

University of Kansas



Department of
East Asian Languages and Cultures
GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

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EALC Graduate Student Handbook

This handbook is designed to supply you with basic information about the Master's Program in the East Asian Languages and Cultures Department, the Juris Doctorate/Master's Joint Degree in Law and East Asian Languages and Cultures and the East Asian Cultures Graduate Certificate at the University of Kansas.

DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Prof. Keith McMahon

(785) 864-9126

Email: kmcmahon@ku.edu

Your main advisor is your thesis advisor, who will handle academic questions, including courses to take and questions relating to the writing of the thesis. The student ideally should select a thesis advisor by the end of the first year or beginning of the second. You will also see the EALC Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) every semester to monitor your course of study, especially when beginning your program. The DGS will oversee your progress, especially in terms of advice about fulfillment of requirements and assistance in finding a thesis advisor. The DGS will help answer technical questions relating to the completion of the project, including the defense. The same applies for the non-thesis option, for which you will consult with the DGS each semester to monitor and determine progress.

GRADUATE PROGRAM COORDINATOR, CLAS

Aley Pennington

(785) 864-1528

Email: aleypennington@ku.edu

The Graduate Program Coordinator handles the paperwork and files that pertain to your study in this program, as well as the forms necessary for the completion of your requirements for the degree, including thesis defense or final M.A. exam. She is available to answer non-academic questions you have about the program.

IMPORTANT WEBSITES

[CLAS Calendar, petition form, grad information](#)

[Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs](#)

[Electronic Thesis and Dissertations](#)

[Enroll & Pay](#)

[KU Scholarworks](#)

[Thesis Formatting Guidelines](#)

EALC PROGRAM OFFERINGS

The Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures currently offers coursework toward the following degrees:

M.A. in East Asian Languages and Cultures with four concentrations:

- Chinese language and literature
- Japanese language and literature
- Korean language and literature
- East Asian cultures

J.D. in Law / M.A. in East Asian Languages and Cultures Joint Degree

Graduate Certificate in East Asian Cultures with three tracks:

- China Studies
- Japan Studies
- Korea Studies

MASTER'S DEGREE IN EAST ASIAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

The department offers a master's degree in East Asian languages and cultures. Students should declare their concentration in one of three options.

- Chinese language and literature
- Japanese language and literature
- Korean language and literature
- East Asian cultures

Students of Chinese or Japanese language and literature take more language courses and study the modern and pre-modern literature of their target culture. Students of East Asian cultures develop a broad interdisciplinary knowledge of East Asia. This concentration is for students pursuing professional or non-college teaching careers, for students in the early stages of language training, or for students who have already acquired competence in an East Asian language.

Admission & Admission Prerequisites

Information regarding application deadlines, materials, and University admission requirements are posted on the [EALC Department Graduate Admissions page](#).

Entrance requirements for a concentration in either **Chinese, Japanese, or Korean language and literature** include

- 3 years of the modern language and, for Chinese language students, one year of classical Chinese or the demonstrated equivalent. Students not meeting this prerequisite may be admitted with deficiencies provided they achieve this level of proficiency outside the minimum of 30 graduate credit hours required for the degree.**
- 2 lecture courses dealing with East Asia.

Entrance requirements for a concentration in **East Asian cultures** are

- At least 2 years of an East Asian language. Students not meeting this prerequisite may be admitted with deficiencies provided they achieve this level of proficiency outside the minimum of 30 graduate credit hours required for the degree.**
- 2 lecture courses dealing with East Asia.

Program Requirements for Chinese, Japanese, or Korean Language and Literature Concentration

1. A minimum of 30 graduate credit hours**:
 - a) Fourth-year level of language.*
 - b) While students may apply credit hours from study abroad toward their degree, at least 18 credit hours must be taken in residence at KU.
 - c) No more than 6 hours of directed readings courses may be included in the required 30 hours.
 - d) A course involving research methods, to be determined in consultation with the Thesis/Faculty Advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.
 - e) Students are expected to take at least one course at the 500 level or above in the literature of their concentration.
 - f) At least 15 credits must be at the 700 level or above.
2. Thesis Option
 - a) A thesis that will demonstrate in-depth research on a topic in the area of concentration, typically completed over 1 or 2 semesters (EALC 899, 3 to 6 credit hours). Students are expected to make significant use of primary and secondary sources in the language of concentration.
3. Portfolio Option
 - a) Must write three substantial research papers on East Asian topics (15-20 pages).
 - i. At least one of the papers should be written by the end of the second semester in the program, though handing it in for a grade does not constitute completion. It must still go through a process of revision before final approval by the department.
 - ii. The papers will be initially evaluated and graded by the instructor of the class in which the paper is submitted. The grade must be A or B.
 - iii. The student will submit each paper to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), plus an abstract (no more than 500 words) summarizing each. The student will keep and submit the original copy with the instructor's remarks and grade.
 - b) With the permission of the DGS, students may include relevant courses in non-East Asian areas (such as linguistics, language pedagogy, anthropology, political science, and literary theory). A paper for such a course would generally not be used to fulfill the above requirements unless it was on an East Asian topic approved beforehand by the DGS.

- c) Students will meet regularly with the DGS (at least once a semester) to determine course selection, progress to degree, and designation of courses in which papers are to be submitted for the degree.
- d) With approval of the DGS, students with a specific focus of study will work with a faculty member with knowledge of that field as their faculty advisor. The DGS will liaise with the advisor on all matters listed above.
- e) In the final semester of study, the DGS, faculty advisor, and student will work together to assemble an oral defense committee of three graduate faculty. The student will select one of the three papers to present and defend for their exam. The committee may also ask general questions about the two other research papers that were submitted to meet the non-thesis requirements.

