











SEM 330

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**Note:** This handbook lists graduate program academic policies and procedures. It includes information on graduate school policies, degree requirements, timeline for degree completion, committee selection guidelines and comprehensive exam/thesis requirements. Every effort has been made to make this handbook accurate as of the date of publication; however, this handbook does not constitute a contractual commitment. Graduate programs may not offer all of the courses as described, and policies are subject to yearly review and changes with program director and Graduate Council approval.

## 2. MS in Electrical Engineering

Master in electrical engineering program requires students to take advanced level courses in electrical engineering in their specialization area as listed in the program description as well as outside the department for overall growth and expansion of the knowledge of the students.

### 2.1. Total number of credits needed

Graduate students seeking the degree of Master of Science in electrical engineering are required to focus on one of the specific areas as listed in the program description and select the courses in this and/or related areas and conduct research through the “thesis” option (Plan A- Thesis option) or through professional paper writing option (Plan B - Non thesis option). It is required that the students take at least 50% courses in the EE areas in the EBME Department and remaining courses are to be decided by the student’s graduate committee.

#### 2.1.1. Plan A: Thesis Option

- This option requires a total of 30 credits and includes:
  - 24 course credits course work
  - 6.0 thesis credits (EE 797)
- To comply with the Graduate School's requirements, students must take:
  - 12 Cr at 700-level courses
  - 12 Cr at either the 600 or 700 level courses

Additionally: All electrical engineering graduate students are required to complete the following course:

- EE 782 - Random Signal Analysis and Estimation Theory (3 units)
- No Master’s student can take EE 791 (Independent Study) for more than 3 Cr.

#### 2.1.2. Plan B: Non-Thesis Option

- This option requires a total of 32 course credits:
- To comply with the Graduate School's requirements, students must take:
  - 15 Cr at 700-level courses and
  - 15 Cr at the 600 or 700 level courses
  - 2 Cr Professional Paper
  - Comprehensive Examination- Does not count for graduation credit requirements

Additionally: All electrical engineering graduate students are required to complete the following course:

- EE 782 - Random Signal Analysis and Estimation Theory (3 units)

- No Master's student can take EE 791 (Independent Study) for more than 3 Cr .

## **2.2. Course Work**

All course work must be completed within six years preceding the awarding of the degree.

### **2.2.1. Theory Core courses**

All electrical engineering graduate students are required to complete the following course:

- EE 782 - Random Signal Analysis and Estimation Theory (3 units)

### **2.2.2. Specialization Areas Requirement**

A list of courses for each research area can be found in the [Electrical Engineering MS General Catalog Website](#)<sup>1</sup>.

### **2.2.3. Independent study**

One independent study (EE 791) is allowed for both MS options and two for the PhD degree. Independent studies provide a way for students to learn specialized topics or gain preliminary research experience in a particular area. Generally, it is better to take independent study course in the area of future research to be undertaken for MS thesis or Ph.D. dissertation. Typically a student and faculty member agree upon a topic for the student to research with guidance from the instructor for an agreed upon amount of credits.

### **2.2.4. Suggested course schedule**

This schedule is merely a suggestion and can vary depending on your advisor (Plan A) and course availability etc.

#### **Plan A- Thesis Option (30 credits)**

1st semester: 9 credits of 600/700 level courses

2nd semester: 9 credits of 600/700 level courses

3rd semester: 3 credits EE 797 (thesis) + 6 credits of 600/700 level courses

4th semester: 3 credits EE 797 (thesis)

#### **Plan B- Non-Thesis Option (32 credits)**

1st semester: 9-12 credits of 600/700 level courses

2nd semester: 9-12 credits of 600/700 level courses

3rd semester: 9-12 credits of 600/700 level courses

4th semester: 2 credits- professional paper + 3 credits of 600/700 level courses

## **2.3. Comprehensive exam.**

All Plan B graduate students are required to take a comprehensive examination (1 to 3 Cr). The comprehensive exam credits do not count for required 32 Cr for the degree. Generally, it consists of 3 separate examinations covering all the courses taken during graduate program. Students are advised to contact their advisor and graduate committee regarding comprehensive examination as soon as the course work is completed or during the 4th semester.

