome.cfm>

Lowell – Refer to Thesis and Dissertation Guide at [http://www.uml.edu/grad/pdf/thesis\\_guide.pdf](http://www.uml.edu/grad/pdf/thesis_guide.pdf)

### **Doctoral Dissertation Committee:**

Generally at the end of the fourth semester but no later than the end of the sixth semester, the student and major faculty advisor select additional faculty (2 minimum) who constitute the student's Dissertation Committee, which is chaired by the student's major advisor. Committee members may be selected from IMS faculty, other departments, and/or other institutions. Committees are encouraged to include at least one IMS faculty 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 and the graduate program director. 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 Coordinator, guides the student toward completion of his/her dissertation, with a target date of the end of the 10th semester. A Dissertation Defense Committee, consisting of members of 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**

Within three months of passing the written portion of the general comprehensive examination, the graduate degree candidate must 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. A copy of the cover sheet must be sent to the IMS Program Office.

Amherst - The Graduate Program Director (Coordinating Committee member) or Department Head/Chair signs and forwards the prospectus to the Graduate Records Office. This copy must be received at least seven (7) months prior to the Final Oral Examination.

Boston – no requirement

Dartmouth – no requirement

Lowell - no requirement

### **Dissertation Credit Requirement:**

The minimum number of dissertation credits required is 18. There is no maximum number of credits to which a student is limited; however, a student can register for only a maximum of nine (9) credits per semester/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 30 days prior to the defense. In addition campus specific regulations should be followed as well.

Amherst - All Final Oral Examinations/Dissertation Defenses must be announced *In the Loop* to allow interested Graduate Faculty and others to attend. The Office of Degree Requirements must receive written notification of the scheduling of a Final Oral Examination at least four weeks prior to the date of the defense. An examination cannot be held unless it has been publicly announced *In the Loop*. The examination must be held on the Amherst campus. All members of the Dissertation Committee must be present at the defense. (Note: All Graduate Faculty are invited to attend and cannot be excluded from a Final Oral Examination. Departments differ in allowing others to attend. Courtesy suggests that the Chair of the Committee, whose name is published *In the Loop*, be consulted by others attending the Defense, with the stipulation above.)

Boston – no requirement

Dartmouth – no requirement

Lowell - One week prior to the dissertation defense, announcements of the defense, listing the graduate student's name, dissertation title, and place and time of the defense, must be submitted to the chairperson of the department and the Dean for posting and distribution. The defense is open to the public.

**Dissertation Defense Results:**

The result of the dissertation defense is forwarded to the IMS Coordinating Committee directly following the examination and

Amherst - The result of the dissertation defense is forwarded to the Graduate Records Office directly following the examination.

Boston – no requirement

Dartmouth – no requirement

Lowell – Student’s Advisor reports the result of the dissertation defense to the department and the Graduate School. In order to pass the defense, the candidate may not receive more than one dissenting vote from the members of the Dissertation Committee.

**Degree Eligibility Form:**

The IMS Degree Eligibility Form must be completed by all doctoral degree candidates and signed by the Graduate Program Director (Coordinating Committee member) and the Department Head/Chair. The completed form must be received by the posted deadline of the home campus. These deadlines are strictly observed and will not be extended. Degrees cannot and will not be awarded retroactively.

Amherst - The Degree Eligibility Form (available in the Office of Degree Requirements) must be completed by all doctoral degree candidates and signed by the Graduate Program Director and the Department Head/Chair. The candidate should verify the accuracy of the information on this form with his/her permanent record. The completed form, along with all appropriate fees, signatures, and the Survey of Earned Doctorates and University Microfilms for MS must be received by the Office of Degree Requirements by the posted deadline.

Boston – The degree application form, signed by the student and the Graduate Program Director, must be submitted to the office of the registrar.

Dartmouth - Candidates for graduation must declare their intention to graduate formally at the Registrar's Office by filing an Application for Diploma.

Lowell - Submission of a Graduate Degree Clearance form to the Graduate School Office by the posted deadline.

