

School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies: Frequently Asked Questions

1) I was admitted in provisional status with special conditions: what do I have to do?

A “**provisional admission**” means your application was incomplete in some way: you may have been missing a transcript, test scores, or a letter of recommendation, but your program allows provisional admissions (not all programs allow this). You will be unable to enroll for a second term in provisional status, so be certain to follow up with your department to supply whatever was missing from your application before the end of your first term or prior to registration.

“**Special Conditions**” indicates that some aspect of your academic background (GPA, test scores, prerequisites for your program) was below the minimum normally required for the program. Your department will expect you to meet certain criteria within a specific time frame, so make sure you work with your department to meet the special conditions in a timely fashion.

“**Provisional status with special conditions**” means that your application was incomplete AND some part of your academic background was below the department’s minimum. Again, work with your department to determine what you must do to have your status changed to “good standing.”

2) I keep hearing other students talk about the “residency” requirement, but I am an out-of-state student; does this apply to me?

Actually, there are two types of residency:

- a) The first is based on whether you were a resident of the state of Kentucky at the time of application and determines whether you pay “in-state” or “out-of-state” tuition; if you have questions about how your residency status was determined, please contact the Executive Director of Graduate Admissions, Mary E. Leggett (502-852-3108).
- b) The second type of “residency” applies to students enrolled in masters and doctoral programs.
 - i) **Masters students must take at least 24 hours of coursework at the University of Louisville** to satisfy the residency requirement for the masters degree.
 - ii) In order that doctoral students have the opportunity to work closely with faculty, use university resources and facilities, and be immersed in the intellectual life of their disciplines, they must spend at least two years of study at the University of Louisville, and at least one year in full-time residency. **Full-time residency for doctoral students is defined as being registered for a minimum of 18 credit hours in a twelve-month period.** Enrollment in candidacy does not fulfill this requirement. You will need to work with your advisor to make sure that you meet this requirement while you are taking courses. If you are a part-time student, talk with your graduate program director to see if there is an alternate residency option available for you.

3) I began graduate studies elsewhere; can I transfer credits to the University of Louisville?

Your program can choose to transfer up to six hours of graduate credit from an accredited institution that offers advanced degrees; they may petition the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies for the transfer of an additional six hours, but you will still need to take enough credits at the University of Louisville to meet the residency requirements listed under 2b above. Transfer credits should be no more than three years old at the time of matriculation into a program.

4) How many credit hours may I enroll in each semester?

Unless a program requires a larger number of hours for full-time students, the maximum number of hours that may be taken in a regular semester is 12. Students wishing to take an overload must petition the unit dean to obtain permission.

5) What if I earn a “C” in one of my classes? Will that course count toward my degree?

Check with your program director to make sure. The School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies allows 6 hours of “C+, C or C-” to count toward the degree, but some programs have stricter guidelines and will not allow a required course in which a “C” was earned to count.

6) What are the requirements for remaining in “good standing” academically?

You must have a graduate grade point average of 3.0 or above; that grade point average will include all coursework listed on your graduate transcript. If your GPA is below 3.0, you will be placed on **Academic Probation** until you regain a 3.0 or are dismissed from the program. Typically, students are not allowed to continue on Academic Probation for more than one semester.

7) What is candidacy?

There are two ways in which we use “candidacy” in graduate education:

- a) When students (masters or doctoral) complete all course requirements and co-curricular requirements (including comprehensive exams) with the exception of the final project, thesis, or dissertation, they become “degree candidates” and enter “candidacy.” Students in candidacy typically do not take additional coursework because they are assumed to be working full-time on their research projects.
- b) “Masters Candidacy” and “Doctoral Candidacy” are also registration/enrollment categories designed to allow you to remain registered and able to access the university’s resources (libraries, laboratories, faculty, etc.) while you complete your thesis or dissertation. Once enrolled in either masters or doctoral candidacy, you must enroll continuously (fall, spring, and summer) until you complete your degree.

8) How long do I have to complete my degree?

- a) If you are a masters student, you must complete your degree within six years of beginning your program of study; this means that coursework that is older than six years old will not count toward your degree.
- b) If you are a doctoral student, the clock starts ticking as soon as you complete your comprehensive or qualifying exam and become a candidate for the degree; you must have been admitted as a doctoral candidate at least nine months before receiving the degree, AND you must complete all requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Education within four calendar years after you pass your qualifying exams.

9) What if I have an extended illness or other problem that requires me to leave the program for a period of time?

Students who have been accepted into a graduate program are expected to remain in continuous enrollment, either full-time or part-time, throughout their matriculation. Students who fail to enroll for a period of more than 12 months will be considered to have withdrawn from the program. However, if circumstances arise that may cause an interruption in graduate study, a student may apply for a leave of absence by requesting such a leave from the unit dean. A requested leave cannot exceed one year; however, under extreme circumstances, a second, subsequent request may be granted by the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs. Students must be considered in good standing for the request to be considered. Check with your program director first to make sure the program is willing to grant such a leave. If granted, a leave of absence does not count toward the time you have to complete your degree.

10) I think I have fulfilled all the requirements for my degree. What do I do to graduate?

- a) Complete degree application via ULink.
- b) You must be registered in the semester in which you intend to graduate; candidacy (see 7b) can be used for this if you have completed all other requirements.
- c) If you are writing a thesis or dissertation, make an appointment with SIGS to have the paper reviewed prior to the deadline published on the SIGS website.
- d) SIGS conducts a final degree audit for all graduate students before degrees will be conferred.