Program Requirements for the East Asian Cultures Concentration

1. A minimum of 30 graduate credit hours**:
 - a) Third-year level of language.*
 - b) While students may apply credit hours from study abroad toward their degree, at least 18 credit hours must be taken in residence at KU.
 - c) A course involving research methods, to be determined in consultation with the thesis advisor and the director of graduate studies.
 - d) Students are expected to select 1 of the East Asian cultures for their concentration and to include in their programs at least 2 courses dealing wholly with an East Asian culture outside the concentration or broadly on East Asia.
 - e) Students may not take more than 6 hours of directed readings.
 - f) Students may, in consultation with the department graduate director, take other credit hours in a discipline or disciplines closely related to their studies. The balance between courses in EALC and related departments must be determined with the student's thesis advisor and the director of graduate studies. East Asian area courses are offered in anthropology, business, film and media studies, geography, history, history of art, linguistics, political science, religious studies, and sociology.
 - g) Students must take 1 literature or culture course with an EALC department graduate faculty member at the 500 level or above in the country of their concentration.
 - h) At least 15 credits must be at the 700 level or above.
2. Thesis Option
 - a) A thesis that will demonstrate in-depth research on a topic in the area of concentration (China, Japan, or Korea), typically completed over 1 or 2 semesters (EALC 899, 3 to 6 credit hours).
3. Portfolio Option
 - a) Must write three substantial research papers on East Asian topics (15-20 pages).
 - i. At least one of the papers should be written by the end of the second semester in the program, though handing it in for a grade does not constitute completion. It must still go through a process of revision before final approval by the department.
 - ii. The papers will be initially evaluated and graded by the instructor of the class in which the paper is submitted. The grade must be A or B.
 - iii. The student will submit each paper to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), plus an abstract (no more than 500 words) summarizing each. The student will keep and submit the original copy with the instructor's remarks and grade.

- b) With the permission of the DGS, students may include relevant courses in non-East Asian areas (such as linguistics, language pedagogy, anthropology, political science, and literary theory). A paper for such a course would generally not be used to fulfill the above requirements unless it was on an East Asian topic approved beforehand by the DGS.
- c) Students will meet regularly with the DGS (at least once a semester) to determine course selection, progress to degree, and designation of courses in which papers are to be submitted for the degree.
- d) With approval of the DGS, students with a specific focus of study will work with a faculty member with knowledge of that field as their faculty advisor. The DGS will liaise with the advisor on all matters listed above.
- e) In the final semester of study, the DGS, faculty advisor, and student will work together to assemble an oral defense committee of three graduate faculty. The student will select one of the three papers to present and defend for their exam. The committee may also ask general questions about the two other research papers that were submitted to meet the non-thesis requirements.

*A language course result lower than 'B' may result in a departmental recommendation for probation status. If language coursework performance does not improve after one semester, the student may be recommended for dismissal.

****At least 50% of coursework for the master's degree must be taken at the 700 level or above.**

Thesis Grading Rubric

THESIS GRADING	Description of Grade	Action by Program
Satisfactory Progress – SP	The student has met the goals of the semester as agreed upon with the instructor and faculty advisor. The student has shown timely completion of the project (s).	The student is making satisfactory progress toward the degree. No action is needed.
Limited Progress – LP	The student has completed less than was aimed for in agreement with the instructor and faculty advisor. The semester's progress may cause delays in the timely completion of the project (s).	The COGA advisor will track grades of LP in the program. If two consecutive grades of LP, or a third LP are reported, the graduate faculty will review the record and may recommend academic probation and/or a mentoring agreement. If additional LPs occur, the student will be out of good academic standing and, as a result, may be recommended for dismissal from the program.
No Progress -- NP	Little or no evidence of completed work. No progress toward completion of the project(s).	The COGA advisor will track any NP grades in the program. NP indicates unsatisfactory progress toward the degree and will mark the student as being out of good academic standing and possibly being placed on academic probation. Results include the drawing up of a mentoring agreement, or recommendation of dismissal from the program.

Regular & Timely Feedback from Thesis/Dissertation Advisors and Department

To ensure academic success and professional growth, all graduate students will receive regular and timely feedback on their research and coursework. The department will keep track of progress on Master's thesis OR portfolio papers via the Mentorship Agreement Form each semester, which faculty advisors will complete in consultation with the student and then finalize and submit to the Director of Graduate Studies.

JOINT DEGREE IN J.D. LAW/ M.A. EAST ASIAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

A joint degree in Law and East Asian Languages and Cultures opens many doors for its recipients. One can find opportunities in international trade and finance, immigration law, and other related fields, as well as a greater ability to work with clients from various backgrounds.

Admission & Admission Prerequisites

Applicants must meet University Admission requirements and both EALC and Law entrance requirements for the joint J.D./M.A. degree program.

- ☐ Students apply for each program separately and must be admitted to both programs no later than the end of the first year of study in Law or the completion of more than 16 credit hours in EALC.
- ☐ The Law School Admission Test (LSAT) is the only standardized test required for an applicant to the joint degree program.

Program Requirements for EALC M.A. degree

Joint degree students must complete a minimum of 106 credit hours: 81 in the School of Law and 25 in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, including:

1. A minimum of 22 graduate credit hours plus 1 of the 2 options listed in part 6.
2. Each student is expected to select 1 of the East Asian Cultures (Japan, China, or Korea) for concentration and to include in his or her program at least two courses dealing wholly with an East Asian culture outside of his or her concentration. Up to 2 courses can be pan-East Asian courses including the student's country of concentration.
3. Students must complete a third year of language of the country of concentration.**
4. No more than 6 hours of directed reading in a language may count toward the M.A. degree.
5. Students must take 1 literature or culture course with an EALC department graduate faculty member at the 500 level or above in the country of their concentration.
6. Students are required to fulfill 1 of the following requirements:
 - a. Write a thesis (3 credit hours) which must deal with a subject within the concentration chosen by the student, or
 - b. Practical thesis: Hold an internship or job in the country of concentration for a period of at least 8 weeks, at the advisor's approval, and write a 40 page analysis of the cultural aspects of the experience (3 credits)

Students MUST consult with the EALC Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) immediately upon admission to the joint program to determine an enrollment plan and obtain a list of current approved joint courses. Joint students must also consult with the DGS during advising periods each semester.