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<sup>1</sup>

[https://catalog.unr.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=24&poid=17633#\\_ga=2.169298850.222468687.1516830021-759821366.1508959810](https://catalog.unr.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=24&poid=17633#_ga=2.169298850.222468687.1516830021-759821366.1508959810)

#### **2.4. Thesis**

For the thesis option, a thesis involving original research in electrical engineering and its successful defense completes the M.S. program. Students must register for six credits of EE 797 (thesis) either in the last semester or 3 credits in the semester that the student defends their thesis and 3 credits in the preceding semester. The MS thesis committee consists of two faculty members from the students' major department including committee Chair and one member from outside the department as Graduate School representative. The thesis defense must be held as a public oral examination, which is announced via posting an electronic mail at least one week in advance. The announcement must include the title and abstract of the work, the date, time and place of the defense, and the names of the student and of the committee chair. See [Section 11](#) for thesis guidelines and formatting requirements. It is important that the student's committee members should have the thesis draft for their review at least 10-15 days ahead of the date of defense.



### 3. Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering

The doctoral program includes the rigorous coursework in the student's area of specialization as well as the completion and defense of a Ph.D. dissertation containing original and innovative research work. These research results are to be published in national/international journals or conference proceedings.

#### 3.1. Total number of credits needed.

The credit requirements for the doctoral program in Electrical Engineering are the following:

- A Ph.D. degree requires a total of 72 credits beyond a BS degree and includes:
  - 30 credits of 700-level courses.
    - If you already have an MS degree 24 units may be transferred (with grades B or better) with a maximum of 18 credits from 700 level courses.
  - 18 credits of 600/700 level courses.
  - 24 credits dissertation work (EE 799)
  - Students must also take the following:

Required Course: All electrical engineering graduate students are required to complete the following course

- EE 782 - Random Signal Analysis and Estimation Theory (3 Cr)
- Qualifying Examination
- 3 Cr Comprehensive Examination ( EE 795): These credits are above the required 72 Cr beyond the BS. The comprehensive examination credits cannot be used to fulfill the 30 Cr of 700- level course work.

#### 3.2. Course work.

All course work must be completed within eight years preceding the awarding of the degree. Credits transferred into doctoral degree from a completed master's degree are exempt from this eight-year limit.

##### 3.2.1. Qualifying Examination

All Doctor of philosophy degree candidates must successfully complete a written qualifying examination administered by the department generally at the end of first year of the graduate program. The examination includes separate exams in two of five major study areas in electrical engineering as shown below. One of the two exams must be in the student's major research area.

- Electromagnetics
- Electronics
- Communications
- Control
- Power

If the student fails to pass the qualifying examination in two attempts, he or she will be dismissed from the graduate program.

##### 3.2.2. Comprehensive exam

The student's dissertation committee must be formed within a year of admission in the Ph.D. program. The committee will be responsible for:

- Program of study.

- Directing the student towards the written qualifying examination as well as written and oral requirement of their comprehensive exam and advancement to candidacy.
- Direction of student's research.

**Doctoral Programs:** Consist of a minimum of five graduate faculty members; the chair, at least two faculty members from the student's major department/program, at least one faculty member from a department in a field related to the student's major, and at least one Graduate School representative.

In case of interdisciplinary graduate programs, the Graduate School Representative cannot have a primary appointment in the same department (or other appropriate major unit) as the student's committee chair.

Formal approval of all student advisory committees is made by the Graduate Dean.

Before candidates can receive their Ph.D. in electrical engineering, they must pass the comprehensive exam by enrolling in EE 795 for 1 to 3 Cr and is above the required 72 Cr beyond the B.S. The comprehensive examination credits cannot be used to fulfill the 30 credits of 700-level course work. The exam must be taken as soon as the student has completed 24 graduate units of coursework in order to be admitted into candidacy. The comprehensive exam must be taken at least one semester before the dissertation defense. A student can take the exam up to two times. If he/she cannot pass the exam the second time, then the student will be dismissed from graduate studies. The exam has two requirements: written and oral.

Written Requirement:

- Three separate written examinations in the student's focus area to be decided by the Advisor and the graduate committee.

Oral Requirement:

- A written dissertation Research proposal (goals, methodology, research plan etc.) and its presentation to the graduate committee
- Discussion of the Work in progress
- Q&A by the student's graduate committee, covering the written exam also if necessary

The student's dissertation committee will decide whether the student passes/fails the written and oral portions of the comprehensive exam.

