

SECTION #: 2.0 ACADEMIC

SUBJECT: GRADUATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Background: This policy defines the scope and requirements for Master's Programs at LC State.

Point of Contact: Vice President for Academic Affairs

Other LC State offices directly involved with implementation of this policy, or significantly affected by the policy: Dean of Graduate Studies, Registrar & Records, Faculty Senate

Date of approval by LC State authority: 1/12/2026

Date of State Board Approval: N/A

Date of Most Recent Review: Date of most recent review.

Summary of Major Changes incorporated in this revision to the policy: New Policy

1. General Purpose

A. The purpose of this policy is to define the expectations and set forth minimum requirements for graduate programs at LC State.

2. Definitions

A. Institutional Credits: Courses taken from LC State after being admitted to a program.

3. Masters' Degrees

A. Minimum Credits.

i. A master's degree requires successful completion of at least thirty (30) semester credits. Individual programs may stipulate credits beyond this minimum.

B. Plan Types: Thesis Plan, or Non-Thesis Plan.

i. Thesis Plan (Plan A). Programs may require a thesis. Under this plan, the program must include a minimum of twenty-seven (27) course credits and a minimum of three (3) thesis credits consistent with program requirements. Total credits required per plan must be published in the Graduate Handbook.

ii. Non-Thesis Plans (Plan B). Programs that do not require a thesis must include at least thirty (30) graduate course credits and a culminating experience (e.g., comprehensive exam, project, capstone). The culminating experience may be included in the thirty (30) graduate course credits. Thesis research credits do not apply to non-thesis plans.

C. Credit Distribution and Level.

i. Major Credits:

a) A minimum of eighteen (18) credits in the major or as specified by the program.

ii. Advanced Coursework:

a) A substantial portion of credit toward the degree must be earned at the five hundred (500) level. Undergraduate courses (300 and 400 level) may be part of a student's course of study and applied toward graduate degree requirements when consistent with program and Graduate Studies policies. Individual programs may set specific level minimums.

SECTION #: 2.0 ACADEMIC

SUBJECT: GRADUATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- b) Any undergraduate course applied towards graduate degree requirements must have a level of rigor appropriate to the graduate program, must be aligned with the program's outcomes, and must be vetted by Graduate Studies.
- c) Courses at the three hundred (300) level may not be applied to the minimum of eighteen (18) credits in the major, except as approved by Graduate Studies.

D. Institutional Credits, Transfer Credits, and Double-Counting.

- i. At least twenty-one (21) credits applicable to degree requirements must be earned through LC State, as defined by Graduate Studies; individual programs may establish higher minimum institutional credit requirements.
- ii. Transfer credits must meet the standards set forth by Graduate Studies and receive approval to be applied to a graduate program. No more than nine (9) credits may be transferred to LC State. Transfer limits for individual programs may be different and must be published in the Graduate Handbook.
- iii. Credits applied to a completed degree elsewhere generally may not be reused to satisfy graduate degree requirements at LC State.

E. Academic Standing.

- i. Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 for credits applied to the degree. Individual programs may impose higher minimum grade requirements.

F. Time Limit.

- i. All degree requirements must be completed within six (6) years from initial enrollment in the master's program unless an approved extension is granted.

G. Culminating Experience.

- i. Each master's program will require a culminating experience appropriate to the discipline (e.g., thesis, comprehensive exam, capstone project, supervised field experience) and will clearly articulate its standards.

H. Program-Specific Requirements.

- i. Departments may establish additional requirements for a graduate program (e.g., language proficiency, comprehensive examinations, project/thesis credit ranges) provided that the additional requirements meet or exceed minimums set forth by Graduate Studies. All additional program-specific requirements must be clearly published in the Graduate Handbook.

4. Graduate Certificates

A. Minimum Credits.

- i. A graduate certificate requires successful completion of at least twelve (12) semester credits. Individual programs may stipulate credits beyond this minimum.

B. Plan Type: Practitioner-Based

- i. Each certificate is practitioner-based and focused on providing students with exposure to critical skills and effective best practices that are aligned with national standards.

C. Credit Distribution and Level.

i. Program Credits.

- a) All credits toward the certificate must be earned at the five hundred (500) level.

D. Institutional Credits and Transfer Credits.

- i. All credits toward the certificate must be earned from LC State.

SECTION #: 2.0 ACADEMIC

SUBJECT: GRADUATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- ii. Transfer credits are not permitted for graduate certificates from LC State.
- E. Academic Standing.
 - i. Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 for credits applied to the degree. Individual programs may impose higher minimum grade requirements.
- F. Time Limit.
 - i. All certificate requirements must be completed within four (4) years from initial enrollment in the certificate program unless an approved extension is granted.
- G. Culminating Experience.
 - i. Each certificate program will require a culminating experience appropriate to the discipline (i.e., capstone, internship, practicum) and will clearly articulate its standards.
- H. Program-Specific Requirements
 - i. Departments may establish additional requirements for a certificate program (e.g., language proficiency, examinations, credit ranges) provided that the additional requirements meet or exceed minimums set forth by Graduate Studies. All additional program-specific requirements must be clearly published in the Graduate Handbook.