First and second year language courses do not count toward the 25 credits required for M.A. degree completion in the J.D./M.A. program. Third year language is 6-10 credits and counts toward the degree. Third and fourth year Chinese, Japanese, and Korean language courses may fulfill credit requirements as well.**

** A language course result lower than B may result in a departmental recommendation for probation status. If language coursework performance does not improve after one semester, the student may be recommended for dismissal.

MISCELLANEOUS EALC MA DEGREE PROTOCOLS

Regarding requirements:

Early on in your first semester at KU, contact potential faculty/thesis advisors to get an idea of the areas they could supervise you on, and the types of courses they would expect you to be taking to prepare yourself to work with them. The Director of Graduate Studies will help you identify potential advisors.

See the Director of Graduate Studies **whenever** you are making decisions about course selection – but note that, once you have a faculty/thesis advisor, you should first discuss course selections with your advisor before seeing the DGS, and inform your advisor of any changes in planned course selections

To make sure you are on track with your MA degree and all the requirements, see the DGS **every** semester at least once if not more often. Do not make important decisions without consulting your faculty/thesis advisor and the DGS.

Students from other overlapping programs: If a student is a degree-seeking student in Art History or some other program, EALC may accept as many of the student's completed hours in the other program as it considers feasible. If a student is non-degree-seeking, only twelve hours may count toward a degree.

Course numbering: Students may take East Asia related courses from other departments, that is, courses without the EALC prefix, such as: History, Art History, Political Science, and Religious Studies. In all cases, check with your faculty/thesis advisor and the DGS first. All courses must be at the 500 level or above in order to count toward completion of the degree.

Annual evaluation: In addition to seeing students regularly in advising sessions, EALC conducts a yearly progress report on each of its graduate students. You will receive an annual evaluation every spring, in which, among other things, the DGS, after discussion with your faculty/thesis advisor and other faculty, will comment on progress toward degree and in particular, will be concerned that students show above average performance in research work and in language classes.

Financial Aid – see EALC graduate advisor for information about fellowships for students in East Asian Studies at K.U. There are positions as Graduate Teaching Assistants and Foreign Language Area Studies fellowships when available from the Center for East Asian Studies.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN EAST ASIAN CULTURES

The department offers a graduate certificate in East Asian Cultures. All M.A. students will be granted entrance into the graduate certificate program in the track of their choosing:

- Chinese Studies
- Japanese Studies
- Korean Studies

Graduate students from other departments may also participate in the Graduate Certificate program to receive a transcript designation upon certificate completion.

Admission & Admission Prerequisites

A student must be in good standing with their graduate degree program in order to participate in the certificate program. Required and supplemental materials for the application are listed on the [East Asian Cultures certificate page](#).

Program Requirements for East Asian Studies Certificate

Students are required to complete 12 credits of graduate –level coursework to successfully earn an East Asian Cultures certificate in their chosen area of concentration.

Required Course:

EALC 704 Contemporary East Asia

Elective Courses:

The following restrictions apply to the choice of electives:

Two courses must concentrate on the country the student is studying.

The third elective course may either concentrate on the country of study, OR on East Asia in general.

In consultation with the department's Director of Graduate Studies, students must choose three additional 3-credit courses from either:

East Asian Languages & Cultures graduate-level courses, see the [Academic Catalog](#) for current offerings.

Approved additional elective courses, listed below:

COMS 557 East Asian Communication

ECON 583 Economic Issues of East

Asia GEOG 796 Asian Regions: _____

HIST 510 Topics in: _____

HIST 582 Ancient Japan

HIST 605 Medieval Japan

HA 503 Japanese Prints

HA 545 Early Chinese Art

HA 705 Major Artist: _____

HA 782 Japanese Painting

HA 788 Proseminar in Japanese Art: _____

HA 789 Proseminar in Chinese Art: _____

HA 822 Seminar in Buddhist Art: _____

HA 824 Seminar in Edo Period Painting: _____

HA 980 Seminar in Chinese Art: _____

HA 990 Seminar in Japanese Art: _____

REL 510 Religion in Korea

NON-DEGREE SEEKING ENROLLMENT OPTION

If you completed a Bachelor's degree with a minimum 3.0 GPA and wish to take a course in the department, please note that undergraduate prerequisite course completion may be necessary to succeed in graduate-level courses. Address your preparedness and motivation for taking coursework in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures in your statement of purpose.

- If you intend to enroll in language coursework, please contact the Director of Graduate Studies so we may determine your language placement level.
- If you intend to use NDS coursework to strengthen your profile for graduate study, please contact the Director of Graduate Study to determine your options. Completion of NDS coursework to fulfill prerequisites will not guarantee graduate program admission since multiple factors affect that decision.

Application Materials:

- A current C.V. (Curriculum Vitae) or resume.
- A Statement of Purpose explaining your academic objectives.
- A writing sample that demonstrates your writing skills and basic research capacity. A research paper from a previous upper-level undergraduate course will suffice.
- Two letters of recommendation that can endorse your preparedness for graduate-level course work.
- Transcripts from all institutions from which a degree was obtained and from all institutions where relevant coursework was completed.

ENROLLMENT & MAXIMUM CREDIT HOURS

The normal full-time enrollment for a graduate student is **nine** credit hours per semester or **six** hours per summer session. Students are not normally permitted to enroll for more than **sixteen** hours or more than **eight** hours in summer session. If a student is a KU employee or Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA), the hours of enrollment should be limited accordingly—usually to no more than **ten** hours for a half-time appointment or **six** hours for full-time appointment. Please note that in order to adhere to the employment contract, a GTA must have a minimum of **six** hours per fall or spring semester. There are no enrollment requirements for GTAs in the summer semester.

STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Graduate students are responsible for informing themselves of Graduate School requirements as stated in the most recent issue of the [Graduate School Catalog](#). They are also expected to be familiar with the regulations and requirements of their Graduate Divisions and departments and of their graduate programs. Members of the Graduate Faculty and of the staffs of the Graduate Divisions and Graduate School are ready to answer questions and offer counsel.

STUDENT-ADVISOR RELATIONSHIP

The selection of an advisor is one in which you and your faculty advisor share equal responsibility in planning for your academic success and ensuring that you make timely progress in meeting the degree requirements of the department, college, and university. Your advisor will assist you in selecting required and elective courses, developing research projects, and preparing for the degree requirements (e.g., selecting the topic of your thesis or topics for your three portfolio projects). You and your advisor will also work collaboratively on your professional development. Specifically, your advisor will assist you in clarifying your professional goals and, when possible, attaining substantive experience in teaching (e.g., identifying opportunities and mentoring), research (e.g., making presentations and participating in other research performances), and service (e.g., committee work for the department or other college organizations).

Changing your faculty advisor: for a variety of reasons, you may complete your degree with someone other than the advisor who admitted you. The reasons include: 1. Your or your advisor's interests may change such that the two are no longer compatible. 2. After providing at least one full semester's warning, your advisor may terminate the advising relationship. This most often occurs when students fail to make timely progress toward their degrees. 3. Your advisor leaves the department or KU, or your advisor retires or dies. In each instance, the faculty advisor should notify the Graduate Program Coordinator of the need for a change in advisor.

What happens next depends upon your progression toward the MA degree and the reason for the change in advisor. 1) If you and your advisor's relationship dissolves due to a change in research/academic interests/goals and you are in good academic standing and pre-comprehensive exam, the department is under no obligation to appoint a new advisor. It is the student's responsibility to secure a new advisor; however, the student may request guidance from the Director(s) of Graduate Study and/or their current advisor. The current advisor will continue to mentor the student until a new faculty advisor can be secured. It is highly recommended that the student secure a new advisor within one full term. At the time, the program can review the student's attempts to locate a new advisor and, if the program finds the attempts unsatisfactory, can elect to place the student on academic probation and/or dismiss the student from the program.

Faculty members will not be required to supervise research that is outside of their area of expertise or interest. If a faculty advisor no longer wishes to mentor a student due to a change in compatibility (including ongoing unsatisfactory performance in academic and/or GTA responsibilities),

the advisor must notify the Graduate Program Coordinator of the dissolution of their advisor relationship and responsibilities. The Graduate Program Coordinator will send notice to the student and also notify the Director(s) of Graduate Study. The advisor must provide the student with one full term/semester of notice (for example, a faculty advisor should notify a student within the first few weeks at the beginning of a term that they will discontinue being an advisor by the end of that term; should this occur in the middle of a term, the student will have one full semester in the following term to find a replacement advisor). The student must locate a new advisor by the end of their full term of notice to remain in good academic standing. If the student fails to secure a new advisor within this timeframe, they will be considered out of good academic standing and the department can elect to place the student on academic probation and/or dismiss the student from the program.

In all of these cases, the new advisor is not obliged to supervise research that is outside the advisor's area of expertise or interest. Thus, students may find that they must change their area of research to accommodate their new advisor. This may add time to earning their degree. In all cases, the program encourages students to meet with their new faculty advisors to outline outstanding degree requirements or research and to establish a mentoring agreement. In each case of an advisor change, the student is responsible for completing a Record of Change in Advisor form (available Graduate Program Coordinator) and submitting the completed document to the Graduate Program Coordinator for filing. The form will be kept in the student's electronic file.

Who can serve as your advisor? Your advisor must be tenured or in a tenure-track position and must hold at least a 10% appointment in the department. Adjunct or courtesy faculty can co-advise students, but may not serve as their only advisor or, unless authorized, may not admit students.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Pursuant to Article XIV of the University Senate Code and Articles V and VI of the University Senate Rules and Regulations of the University of Kansas, Lawrence, the Graduate School establishes the following procedures to hear the individual grievances of graduate students. A graduate student who believes himself or herself to be unfairly or unlawfully treated in an academic matter may present a grievance to the academic department or program chair. Each academic unit and all Graduate Divisions have established grievance policies and procedures. Appeals of a grievance heard at one of these levels is to the Judicial Board. These procedures shall not be used to hear disputes assigned to other hearing bodies under USSR Article VI, Section 4.

GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION (GSO)

Graduate students are encouraged to organize themselves and provide input in departmental affairs. The following are the policies for such input (as of 10/07):

If there is an active graduate student organization (GSO) in the department, it will be responsible for annually electing, through secret ballot, a single representative.

The graduate student representative can be either self-nominated or nominated by other graduate students.

The representative should take an impartial stance in representing the best interests of the graduate student body by communicating with the graduate student body.

The graduate student representative may sit in on faculty meetings and provide input, if and only if that input has been discussed with the majority of graduate students and represents the interests/concerns of

the graduate students as a whole.

The graduate student representative is responsible for communicating concerns/ requests for opinions from the faculty to the GSO when the faculty expresses that desire.

The graduate student should act as a medium to present the concerns and interests of the entire graduate student body in the department.

The representative should be responsible for holding meetings and/or discussions with the graduate student body in order to represent the interests of the student body as a whole.

The GSO may at any time replace the graduate student representative if there is concern about integrity, misrepresentation, or misconduct.

In matters related to hiring and tenure and other such committees, faculty may select a graduate student to represent graduate student interests on appropriate committees. If there is no active GSO in the department, then before a decision is made regarding hiring or tenure, the relevant committee must solicit written feedback from the graduate students of the department by circulating a questionnaire. The results of that survey must be considered by the committee before making a decision. However in no case may a graduate student vote on the final selection of a candidate being considered for hire in EALC.