According to UNR regulations, admission to candidacy confirms that a student has successfully completed the departmental course requirements and university residency requirements. In order to gain admission to candidacy, a student must meet all the following requirements:

1. Hold at least a "B" average in all graduate work;
2. Pass the comprehensive written and oral exam
3. Gain the advisory/examining committee's formal approval for the program of study, including dissertation development.

[Doctoral degree admission to candidacy form](#)<sup>2</sup> needs to be submitted to the graduate school and

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/17doctoral-degree-admission-to-candidacy-updated.pdf>

the student's advisory committee, graduate director of the program and the Graduate Dean must approve the form.

### **3.3. Suggested Course Schedule**

This schedule is merely a suggestion and can vary depending on your advisor, course availability, focus area etc.

1st semester: 9-15 credits of 600/700 level courses

2nd semester: 9-15 credits of 600/700 level courses

3rd semester: 6-12 credits of 600/700 + EE EE 782 - Random Signal Analysis and Estimation Theory (3 Cr)

4th semester: 9-15 credits of 600/700 level courses + Written Qualifying examination administered by the department

The written qualifying examination includes separate exams in two of the five major study areas in electrical engineering. One of the two exams must be in student's major research area. A student can take the exam up to two times. If he/she cannot pass the exam the second time, then the student will be dismissed from graduate studies.

5th semester: 9-15 credits of 600/700 level courses + 1 to 2 credits EE 795 (comprehensive exam)

6th semester: 3 Cr 600/700 level courses + 6-12 credits of EE 799 (dissertation)

7th semester: 9-12 credits of EE 799 (dissertation)

8th semester: 9-12 credits of EE 799 (dissertation)

### **3.4. Publication requirement**

PhD students are expected that by the time of their dissertation defense they have published in high quality journals/conference proceedings and have at least 2 conference papers and 1 journal article. Further, it is recommended that all Ph.D. students are involved in writing grant applications under supervision by their faculty advisors.

### **3.5. Dissertation Defense**

A Dissertation with original research contribution in electrical engineering completes the Ph.D. program. A Dissertation defense must be held as a public oral examination, which is announced via posting and electronic mail at least 7-10 days in advance. The announcement must include the title and abstract of the work, the date, time and place of the defense, names of the student and the committee chair/advisor. A dissertation defense is successful if approved by all the committee members. If necessary, at the discretion of the committee, the candidate may be permitted one additional attempt to conduct a successful defense.

## **4. Transfer credits**

These are credits transferred from another institution. Credits completed at UNR in another program or as a graduate special do not need to be transferred. Transfer credit is requested on the [Graduate Credit Transfer Evaluation Request form](#)<sup>3</sup> available on Graduate School website and must be signed by the student, major advisor, and graduate director. Only courses with a grade of "C" or better may be transferred to a master's program; only courses with a grade of "B" or better may be transferred to a doctoral program. Transfer credits applied to a master's program must

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<sup>3</sup><http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduateschool/GraduateCreditTransferEvaluationRequest.pdf>

comply with the time limitation on master's work (6 years). Thus, if a student took a course five years prior to admission, they would have to complete the degree within one year for the course to apply to the degree. Credits from a completed master's degree will be exempt from the 8-year time limitation for those students earning a doctoral degree. No more than nine (9) credits completed either prior to admission to a graduate program or transferred from another institution may be applied to a master's degree. For doctoral programs a maximum of twenty-four (24) credits from a previously completed master's program or other post BS degree program may be applied. Doctoral students who have completed a master's degree in an appropriate discipline from an accredited institution may, with the approval of their graduate director, receive up to twenty-four (24) credits toward a Ph.D. degree. Students must list each course for which they wish to receive transfer credit on the *Credit Transfer Evaluation Request Form*. All credits used to satisfy degree requirements for the master's degree, except thesis credits, may be acceptable for transfer.