### **Degree Program Oversight**

To provide oversight and program assessment, the campus Graduate Program Coordinator (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 Coordinator (Coordinating Committee member) and may include the student's MS Thesis Committee or Ph.D. Dissertation Committee members, depending on circumstance. The campus Graduate Program Coordinator (Coordinating Committee member) is responsible for clearly communicating the results of that review to the student. If the student must be terminated, the campus Graduate Program Coordinator (Coordinating Committee member) makes that recommendation to the appropriate chairs and/or Dean on the different campuses. To help develop a sense of community, graduate students may make a short presentation on their research to the IMS faculty at the yearly research retreat.

### **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**

Applicants who have completed graduate course work at other accredited institutions may transfer credit towards the completion of an IMS graduate degree. Only

courses completed elsewhere in the United States or Canada within five years prior to the date of admission to the IMS graduate degree program at the University of Massachusetts may be considered for transfer in accordance with the following regulations.

1. A maximum total of 12 (MS and PSM) and 24 (Ph.D.) graduate credits earned with a grade of B or better taken at the University of Massachusetts and/or another accredited institution may be transferred.
2. The courses presented must be from an accredited U.S. or Canadian institution authorized to grant graduate degrees. Other schools will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
3. The courses presented for a master's degree must not have been used in earning another master's degree and must be beyond the baccalaureate credit requirement.
4. The courses presented must be appropriate to the degree program for which the applicant is applying.
5. The courses presented must be graduate level.
6. Transfer credit may not be granted for research seminars, clinical courses, practica, internships, or special projects.
7. Transfer credit from another U.S. or Canadian institution must not exceed equivalent course credit (typically 3) at UMass, and will be based on the University's standard of 37.5 semester contact hours = 3 credits. One and two course credit transfers will also be considered providing they are proportional to the 37.5 semester contact hour standard.
8. Students who wish to transfer credit must send a written request to the IMS Coordinating Committee and file (within the first semester of matriculation) an Academic Petition form at the home campus Graduate Registrar's Office.
9. An official transcript and description of the course(s) must be submitted with the written request.

**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 for, 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 without a MS at the start	8 years
Ph.D. degree with a related master's degree	8 years

A student may obtain an extension of one year by filing an Academic Petition signed by his or her coordinator, department chair, and the IMS Coordinating Committee. In exceptional cases, an additional extension may be granted. In this case, the student must submit an Academic Petition, a letter of explanation accompanied by a detailed plan for degree completion, and a letter from the student's coordinator or thesis advisor concurring with the request.

## Academic Grades

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

Letter Quality Point	Grade Equivalent (UMB)	Grade Equivalent (UMA, UML)	Grade Equivalent (UMD)
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, 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 retake option with grade replacement on a course for which the student receives a grade of B- or less but the course may be offered only once toward degree requirements.



### **Continuous Enrollment**

Graduate students are required to maintain continuous enrollment each semester by registering for course/thesis/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**

No more than 6 credits of grades below B may be counted toward the master's degree; no more than 9 credits of grades below B may be counted toward the doctorate. No graduate degree will be awarded to any student whose overall cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0.

### **Academic Warning**

Any graduate student whose semester grade point average (GPA) falls below 3.0 will automatically receive a warning notice which will also be sent to the graduate coordinator, and filed with the student's record. The student will be required to meet with the graduate coordinator or his/her designee within 30 days of receipt of the warning notice and develop an academic plan to bring his or her GPA to a level above 3.0.

### **Academic Probation**

Any graduate student whose 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 graduate coordinator, chairperson, college dean, Dean of the 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 coordinator or his/her designee, will 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 Dean of the Graduate School of the home campus. A recommendation of loss of degree candidacy and dismissal are subject to the approval of the IMS Coordinating Committee.

### **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 graduate coordinator, chairperson, the college and the graduate deans, 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 of the Graduate School of the home

campus may at any time examine the performance of any student not living up to the academic standard expected of graduate students and recommend to the appropriate graduate committee a course of action including dismissal.

### **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. 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.