GOOD RESEARCH PRACTICES

Research is a major focus of graduate education. A key part of good research practices involves ethics and “responsible conduct for research” (RCR). Working in collaboration with the KU Center for Research, KU’s graduate ethics program focuses on curriculum reform, as well as faculty, staff, student, and administrator training on issues pertaining to ethical conduct of research and scholarship. For more information, the [Office of Research Integrity](#) or email them at researchintegrity@ku.edu.

EALC courses involving research training include all courses at 500 level and above, including those in other departments teaching about East Asia. Consult with the DGS to be certain. Courses outside of East Asia can sometimes be allowed for such purposes.

WRITING A THESIS

For students electing the Thesis Option, the thesis is the culmination of your studies in EALC at K.U. The thesis is a study of approximately 60 to 100 pages (it can be longer) on a topic that you research under the supervision of an advisor at K.U. The advisor need not be a member of EALC, but may be (and commonly is) someone from another department who is a specialist in East Asia. The Director of Graduate Studies can help direct you toward a thesis advisor and will continue to track your progress with the thesis advisor as you develop your thesis.

Timing is essential in preparing your thesis. By the end of the first year you should know who your thesis advisor will be and, ideally, have decided upon a topic for your thesis. You should also discuss your questions and ideas with the EALC Director of Graduate Studies at the same time that you discuss anything with a potential adviser. The DGS can help you with deciding upon an adviser and must be kept informed of your progress. Your advisor should be consulted when selecting courses, selecting a topic, advising on potential committee members, and, of course, is the most important person when it comes to guidance on the writing of your thesis.

How to write a thesis? It is important that you make yourself aware of the basic expectations for an M.A. thesis, such as its structure, methodology, format, and so forth. We suggest that you also look at the theses of former M.A. students, which can serve as models. They should remind you that the document you produce will be a public one. Others will see it and some may even cite it when conducting their own research.

After deciding upon a topic, you must collect materials and digest them in time to start writing at least four to six months before you actually hand in the thesis. For example, if you plan to graduate in May, you should plan to finish your entire first draft by March (though timing also depends on your individual advisor). Expect **revision** to be a major part of your writing. The advisor will return portions of the thesis to you for revision, usually several times. When the advisor judges that your thesis is ready, he or she will share it with the other two members of your thesis committee. You will then schedule an oral defense. To do so, you must give the department three weeks advance notice. See below for steps toward applying for the degree.

Remember that 1) collecting information is one thing, taking that information and writing about it is another, and 2) writing involves three important components: creating an outline, writing the first draft according to that outline, and then revising, revising, and revising.

You are responsible for informing yourself about thesis format (including type of paper and binding) and the official school formalities (including deadlines) for thesis submission. All of your graduation requirements will be submitted through and instructions for completing can be found on COGA's [Graduation Checklists](#).

AFTER GRADUATION

We can help you envision a future after graduation based on what our alumni are currently doing, but ultimately you must make that step on your own. However, keep in mind that your instructors at K.U. perform the extremely important service of writing **letters of recommendation** for you. They are willing and happy to do so. Do not feel awkward about asking for a letter of recommendation, especially if you have cultivated an active and constructive relationship with the professors who will write for you.

Note that, if you are planning to apply for Ph.D. programs, those applications are often due in December and usually expect a polished writing sample. Be sure to discuss these applications with your faculty/thesis advisor well in advance, i.e. several months before the earliest application deadline.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

This section contains information on requirements and policies of the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs, hereafter referred to as “the University”. It is not a complete list of all policies pertaining to graduate students. Only those policies that *most commonly* affect graduate students are included.

Policies are described in general terms and are intended to help students understand what is expected. They do not reflect the exact language of the official policy and should not be confused with official policy. Specific information and restrictions as well as links to relevant forms may be accessed by clicking on the policy headings. Links to the official policies in the KU policy library are found at the bottom of each policy description. Students are accountable to and should familiarize themselves with the University's official policies.

GENERAL POLICIES

The following University policies apply to ALL graduate students regardless of degree, program, or department. These are minimum general requirements. Your department or program may have more restrictive policies in any of these areas.

Admission

Degree or non-degree seeking applicants must have a bachelor's degree (as evidenced by an official transcript from the institution the degree was obtained).

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Admission to Graduate Study](#)

English Proficiency Requirements

The University requires all applicants, international or domestic, to demonstrate English proficiency for admission to any graduate program at KU. There are multiple ways to prove English proficiency:

- Declaration of native or native-like speaker status on the online application for graduate study.
- Official scores from an English proficiency standardized test (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS-Academic, or PTE), sent by the testing agency to the University of Kansas. Official scores must be less than two years old. Scores must be reported to KU directly by the testing service. Self-reported scores or unofficial scores are not accepted. TOEFL scores should be sent by ETS to KU institution code 6871. IELTS should be sent to KU Graduate Admissions via the e-delivery service. PTE score sheets containing the Score Report Code and Registration ID should be emailed to graduateadm@ku.edu for verification.
- Graduation with a baccalaureate degree (or higher) earned in residence from an accredited English-medium college or university or an accredited college or university in the United States. Degrees earned online may not be used to verify English proficiency. Note: this option is not sufficient for employment as a Graduate Teaching Assistant.

- AEC Curriculum: Students who haven't taken one of the listed tests may complete coursework through the KU [Applied English Center](#) (AEC) to demonstrate English proficiency.
- US Military Employment: If you are employed as an officer in the U.S. military with documentation of selection or promotion to the rank of Major or higher (or the equivalent U.S. Navy or Coast Guard rank), then you will be considered fully proficient and will not be required to complete AEC testing.

Additional English Competency Requirements for GTAs:

English proficiency requirements for GTAs are governed by the Kansas Board of Regents and must be met separately from the English proficiency requirement for admission to a KU graduate program. Detailed information on English proficiency requirements for GTAs may be found on Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' [Spoken English Competency page](#).