## 5. Timeline for degree completion

- [Declaration of Advisor/Major Advisor/Committee Chair form](#)<sup>4</sup>
  - For MS students, completed form must be submitted to Graduate School by the end of the student's second semester
  - For PhD students completed form must be submitted to Graduate School by the end of the student's third semester
- [Program of Study form](#)<sup>5</sup>
  - For master's students, completed form must be submitted to Graduate School by the end of the student's third semester
  - For PhD students, completed form must be submitted to Graduate School by the end of the student's fourth semester
- [Doctoral degree admission to candidacy form](#)<sup>6</sup>
  - For PhD students who completed all requirements except for the dissertation
- [Graduation Application deadlines](#)<sup>7</sup> Must be submitted to the graduate school several weeks in advance (see 5.2)
  - May Graduation Deadline: March 1
  - August Graduation Deadline: June 1
  - December Graduation Deadline: October 1
- Notice of completion – completed form should be submitted after all requirements have been met. See website for exact dates
  - [Master's Notice of completion](#)<sup>8</sup>
  - [Doctoral Notice of completion](#)<sup>9</sup>
- [Exit Survey form](#)<sup>10</sup>

### 5.1. Program of study

A program of study describes the student's specific plan of courses, research, and related activities. The graduate student's Advisor, the Graduate Director of the program, and the

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/Declaration-of-Advisor.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/program-of-study.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/17doctoral-degree-admission-to-candidacy-updated.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/grad/graduation-and-deadlines>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/notice-of-completion-master->

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/notice-of-completion-doctoral-degree.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines/exit-survey>

Advisory/Examining Committee determine the program of study for each degree candidate. This includes the thesis/professional paper option and the acceptable courses for completion of the degree. The Graduate Dean has final approval of the program of study. Only graduate courses are applicable toward the graduate degree (graduate courses are those with numbers in the 600 and 700 ranges). The approved Program of Study Requirements Form, indicating the members of the Advisory/Examining Committee and the courses used to fulfill the degree requirements, must be filed with the Graduate School. The program of study must be approved by the Graduate Dean prior to the student applying for graduation. Changes to the program of study can be made using the change in program of study [[Program of Study form](#)<sup>11</sup>] or change of advisory [[Change of Advisory form](#)<sup>12</sup>] with approval from the graduate director. It is the responsibility of the student and the Advisory/Examining Committee to ensure that the graduate courses in the proposed program of study are consistent with the requirements of the Graduate School and the department.

### **5.2. Applying for graduation**

Completing all the requirements for your degree may involve:

- Completing all course work and having final grades filed
- Successfully completing your comprehensive examination
- Defending your thesis or dissertation, making all necessary modifications/changes and submitted the final work to the Graduate School before the last date of filing
- Filing all outstanding paperwork (notice of completion, etc.)

After you've completed all requirements and submitted all necessary documents, you should check your transcripts after the semester ends to ensure that grades have been received for all course work. If, for example, you take a course in your final semester that does not apply to your degree requirements and receive an "I – Incomplete" grade in that course, you will NOT be able to graduate: grades must be received for all course work regardless of whether or not the course applies to fulfilling degree requirements. If you've finished work for a previously received "I" grade, you should check your transcripts to ensure that the instructor has actually filed a final grade for that course. There are cases where courses exceed the time limit for the degree or that grades received for particular courses do not meet minimum university standards (i.e. receiving a "C-" in a course). In these instances, the student must meet with their graduate advisor/director to explore corrective measures such as petitioning for an extension of the time limit or substituting an appropriate graduate course for another.

### **5.3. Commencement**

Graduating doctoral students are accorded special recognition during commencement exercises by participating in a Hooding Ceremony. They receive their doctoral hoods from their faculty Advisor (or his/her representative) and the Dean of the Graduating School. To participate in this ceremony, students must have:

1. Filed an application for graduation for the appropriate semester (fall or spring); and
2. Successfully defended their dissertation and filed the Notice of Completion with the Graduate School at least one week prior to the commencement exercises. Students who complete their degree during the summer session are eligible to attend either the fall or spring commencement exercises.

Commencement exercises are held each December and May. There is a separate commencement ceremony held for advanced degrees conferred in May of each year. The December exercises are

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/program-of-study.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/3change-of-advisory-committee.pdf>

combined graduate/undergraduate ceremonies. Doctoral students are “hooded” by their academic advisors. Students and advisors process in and are seated together.

