



Policy Name:	Graduate Academic Credit Policy
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Approving Authority:	Northwest Leadership Team
Responsible Office:	Provost
Category:	Enrollment and Academic

I. Purpose

This policy outlines the University's policy and protocol for acceptance and awarding of graduate academic credit for Northwest classes.

II. Policy

Credit System

The unit of credit is the semester hour. Lecture-recitation courses average one hour of meeting per week in a semester for each hour of credit given. Laboratory courses average two or more hours per week in a semester for each hour of credit given.

The amount of credit for each course is indicated in the departmental statements and in the Course Offerings.

Total Hours Required

A minimum of 30 semester hours is required for all master's and specialist's degrees, with the exception of the M.S.Ed. in Guidance and Counseling. Check specific program requirements in the appropriate section in the graduate catalog. All master's degrees require 15 hours of courses at the 600 level. All other courses must be graduate level.

Academic Load

A full-time graduate student is one who takes six or more hours in a semester:

- The maximum is 18 hours in a semester.
- Workshop credits are counted in the academic load.
- For financial aid purposes, a student must take three hours during a semester to be considered a half-time student.
- Students working on an assistantship are subject to regulations stipulated by that award concerning minimum enrollment requirement and maximum credit load to be taken.
- Courses taken for audit are included in the academic load.

Minimum Grade Point Average to Remain in Graduate Program

Graduate students who earn below a 3.00 grade point average for two consecutive terms of enrollment will be suspended for one term. A student who has been readmitted after a one-term suspension and who does not achieve a 3.00 grade point average for the term of readmission will not be permitted to continue in that master's degree program.

Minimum Grade Point Average Required for Graduation

The overall grade point average must be 3.00 ("B") or above in the major study area. All graduate coursework taken at Northwest must average 3.00 or above with no hours of "D" or "F". Transfer credit grades do not apply to calculating the 3.00 GPA in courses taken at Northwest. The Specialist in Education degree requires a 3.25 overall GPA at Northwest.

Audit

Graduate students may audit graduate courses, provided the class section has available space and proper enrollment forms are completed. The normal academic load applies. Auditors will enroll for the course, pay the same fees as other students, and enjoy all the privileges of the University. Forms are available in the Registrar's Office and online.

The auditor is expected to attend regularly and is to determine from the instructor the amount of work expected. If an auditing student does not meet the criteria for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class roll and the audit will not appear on the student's record.

Students who initially enroll in a course for credit may be permitted to change their enrollment to audit or remove from audit any time within the first three weeks of the semester, eight days of a

six-week or eight-week course, five days of a four-week course and two days of any shorter length course.

A course may be audited either before or after it is taken for academic credit.

Pass/Fail

No courses for graduate credit may be taken on a pass/fail basis.

Dual Enrollment

A Northwest senior who needs fewer than 30 semester hours to complete the baccalaureate degree and who needs less than a full enrollment of required undergraduate courses in any term of the senior year may petition to take courses for graduate credit, provided prerequisites are met and they follow the approval procedures. The student must: 1) have a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.50 or above, 2) fill out a petition for dual enrollment online, 3) apply for admission to the Graduate School if from another regionally-accredited university, and 4) have approval of the appropriate advisor or chairperson, and the Dean of the Graduate School. The maximum load is 18 hours for any semester in which graduate credit is involved, and no more than seven hours in a four-week summer session.

Dual enrollment is available at the graduate and the undergraduate level:

A Northwest graduate student may petition to take an undergraduate class (500 level) which is not required for their graduate program, pay undergraduate fees and receive undergraduate credit. The Petition for Dual Enrollment for Undergraduate Credit for Graduate Students must be completed during the first week of class and cannot be changed to graduate credit at any time in the future. Petitions for Dual Enrollment for Undergraduate Credit for Graduate Students are available online and must be approved by the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Dean. The maximum load is 18 hours for any semester in which graduate credit is involved, and no more than seven hours in a four-week summer session.

Correspondence Courses and Workshops

Northwest does not accept courses by correspondence for graduate credit. Campus-based, electronically-generated courses will be considered as residential credit. No more than six hours of workshop credit may be applied to any degree. Workshop credit is a part of the academic load.

Time Limitations

All requirements submitted in fulfillment of a Master's or Specialist in Education degree must be completed within a period of eight years. Coursework for the Certificate in Instructional Technology must be taken within three years, and the ELL/ESOL Certificate has eight years to complete. In the event a student has already completed a required course taken before the eight-year time period, the academic advisor and graduate student may agree to substitute another graduate level course which would complement the student's program. This substitution must be submitted to the Graduate Office in writing. No coursework older than eight years will be counted toward the

degree. These limitations will be extended only for the period of active duty of students entering the military service. The student must submit a petition upon his or her return from military service. Petitions are in the Registrar's office and online.