Related Policies and Forms:

- [English Proficiency Requirements for Admission to Graduate Study](#)
- [Spoken English Language Competency of Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants, Kansas Board of Regents Policy](#)

Enrollment

For graduate students, advising on enrollment and course selection take place at the department level. While individual units may have additional enrollment requirements, for students who are required to enroll full-time (e.g. students holding a GTA/GRA/GA appointment, international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa, students receiving federal financial aid, etc.) the University defines full-time enrollment it as follows:

Fall and Spring semesters:

- Enrollment in 9 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s). *See Doctoral post-comprehensive enrollment.
- Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a Competency-Based Education (CBE) program

Summer sessions:

- Enrollment in 6 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 3 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;

- Enrollment in 3 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s).
- Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a CBE program

Graduate students are not normally permitted to enroll for more than 16 hours a semester or more than 8 hours in summer session.

While these are KU's definitions of full-time enrollment, other institutions may have different definitions. Be sure to consult with your financial aid and/or health insurance providers before making enrollment decisions.

Students not enrolled by 11:59pm the day before the first day of classes will be assessed a late enrollment fee. The University Registrar then deactivates the KU ID of any not enrolled by the last Friday in October (for Fall) or last Friday in March (for Spring). Students who wish to enroll after that must submit a [Permit to Re-Enroll](#) to be reactivated.

Students who wish to leave their graduate program should inform the department of such plans in writing so that a Voluntary Withdrawal form may be submitted on their behalf. Please note that voluntarily withdrawing from your program does **not** automatically withdraw you from coursework. You must also withdraw from all classes in Enroll & Pay via the “Withdraw from the University” option.

Deadlines for adding, changing, dropping, or withdrawing from all courses, as well any fines associated with the change, are set by the University. **Deadlines vary from year to year. Students should carefully review the current [Academic Calendar](#).**

You may also wish to consult the Registrar's page on [Effects of Dropping or Withdrawing on your Transcript](#).

Your graduate program coordinator (or similar title) is available to guide you through any enrollment scenarios or questions that come up. In order to avoid problems on your record, please consult with them prior to dropping or changing enrollment.

Related Policies:

- [Discontinued Enrollment](#)
- [Enrollment](#)
- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Graduate Coursework Expiration Dates](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#)

Graduate Credit (Including Transfer Credit)

The University's Graduate Credit [policy](#) defines KU's conditions for the following:

- Definition of graduate credit for the purposes of a course “counting” towards a graduate degree or graduate certificate at KU;
- Transfer of graduate credit to KU from an outside institution;

- Reduction in the required number of graduate hours for Master's students;
- Counting credit hours taken as non-degree seeking student towards a later graduate degree at KU;
- Counting credit hours taken as a certificate seeking student toward another graduate degree.

Transfer Credit

The transfer credit option allows master's students to add graduate-level coursework completed at another institution to their KU transcript to count toward their KU degree. Upper-level coursework taken as an undergraduate, even courses numbered at the graduate level, is not eligible for transfer in any case. Additional restrictions apply to what non-KU graduate courses and the number of credit hours that can be counted toward a KU master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below, as well as consulting with their DGS. In all cases, transfer credit must first be approved at the department or program level. To begin the transfer process, students should consult with their DGS to submit the required transfer materials. These include a transcript reflecting the courses to be transferred and descriptions and/or syllabi for the courses in question.

No transfer of credits is allowed for the Ph.D. In circumstances where students enter the Ph.D. program with an M.A. from another institution or other relevant graduate coursework, it may be possible for students to request a reduction in the number of hours required for the Ph.D. Students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Reduced Credit Hour Degree

KU policy defines 30 hours as the minimum for master's degrees. Departments may petition for a reduced hour degree master's degree for individual students in cases where they may provide evidence that the student entered the program especially well-prepared to complete a graduate-level degree and the student is able to maintain a superior grade point average. Reduced credit hour degrees must be based on coursework or experiences that can be objectively measured, such as coursework or qualifying internship or study abroad programs. Professional or life experience does not qualify. A reduction in hours is distinct from a transfer of credit and is reserved for students whose prior coursework doesn't qualify for transfer credit (e.g. was already used to fulfill requirements towards a completed degree) and there are no modifications on the transcript.

Restrictions apply to the number of credit hours that can be reduced for a master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below.

In all cases, a reduction in hours must first be approved at the department or program level, so to begin the process for approval, students should consult with their DGS. Students must also provide documentation of the coursework or experience being used to justify the reduced hours (e.g. transcripts, program descriptions).

Because there is no minimum number of required hours for the Ph.D., reduction of required hours based on prior degrees or experience is determined solely at the program level. Doctoral students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Related Policies:

- [Graduate Credit](#)

- [Co-enrollment](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#) (on Reduced Hour Master's Degree)

Credit/No Credit

The University supports and encourages interdisciplinary study, which may include graduate students enrolling in coursework at the graduate level that is outside of their primary discipline. The Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) is an option for graduate students who are taking a course that is not required for their degree or certificate and who do not wish to have the course grade reflected in their cumulative graduate GPA. Rather than a grade appearing on the transcript, the student receives a designation of CR or NC, which does not factor in the GPA.

No course graded CR/NC will count toward the satisfaction of any graduate degree or certificate requirement. This includes, but is not limited to, courses taken to fulfill the Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirement for doctoral students.

Students make the CR/NC election via the Registrar's CR/NC [online request](#) form. Elections and changes to elections can only be made during the specific CR/NC period. For regular semester courses, this period begins after the last day to add a class and extends for approximately two weeks. Exact dates may be found on the current KU [Academic Calendar](#). Please keep in mind, short courses may have [alternate dates](#).