## **6. Committee selection guideline**

### **6.1. MS thesis advisory committee**

For the thesis option (Plan A) or Non Thesis option (Plan B), the committee should consist of at least 3 members, who must all be members of the Graduate Faculty. The committee must be formed no later than at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. One of the members must be the graduate student’s advisor, serving as Committee Chair, and one must be from outside the Department of Electrical and Biomedical Engineering, serving as the Graduate School Representative. The Graduate School Representative member’s role on the committee is not necessarily to provide subject-matter expertise but rather to ensure compliance with university policy and regulations; to serve as a representative of the Graduate Dean, “outside” the department granting the degree; and to provide an objective, non-partisan, independent perspective. Students may request the appointment of an additional committee member from the faculty of another university or from a relevant discipline or profession, provided the prospective member has achieved a record of distinction. Formal approval of the student’s Advisory/Examining Committee is made by the Graduate Dean.

The Advisory/Examining Committee approves the student’s program of study and guides the students through his or her graduate program. The student should maintain close contact with his or her committee, keeping them informed of his or her progress and allowing them ample time to review drafts of the student’s thesis or dissertation. The students should be aware of their schedules when trying to arrange committee meetings and thesis defense. Note that it is the student’s responsibility to make these arrangements.

### **6.2. PhD Advisory/Examining Committee**

The committee must be formed no later than end of 4<sup>th</sup> semester. The Advisory/Examining Committee of a doctoral student should consist of at least 5 members, who must all be members of the Graduate Faculty. One of the members must be the student’s advisor, serving as Committee Chair, two or more members must be from the Electrical and Biomedical Engineering Department, one or more from departments in related fields, and one from outside the Department of Electrical and Biomedical Engineering, serving as the Graduate School Representative. The Graduate School Representative member’s role on the committee is not necessarily to provide subject-matter expertise but rather to ensure compliance with university policy and regulations; to serve as a representative of the Graduate Dean, “outside” the department granting the degree; and to provide an objective, non-partisan, independent perspective. Students may request the appointment of an additional committee member from the faculty of another university or from a relevant discipline or profession, provided the prospective member has achieved a record of distinction. Formal approval of the student’s Advisory/Examining Committee is made by the Graduate Dean.

For students going directly from the Bachelor’s degree to the Ph.D. degree, the Advisory/Examining Committee should be formed prior to the completion of 24 credits in graduate courses. Students entering the Ph.D. program with a Master’s degree should form the Advisory/Examining Committee during their first semester of enrollment.

The Advisory/Examining Committee approves the student’s program of study and guides the students through his or her graduate program. The student should maintain close contact with his

or her committee, keeping them informed of his or her progress and allowing them ample time to review drafts of the student's thesis or dissertation. The students should be aware of their schedules when trying to arrange committee meetings and dissertation defense. Note that it is the student's responsibility to make these arrangements.

## 7. Thesis/dissertation requirements

Graduate School forms and resources related to thesis and dissertations:

- [MS Thesis Filing Guidelines](#)<sup>13</sup>
- [Doctoral Dissertation Filing Guidelines](#)<sup>14</sup>
- [Dissertation Title Form](#)<sup>15</sup>

Please also include that once all requirements have been met, students need to submit a Final Review Approval and Notice of Completion form in order to graduate.

- Final Review Approval – Obtain sign-off from advisory committee chair.
  - [Master's form](#)<sup>16</sup>
  - [Doctoral form](#)<sup>17</sup>
- Notice of completion – completed form should be submitted after all requirements have been met.
  - [Master's form](#)<sup>18</sup>
  - [Doctoral form](#)<sup>19</sup>

## 8. Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistantship positions are offered through various departments and are paid by grants or state funds. Students interested in these positions must contact the department for specific requirements. The Graduate School is responsible for approval of graduate assistantships after a department has requested the initiation of a contract. All positions are contingent upon available funding.

Graduate assistants perform a variety of duties from teaching undergraduate classes to grading papers, to conducting research in laboratories. Teaching assistants receive special teaching-skills training through the Excellence in Teaching Program<sup>20</sup>.

All graduate students holding an assistantship (GTA or GRA) are considered Nevada residents for tuition purposes. Non-resident tuition is only waived for the duration of the assistantship. To be eligible for an assistantship, students must be admitted to a degree-granting program and be in good academic standing. The student must have an overall GPA of at least 3.0 and must be continuously enrolled in at least 6 graduate level credits (600-700) throughout the duration of the assistantship.

State-funded assistantships (GTA/GRA) may be held for a maximum of: three (3) years for master's degree students and five (5) years for doctoral degree students.

Please also refer to the most updated information on graduate assistantship in the graduate school

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines/thesis-filing-guidelines>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines/dissertation-filing-guidelines>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines/dissertation-title-form>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/thesis-final-review-approval-form.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/dissertation-final-review-approval-form.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/notice-of-completion-master-degree-updated.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/notice-of-completion-doctoral-degree.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> <https://library.unr.edu/TLT>

website:

- [General information](#)<sup>21</sup>
- [Graduate Assistantship handbook](#)<sup>22</sup>

### **8.1. Graduate Employment: Rights and Responsibilities**

Graduate Assistants play an invaluable role in the university's instruction and research endeavors. In their roles as graduate assistants, graduate students should be treated with respect as junior colleagues, and receive guidance in the performance of their duties as necessary. Graduate Assistants are classified as professional employees, as such they do not work according to the clock, but rather, according to performance of a specified job. Graduate Assistants work on average 20 hours per week for a 0.5 FTE employee.

#### **8.1.1. Rights**

Graduate students have the right to fair and equitable treatment as employees (**UNR general catalog -Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity statement**). Graduate Assistants have the right to discuss and clarify the conditions of their employment and expected workload with their supervisor. Graduate Assistants have the right to expect the work requirements to be consistent with professional expectations. Consequently graduate assistants should not be assigned, as part of their employment, inappropriate work tasks as house-sitting, babysitting, etc. for their supervisor.

#### **8.1.2. Responsibilities**

As professional employees, graduate assistants should conduct themselves appropriately (dress, collegial relations, punctuality, dependability, etc.) in the work situation. As professional employees, graduate assistants will strive to fulfill the agreed upon work obligations. As professional employees, graduate assistants have the responsibility to report inappropriate work expectations or working conditions to the Associate Dean of the Graduate School and/or other appropriate campus entities.

### **8.2. Assistantships with the EBME Department**

To inquire about a possible Research Assistantship, the student should contact EBME faculty members in the student's area(s) of research. Information of EBME faculty's research areas is available on the department's [website](#)<sup>23</sup>.

## **9. Health Insurance**

All domestic degree seeking graduate students, who are enrolled in six or more credits (regardless of the course level) in a semester, will be automatically enrolled and billed for the [University sponsored health insurance](#)<sup>24</sup> for each term they are eligible (fall & spring/summer). If a student has other comparable coverage and would like to waive out of the student health insurance, it is the student's responsibility to complete the University [Online Waiver form](#)<sup>25</sup> prior to the deadline. If approved, a health insurance waiver is good for the current academic year only. A new waiver must be submitted each academic year. All international graduate students are required to carry student health insurance, and the cost will be automatically added to your student account. Any international graduate students with insurance questions must contact the [Office of International](#)

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/grad/funding/graduate-assistantships>

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.unr.edu/Documents/administration-finance/hr/hr\\_graduate/GA\\_handbook.pdf](https://www.unr.edu/Documents/administration-finance/hr/hr_graduate/GA_handbook.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/ebme/people>

<sup>24</sup> [https://www.unr.edu/Documents/administration-finance/hr/hr\\_graduate/GA\\_handbook.pdf](https://www.unr.edu/Documents/administration-finance/hr/hr_graduate/GA_handbook.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> <https://studentinsurance.usi.com/errors/waiversessionerror.aspx>



[Students and Scholars \(OISS\)](#)<sup>26</sup> directly.

## 10. Policies

### 10.1. Academic Status

All graduate students must maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0. If their GPA drops below 3.0 they are either placed on probation or dismissed. Undergraduate courses will not count towards graduate GPA.

- **Probation:** students whose cumulative graduate GPA is between 2.99 and 2.31 are put on probation. Students are placed on academic probation for one semester. If they fail to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 by the end of one semester, they are dismissed from their graduate program. Thesis, dissertation, S/U graded credits, and transfer credits have no impact on a student's GPA.
- **Dismissal:** students whose cumulative graduate GPA is 2.30 or lower are dismissed from graduate standing. Dismissed students are no longer in a graduate program but may take graduate-level courses as a Grad Special. Students wishing to complete their degree must obtain approval to take graduate-level courses, raise their graduate GPA to at least 3.0 and then re-apply to a graduate program. All the courses taken to raise their GPA will be included in the graduate special/ transfer credit limitation (9 credits for master's degrees).