The student should consult with their own program advisor about the appropriateness of the course prior to enrolling; however, in cases where CR/NC is elected, the course instructor is not informed of the election unless the student chooses to share this information.

Additional restrictions apply. Students should carefully review the information in the link above.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [University Senate Rules and Regulations \(USRR\), Section 2.3.8](#)

Probation & Dismissal

Probation is an academic status that can be assigned to a graduate student that is not making [satisfactory progress](#) toward completing their degree. The department initiates the probation process and will inform the student of why they are not making satisfactory progress, what they must do to return to good standing, and the deadline for doing so.

Students are most commonly placed on probation due to their graduate cumulative [GPA](#) dropping below a B average (3.0 on a 4.0 scale). In these cases, probation occurs automatically and is reflected on the student's record for the semester following the semester in which the student's GPA drops below 3.0. If the student's cumulative GPA is raised to 3.0 by the end of the probationary semester, the student will be automatically returned to good academic standing.

Individual Schools/the College may set more stringent GPA requirements.

Students may also be placed on probation by their departments for other reasons that constituting a failure to make satisfactory progress towards degree. These may include, but are not limited to;

- Lack of progress on the thesis, dissertation, or capstone project

- Unacceptable academic performance on program milestones outside of coursework (e.g. exams)
- Unsatisfactory grades or GPA within foundational required courses (despite the overall cumulative GPA)
- An unsatisfactory result in their department's annual progress evaluation

Nearing or going beyond their maximum time to degree. See the Time Limits section below for more information.

Students should carefully review the [Good Academic Standing policy](#) for graduate students at KU for more information on what constitutes making satisfactory academic progress.

Individual programs may also have additional measures of progress. Students should also consult the Annual Review section of their department graduate handbook or the degree requirements section and with their program advisor for more information.

If a student is unable to raise their cumulative GPA or otherwise meet the communicated terms of the academic probation, the department will reconsider their continuation in the program, and in most cases will recommend the student for dismissal. Once dismissed, a student is no longer able to be enrolled in coursework and cannot complete their degree. Students dismissed from any graduate program may not be admitted to any other graduate program at the University of Kansas.

A student on probation or facing dismissal should discuss their status with their advisor.

Related Policies:

- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)
- [Good Academic Standing policy](#)

Grading

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' (GPA) [Grading policy](#) governs requirements for the grading of graduate students above those described in [Article II](#) of the University Senate Rules and Regulations. Additionally, individual schools, departments, or programs may have grading policies that are more stringent than those of GPA.

Students should also consult their advisor and the departmental grading section of this handbook for additional information that may affect them.

At minimum, for all graduate students at KU, at least a B average is required on course work counted toward any of the master's degrees at KU, and only courses graded A, B, or C (excluding C-) may be counted. Course work counted toward a doctorate, including that for a master's degree if obtained at KU, should average better than a B.

Related Policies:

- [University Senate Rules & Regulations](#)

- [Grading](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)

Time Limits

The University expects that master's degree should typically be completed in two (2) years of full-time study, the doctorate degree in five (5) years of study, and both the master's and doctorate together in six-seven (6-7) years of study.

Students who anticipate exceeding these targets should review the information in the policies below, as well as consult with their program advisor to create a timeline for degree completion. In order to support this process, students are encouraged to use a Mentoring Agreement Template and/or adapt to their own needs to support effective mentoring and a positive mentoring relationship.

Note that individual schools/the College/degree programs may require Mentoring Agreements for students who are nearing their maximum time to degree.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Degree Program Time Constraints](#)
- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](https://policy.drupal.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-program-time-constraints)<https://policy.drupal.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-program-time-constraints>
- [Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Oral Exams](#) (on exam expiration and recertification)
- [Doctoral Program Profiles with Time to Degree Information](#)
- [KU CLAS Mentorship Agreement Template](#)
- [Univ. Michigan Rackham Graduate School Mentoring Plan Templates](#)
- [KU Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs IDP template](#)

Leave of Absence

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. cases of illness, emergency, financial hardship, military leave, to pursue family responsibilities, or to pursue full-time activities related to long-range professional goals) it may be necessary for graduate students to take a break from their program temporarily, without having to withdraw entirely from the program. An approved leave of absence allows a student to take a temporary break from enrolling in graduate coursework while remaining in good standing with the University and the department and while “stopping the clock” on their time to degree. When a student is on Leave of Absence status it is understood that they have temporarily suspended their graduate work and therefore will not make use of University resources, including faculty time.

Requesting a Leave of Absence is done through a University petition. University petitions must first be approved

and supported at the program level, so students wishing to initiate the petition process should first consult with their Director of Graduate Studies and review their department's internal petition procedures. Units or the Director of Graduate Study may request documentation to support the student's need for a leave of absence.

In order for a Leave of Absence to be approved, the student must be withdrawn from all active and/or future enrollment. Withdrawal for the purposes of Leave of Absence is still subject to all Registrar deadlines, required forms, and applicable tuition and fees.

Students on Leave of Absence are automatically reactivated after their leave is over and are eligible to enroll for their intended semester back during the normal enrollment periods. See the KU [Academic Calendar](#) for exact dates that enrollment begins.

If at any time plans change and a student wishes to return and enroll before leave was supposed to end, they may contact their department to be reactivated early.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Leaves of Absence](#) (policy)
- [Leave of Absence](#) (GPA website, form linked at bottom of page)

Required University Milestones

All graduate students must complete one or more exams as part of their degree requirements. In addition to department or program guidelines, the following milestones are required for all students and specific regulations apply:

- Master's Final Culminating Exam (written or oral)/Thesis Defense for Master's degree
- Doctoral Comprehensive Oral Exam
- Doctoral Final Exam/Dissertation Defense

*A final culminating effort is not required for departments with an approved coursework-only master's degree option in the Academic Catalog (note that programs with a capstone are considered coursework only).