### 10.2. Continuous enrollment

Graduate students must register for a minimum of 3 graduate credits each fall and spring semester until graduation or have an Application for [Leave of Absence form](#)<sup>27</sup> approved by the Graduate Director of the program and the Graduate School. Approved leaves of absence do not abrogate the time limitations on course work (6 years for a master's degree program and 8 years for a doctoral program). International students may be required to enroll in nine graduate credits each fall and spring semester depending on the requirements of their visa. There are no minimum registration requirements during the summer. All students holding assistantships (whether teaching or research assistantships) are required to enroll in a minimum of 6 graduate credits each semester they hold the assistantship.

### 10.3. Enrollment limitations

In each fall and spring semester graduate students may not enroll in more than 16 graduate credits. In each summer session graduate students may not enroll in more than 6 graduate credits. In each semester they hold an assistantship graduate assistants must enroll in at least 6 and may not enroll in more than 12 graduate credits.

### 10.4. Leave of absence

All graduate students are required to maintain continuous enrollment of a minimum of three (3) graduate credits each fall and spring semester. A leave of absence is a temporary cessation of study due to medical reasons or other emergencies during which time the students are not required to maintain continuous registration. Students requesting a leave of absence must be in good academic standing and submit a completed Application for [Leave of Absence form](#)<sup>28</sup> to the Graduate School before the period of leave begins. Students applying for a leave of absence should not have any "incomplete" grade which could be changed to "F" and have a detrimental impact on their cumulative grade point average. Usually leaves of absence are approved for one to two semesters and may be extended by the student filling an additional leave of absence form.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/oiss>

<sup>27</sup> [https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/leaveofabsencer\\_9.23-1.pdf](https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/leaveofabsencer_9.23-1.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> [https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/leaveofabsencer\\_9.23-1.pdf](https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/leaveofabsencer_9.23-1.pdf)

Time spent on an approved leave is included in the time allowed to complete the degree, i.e. six calendar years for the master's degree and eight calendar years for the doctoral degree. That is, **the clock doesn't stop.**

### **10.5. Reinstatement**

Students can request reinstatement to their graduate program after an unapproved Leave of Absence by filing a [Notice of Reinstatement to Graduate Standing form<sup>29</sup>](#) with their graduate program. Once completed, the program will return this form to the Graduate School for final approval. This form allows the program the option to recommend the student be readmitted to their graduate program based on their previous admission *or* require the student to re-apply for admission which would require him or her to submit a new application for admission and pay the application fee.

### **10.6. Good standing**

Each graduate course must be completed with a grade of "C" or better for the credit to be acceptable toward an advanced degree. In addition, students must maintain good standing with an overall graduate credit GPA of at least 3.0 on a scale of 4.0.

### **10.7. Probation**

Students whose cumulative graduate GPA is one to six grade points below the necessary 3.0 GPA are placed on probation for one semester. If they fail to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 by the end of one semester, they are dismissed from their graduate program. Students placed on probation receive a letter from the Graduate School explaining exactly how many credits of "A" are required to raise their GPA to 3.0. Thesis, dissertation, S/U graded credits, and transfer credits have no impact on a student's GPA.

### **10.8. Dismissal**

If the graduate grade-point total is seven or more grade points below the necessary 3.0 GPA the student is dismissed from graduate standing. Also, if the graduate GPA remains below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters the student is dismissed from graduate standing. Dismissed students are no longer in a graduate program and may not take graduate-level courses without the written approval of the course instructor and the Graduate Dean. Students wishing to complete their degree must obtain approval to take graduate-level courses, raise their graduate GPA to at least 3.0 and then re-apply to their graduate program. Any courses taken to raise their GPA will be included in the graduate special/transfer credit limitation (9 credits for master's degrees).

### **10.9. Getting an MS while pursuing a PhD.**

If a student who is currently enrolled in the PhD program wants to earn an MS en route then the student needs to complete a master's degree program of study. The graduate director will then send a memo to the grad school informing them of this request and the student can then apply for graduation. For either option (thesis, non-thesis) students will only be able to use 24 credits towards the PhD. If they take the thesis option, the 6 thesis credits cannot be used towards dissertation credits.