Before a student is allowed to complete any of these three exams, pre-approval from the school/College is required in advance of the exam date. This pre-approval request will be submitted on the student's behalf by their department after the exam date has been scheduled. The school/College reviews the student record and verifies all University requirements have been fulfilled. The full list of these requirements may be found via the link in the heading above. Students should work with their departments well in advance of their planned exam date, to schedule their exams in a timely fashion and to ensure that all University policies relating to oral exams are being followed.

There are additional policies requirements for oral exams. The following are University policies pertaining to oral exams:

Oral Exam Committee Composition

All voting committee members must be appointed members of the Graduate Faculty of KU. Additionally, a majority of committee members serving on a graduate student oral examination committee must be

tenured/tenure-track faculty in the candidate's department or program of study.

Many additional restrictions apply, especially for doctoral exam committees. Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the University policies pertaining to exams, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies when forming an exam committee. Your graduate program coordinator can assist with confirming the qualifying status of any faculty member at KU, or outside of KU.

Oral Exam Attendance

Oral Exams may be conducted in-person, remotely, or a hybrid of both. There are no University level requirements for physical presence; however, there are strict regulations on participation.

In all cases, all committee members must be present, either physically or via phone/video conference, for an exam to commence. **If a committee member does not arrive or appear, the exam may not begin and if a committee member leaves or loses connection such that they cannot fully participate, the exam may not proceed. Oral examinations that do not meet these attendance requirements are not valid.**

Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the policies below, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies in the formation of an oral exam committee.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Doctoral Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Oral Exam Attendance](#)
- [Graduate Faculty Appointments](#)

DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the student's individual Ph.D. program's degree requirements, the following are University requirements for graduation with a Ph.D. at KU.

Enrollment Requirement

Prior to the semester in which the comprehensive exam is held, all doctoral students must complete a minimum program engagement equivalent to two full-time semesters. This may be accomplished through either of the following:

- Two semesters (fall and/or spring) of full-time enrollment in KU coursework, as defined by University policy
- At least 18 hours of enrollment in KU coursework spread out over several part-time semesters

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](#)

Continuous Enrollment for Post-Comprehensive Students

During the semester in which the doctoral oral comprehensive exam is completed and each fall and spring semester follows, doctoral students must adhere to very specific enrollment requirements. These requirements may be different than enrollment requirements prior to the oral comp exam.

Failure to properly comply with the enrollment requirements may cause delays to graduation or additional enrollment requirements to make up what was missed, increasing tuition expenses near the end of your degree program.

To avoid delays or additional costs, you are also strongly advised to meet with your graduate program coordinator the semester before your oral comprehensive exam. Your graduate coordinator will work with you to develop an enrollment plan that meets all policy requirements, while also preventing unnecessary or avoidable fees.

Post-comprehensive enrollment requirements also apply to students with GTA/GRA/GA appointments, but these students must be certified to drop their enrollment levels. Departments are responsible for tracking student enrollment and will submit the certification form on the student's behalf **at least two weeks prior** to the beginning of the semester in which the enrollment will drop below 6 hours. Students who are certified to reduce hours continue to meet the University's definition of full-time enrollment, as well as the enrollment requirements of their employment contract.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Doctoral Candidacy](#)

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

The University offers a variety of [Approved Graduate Certificate Programs](#) to encourage current graduate students to pursue interdisciplinary study, gain a credential for expertise in an outside area of study, or provide an option for a coherent course of advanced study for those not ready to commit to a full degree program. Note that students must be fully admitted to a graduate certificate by the end of the last course that will count to fulfill the certificate. Students wishing to complete the certificate should apply as early as possible. Students whose interests or career goals may be served by a Graduate Certificate should familiarize themselves with the University's policies relating to Certificate programs (found below) early in their graduate career, in addition to individual certificate program requirements.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Graduate Certificate Programs: Eligibility and Admission Criteria](#)
- [Policies & Procedures for Graduate Certificate Programs](#)

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (Master's & Ph.D.)

In addition to all program requirements, students [planning to graduate](#) must complete all University graduation

requirements **prior to the published Graduation Deadline** in a given semester. Students should consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for the published Graduation Deadline, which varies by semester.

Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs Graduation Checklists ([Master's](#) | [Doctoral](#))

These graduation checklists provide a comprehensive list of all University requirements for graduation and should be consulted by every graduating master's or doctoral student as soon as graduation is expected. Submission of the final draft of the thesis or dissertation is done electronically. Students must comply with all University requirements for [formatting](#) and [electronic submission](#) of the thesis or dissertation. There is no University requirement that students provide a bound or printed copy of the draft.

We strongly encourage students to submit an Application for Graduation as early as possible; ideally prior to the 20th day of classes of the semester they intend to graduate.

GRADUATE & POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs (GPA) offers funding opportunities in several different categories. Students interested in applying should direct inquiries to the department's Director of Graduate Studies or to GPA. Some of the available funding includes:

[Summer Research Scholarships](#): intended primarily for post-comp doctoral students.

[Graduate Student Travel Fund](#): intended for graduate students presenting a paper at a national or regional meeting of a learned or professional society. A student may receive an award (max \$750) only once per academic year, with priority given to students who have not received the fund previously. Funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

[Doctoral Student Research Fund](#): Designed to support KU doctoral students who need assistance to carry out research that advances progress toward the degree. Applications for this fund are accepted only for a limited time as funding is available. Students are eligible to receive one award from this fund during their doctoral career. Students should check the link above for additional information and restrictions.

Policies Regarding Freedom of Expression on Campus

Kansas State Law (HB2333) requires postsecondary educational institutions in Kansas to publish in their handbooks and orientation programs the institution's policies, regulations, or expectations of students regarding free expression on campus.

Per KU General Counsel, this includes the following two policies:

- [KU Public Assembly Policy](#)
- [Kansas Board of Regents Statement on Free Expression](#)

Note that the two policies listed above apply to ALL members of the campus community; they are not specific to graduate students.