### **10.10. Completing Two Degrees Simultaneously**

Students may choose to complete two master's degrees at the same time, or complete a master's degree while working on a doctoral program in a different discipline. Students may *not* complete two doctoral programs simultaneously. When completing two master's degrees at the same time, the student must apply and be accepted to each graduate program; must submit a separate

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<sup>29</sup><https://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/Notice-of-Reinstatement-Graduate-Standing.pdf>

program of study for each degree; must form two separate advisory committees with no more than one member in common; and have no more than 9 credits in common with each program of study.

### 10.11. Changing Advisors

It can happen that your research interests change over time or that the relationship with your current advisor has changed for the worse. Any student is free to change advisors, but changing earlier in your career is generally easier than later. If you are thinking about switching advisors, you can accomplish this the best if you adopt an attitude of respect for the person who initially advised you or recruited you to come to UNR.

The following are general guidelines for switching advisors:

1. Talk to the graduate director. The graduate director represents the interests of the graduate students and can help you make a better decision whether switching advisors would be good for you. The graduate director can also try to mediate between you and your advisor and help you better understand the pros and cons of changing advisors. This advice is especially important if you are attempting to change advisors toward the final phase of your graduate program.
2. Decide whether you want to switch advisors (do not approach other faculty before deciding).
3. Decide whether you could work with two advisors.
4. Try to work through any differences with your current advisor. Express to your advisor why you are considering a change, discuss whether his/her expectations of you are realistic, and whether they are open to adjusting.
5. Carefully consider the pros and cons of switching advisors as this may involve:
  - a. You can lose your RA or TA position (if your existing advisor provided you with a 10 hour RA ship). Switching advisors is not a guarantee you can maintain your TA ship.
  - b. You need to find a new research topic as continuing your existing research with a new advisor is only acceptable with permission of your old advisor.
  - c. You may receive an unsatisfactory on thesis/dissertation credits that you are currently taking or a failing grade on an independent study with your current advisor if you do not complete your advisors' expectation for that semester.
  - d. If you are a PhD student and you have enough credits you may need to graduate with an MS degree on your old research topic before starting a new research topic with a new advisor.
6. After your decision, approach another faculty member about being an (co-) advisor for you.
  - e. Frame your approach with positive information, such as new interests and new possibilities. Be professional at all times.
  - f. Focus discussions on your interests and goals and not on negative incidents or difficulties.
  - g. Avoid doing or saying anything that could have negative ramifications for your future career.
7. Notify your current advisor and discuss and arrange a timeframe for completing any remaining work with your current advisor before the switch takes place.
8. Arrange a meeting with your new and old advisor to discuss your new topic of research and or overlap on publications in your thesis/dissertation.
9. Regarding Intellectual property claims, carefully consider UNRs intellectual property [policy](https://www.unr.edu/Documents/research/oei/ip-ownership.pdf)<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/Documents/research/oei/ip-ownership.pdf>

10. Complete or update any formal paperwork that contains information about your advisor, e.g., advisory forms etc.

### **10.12. Academic Dishonesty**

In order to maintain an academic climate conducive to each member's success in the pursuit and transmission of knowledge, the University of Nevada, Reno, has established a set of policies and standards for all of its members to adhere to. For student members of this community, enrollment at the university carries certain obligations related to activities in the academic setting, including behavior inside and outside the classroom. Specific details can be found on the Student [code of conduct website](#)<sup>31</sup>.

## **11. Graduate Student Association**

The [Graduate Student Association \(GSA\)](#)<sup>32</sup> represents all graduate students and promotes the welfare and interests of the graduate students at the University of Nevada, Reno. The GSA works closely with appropriate university administrative offices, including the Graduate School and Student Services and reports to the President of the University. The GSA government functions through the Council of Representatives, Executive Council and established committees. Graduate students have the right to form clubs and organizations within their programs, departments, colleges, ethnicities, shared interests, or any other constituencies, for the purposes of academic, professional, or social networking, sharing, and advocacy.

## **12. Acknowledgments**

Parts of this handbook's text have been taken and adapted from UNR's Graduate Student's Guide to University, the UNR Graduate School website, and the UNR Graduate Student Association website.

Please refer to [Forms Website](#)<sup>33</sup> for all forms available at The Graduate School.

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<sup>31</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/student-conduct/policies/student-code-of-conduct>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/gsa/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines>