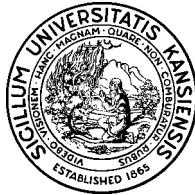


The University of Kansas
Computational Biology Program
Handbook

Fall 2026

compbio.ku.edu



Lawrence, KS

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Table of Directory information

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Table 1

Admissions

Requirements for Admission:

-A Bachelor's or Master's degree in natural sciences, mathematics, engineering or another relevant field

Application Requirements:

Updated CV

Transcript copies

A Personal statement

3 letters of recommendation

Language Proficiency Requirement for GTA Funding: Non-native speakers of English must also demonstrate English proficiency by submitting scores on either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or the Academic Format of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Our department requires applicants to score at least 22 on

the Speaking section (and at least 20 on all other parts) on the internet based TOEFL exam, a minimum overall score of 7 on the IELTS, or 50 on the SPEAK test. The university has additional score requirements for employment as a graduate teaching or research assistant (GTA or GRA) including interview by institutional representatives per [Kansas Board of Regents policy](#). Please see Section VII: University Policies and Degree Requirements for university level English proficiency requirements.

Graduate Program Progress to Degree and Professional Development

Goal and objectives

The goal of graduate education for the Ph.D. degree within the Computational Biology Program is to enhance students' academic knowledge base, teaching ability, communication ability, and in-depth basic research ability within a particular scientific area in the discipline.

Year One

The student will begin taking formal courses to fulfill requirements for the degree, including the Bioinformatics core course. At least two individual lab rotations are expected for each new graduate student during the first year of graduate study. The Graduate Director and the Graduate Program Coordinator both function as advisors for students who have newly entered the program. By the end of the first year the student will select the thesis Advisor, (if they did not begin the program as directly admitted to a faculty laboratory). Once a student has identified a Major Advisor for their thesis/dissertation research, it is understood that their mentor will provide regular and timely feedback to the student throughout their mentorship. A Mentorship Agreement can be used to facilitate this. During the first and subsequent years, the student is required to attend the weekly Computational Biology seminar series. The student is also required to participate in the Computational Biology Student Seminar series.

Year Two

By the end of the second year, the student will have completed the formal coursework to fulfill requirements for the degree. The student will complete and submit a research proposal for the Comprehensive Oral Exam. This proposal will be written in the format of a National Institutes of

Health (NIH) or National Science Foundation (NSF) grant proposal. The proposal must develop a research topic related to the general areas of computational biology. The topic of the research proposal is decided upon by the student in consultation with the thesis Advisor.

Subsequent Years

Upon completion of the Comprehensive Oral Exam, the student will aggressively carry out research in the laboratory of the thesis Advisor. In addition, the student will continue attending the weekly Computational Biology seminar series and participating in the Computational Biology Student Seminar series.

A PhD degree is awarded once the student has written a final dissertation and carried out a successful defense of it before a committee.

Policies and Procedures

Research Laboratory Rotations for New Students- Optional

Faculty Talks – All faculty members who are interested in taking a rotation student will have the opportunity to speak with new students. Faculty talks will take place the first week of classes.

Selection of Rotations – New students will contact faculty members directly to set up appointments to discuss research and possible lab rotations.

After agreeing to rotations with faculty, new students will turn in to the Director of Graduate Studies the names of the faculty members in whose labs you wish to rotate. Each lab rotation will last approximately nine weeks.

Completion of Rotations – By the end of the third rotation, submit to the Director of Graduate Studies a ranked list of faculty members with whom you would like to work. Every effort will be made to allow you to join your first-choice lab, although there must be mutual agreement between the student and faculty member. This mutual agreement will depend on your effort and performance during the rotation, the availability of continued financial support, the availability of space within the lab, and so on. If the first choice cannot be fulfilled, the second choice will be examined under the same constraints. Once a mutual agreement has been reached, new students will officially join re-search labs. If, after the end of the first year,

a student has not identified a Major Advisor for research, the student will be dismissed from the graduate program.

Policy on Switching Advisors

In rare instances a situation may arise such that you, your advisor, or both desire a change in advisor. Before any action is taken by either party, the Director of Graduate Studies and your Graduate Committee will be apprised of the situation and discussion of the issue initiated. Students may switch advisors after a discussion with the Director of Graduate Studies.

Changing advisors may become necessary if the mentor leaves KU, retires, in cases of funding decrease, or loss of interpersonal and academic compatibility. A resolution will be reached in a timely manner.

Students who need additional support may contact College Office of Graduate Affairs (<https://coga.ku.edu>) or Ombuds (<https://ombuds.ku.edu>).

Enrollment Requirements

K.U. has on-line enrollment. Check out the [Enroll & Pay User Guides](#) to assist you in step-by-step instructions for online enrollment processes.

The Computational Biology Program has established a minimum credit hour level of enrollment that is appropriate for normal progress (i.e., course work and research effort) and which is representative of faculty time required for a student's work towards an advanced degree. These requirements must equal, and may exceed, the minimum credit hour enrollment limit set by Graduate Studies. Program enrollment requirements are as follows:

1. Ph.D. Enrollment Hours: Pre-Comprehensive Oral

Students who have not yet passed the Comprehensive Oral Exam are expected to enroll in at least 6 credit hours each fall and spring semester. Summer enrollment is optional.

2. Ph.D. Enrollment Hours: 18-Hour Post-Comp Rule

After passing the Comprehensive Oral Exam, you must be continuously enrolled, until all degree requirements are completed. For the first 18 hours of post-comprehensive enrollment, the doctoral student must enroll in a minimum of 6 credit hours per semester with at least one credit of dissertation (BINF 999) until graduation.

3. Ph.D. Enrollment Hours: Beyond the 18-Hour Post-Comp Rule

Students who have completed the 18-Hour Post-Comp requirement are now eligible to enroll in fewer than 6 hours per semester, as long as at least one credit of dissertation credit (BINF 999) is taken per Fall/Spring semester until graduation. Before you do this, please confirm with the Graduate Program Coordinator who will submit the form to certify this.

Enrollment- Permission numbers

Some courses restrict enrollment permissions and require a permission number in order to enroll. If permission of the instructor is required, please reach out to the instructor for permission to enroll before reaching out directly to the Graduate Program Coordinator for a permission code.

Late enrollment

Changes to enrollment can be made directly in the Enroll & Pay system up until the first day of classes. Any adjustments made after that may require online forms and/or late fees. After the last day to add/change sections without permission has passed, increasing and decreasing hours of a variable credit course requires instructor approval. If you find you must add/drop/swap a course past a deadline on the Academic Calendar, please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Academic Performance- Grading policy and Good Academic Standing

Grading Systems - Graduate courses use the ABCDF grading system or the SU performance criteria (S = satisfactory performance and U = unsatisfactory performance). Thesis and dissertation research courses are graded with the latter.

Good Academic Standing - Only grades of "A" or "B" in graduate courses are considered satisfactory. If a grade of "C" or below is obtained, you will not receive graduate credit for this course, and the course must be retaken. If your cumulative grade-point average falls below "B" (3.0 on a 4.0 scale), you are automatically placed on academic probation and will be required to raise your cumulative grade-point average to at least a "B" (3.0) during the next semester. If, after the second semester, a student who has probationary status fails to maintain a "B" (3.0) cumulative grade point average, the student will be

dismissed from the graduate program. Grades such as “P”, “S”, “U” and “T” are omitted from these calculations. You will not be allowed to hold a GTA or GRA appointment until probationary status has been removed.

Annual Student Progress Review

Mandatory Annual Meetings: You are responsible for scheduling annual committee meetings, which are mandatory past the Oral Comprehensive Exam. Failure to satisfy this requirement may lead to you being considered not in good academic standing by the program. The committee evaluates the student on research engagement and ability to effectively communicate science. An unsatisfactory assessment will require the committee meeting within six months to reevaluate student progress. The committee will provide written feedback to the student regarding their performance- the Annual Progress Report. A student receiving unsatisfactory assessment in consecutive committee meetings will be considered not in good academic standing by the program.

Graduate Assistantships

The following mechanisms are available for graduate assistantship:

Graduate Fellowship: Competitive graduate fellowships are available, including [University Graduate Fellowships](#) and the [Madison & Lila Self Graduate Fellowship](#). Applications should be coordinated with the Director of Graduate [Studies](#).

Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs): GTAs are provided on a semester-by-semester basis. Students holding these appointments must make arrangements with their Faculty Advisor for summer appointments. The specific GTA is set by Program requirements and expertise of the student.

Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs): Individual faculty may have Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs) available from grant funds. GRAs are appointed for one semester at a time.

Tuition is waived for Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) who hold at least a 40% appointment and are enrolled in a minimum of 6 hours, and up to 3 hours of campus fees are paid. Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) with at least a 40% appointment will be assessed in-state rates.

GTA Appointment and reappointment- Initial appointment is based on course needs and faculty recommendations to the Graduate Program

Coordinator and the Department Chair. Reappointment is made for fall and spring based on performance and departmental needs.

Evaluation of GTAs

The University's Performance Evaluations for Graduate Teaching Assistants policy requires that the assessment of the performance of GTAs be based on the job duties assigned to the GTA in his or her contract.

GTAs must be evaluated each semester, and a performance evaluation, including classroom observations and a written performance evaluation, must be completed each year. During the first year of a GTA's appointment, a documented classroom observation must be conducted during each semester of the academic year. For continuing GTAs, a documented classroom observation must be conducted at least once during the academic year.

Time Limits on Appointments

No GTA may be appointed for more than sixteen semesters.

This policy does not apply to summer session GTA appointments. Semesters in which a student's sole appointment is as a GRA do not count against the GTA-semester limit. Voluntary Resignation during a semester, unless it results from an emergency, is a breach of contract. Leaves of absence for medical reasons must be approved by the College Office of Graduate Affairs.

GTA General Expectations and Duties

Duties for GTAs will vary from course to course. General examples of GTA expectations may include: attending weekly TA meetings, grading weekly assignments and posting grades in Canvas, leading class activities, maintaining office hours, facilitating class discussion, assisting with planning activities and exams, serve as lecturer/instructor etc. Course instructors who supervise GTAs provide expectations and duties specific to their courses at least 5 days prior to the first day of class.

Incomplete Grades clause- Please note that any GTA who assigns an Incomplete grade for a course must notify the department.

Return of Student Materials- GTAs must return all student work (ex: assignments, exams) to the department within 30 days of the grade deadline for each term. For materials that must go into storage or be destroyed please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Access to Resources for GTAs

All Computational Biology GTAs have a research desk in MRB. Please reach out to the Graduate Program Coordinator if you would like to gain access or confirm the location of the following:

- your GTA mailbox
- computer resources
- printing and copying

Elevating Concerns for GTAs

Who should a GTA contact about issues with their assignment?

Table of contacts for GTAs

Supervisor	<i>Questions about duties, concerns about workload</i>
Graduate Program Coordinator	<i>Pay, benefits, tuition support and/or student bill, onboarding documents, access to resources</i>
Department Chair	<i>Elevating general concerns or working conditions</i>

Table 2

GTAs and GRAs Benefits and Payroll

Health Insurance for full time GTAs and GRAs is subsidized by the university. This is an optional group health insurance that includes optional vision and dental discount plans. For more information, visit HR’s [Graduate Student Health Insurance page](#).

[Paychecks are available to view in HR/Pay the Monday before a pay day](#). If using the system for the first time, the system will need to register the login and then go through an update before any information is accessible. Log in and then log out. Wait a few hours and then log in again. The system has registered you as a user when the main home page menu shows the Self Service option. Navigate to Self Service, then select View Paychecks. Current deductions and direct deposit information may also be viewed and updated via the HR/Pay system. Payroll date calendars may be found on the [KU Payroll Office website](#)

Progress to Degree Forms

The Progress to Degree form (PTD) enables the University to track and collect vital information about students’ progress to degrees. Upon receiving the information from you, the Director of Graduate Studies will complete the necessary PTD form and forward it to Graduate Studies for approval. Thus, it is very important that you contact the Director of Graduate Studies when you do ANY of the following: change degree status, form a committee, schedule an exam, consider a leave of absence, schedule

a defense, or change degree program. If you're not sure about something, please check with the Director of Graduate Studies or the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Ph.D. Curriculum

A. Computational Biology PhD Core Courses

First Year Computational Biology Core Course

BINF 701/702 is the Computational Biology core course developed at the KU Center for Computational Biology. The course is designed to introduce the most important and basic concepts, methods, and tools used in computational biology. Topics include (but are not limited to) bioinformatics databases, sequence and structure alignment, protein structure prediction, protein folding, protein-protein interaction, Monte Carlo simulation, protein design, dynamical systems, and systems biology. Emphasis will be put on the understanding and utilization of these concepts and algorithms. We also discuss in detail the application of these algorithms to interesting problems in gene regulation, signaling networks, macromolecular self-assembly, and drug design. The objective is to help the students to rapidly reach the frontier of computational biology and be able to use the computational tools to solve problems in their own research.

B. Seminars

All graduate students will be expected to attend Center for Computational Biology seminars. These are generally speakers from outside the University, scheduled on some Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. in the Computational Biology seminar room in MRB (unless otherwise noted).

C. Required Courses

BINF 701	Computational Biology Core I (5)
BINF 702	Computational Biology Core II (5)
BINF 709	Topics in Bioinformatics
BIOL 636	Biochemistry I (4)
BINF 999	Dissertation Research (1-18)

D. Suggested Elective Courses

To determine what elective courses to take, talk to your advisor or the Director of Graduate Studies.

Biology/Chemistry

- BIOL 638 Biochemistry II (4)
BIOL 772 Gene Expression (3)
CHEM 740 Principles of Organic Reactions
(3)
CHEM 760 Introduction to Chemistry in Biology
(3)

Analysis/Mathematics/Statistics

- C&PE 778 Applied Optimization Methods (3)
MATH 526 Applied Mathematical Statistics I (3)
MATH 581 Numerical Methods (3)
MATH 590 Linear Algebra (3)
MATH 605 Applied Regression Analysis (3)
MATH 727 Probability Theory (3)
MATH 728 Statistical Theory (3)
MATH 781 Numerical Analysis I (3)
MATH 865 Stochastic Processes I (3)
EECS 649 Introduction to Artificial Intelligence (3)
EECS 658 Introduction to Machine Learning (3)
EECS 447 Introduction to Database Systems (3)
EECS 739 Parallel Scientific Computing (3)
BIOL 841 Biometry I (5)

Continuous Seminar Participation

All students in the PhD are required attend the weekly Computational Biology seminar series and participate in the Computational Biology student seminar series.

Research Skills & Responsible Scholarship

The University requires that every doctoral student receive training in responsible scholarship pertinent to the field of research and obtain research skills pertinent to the doctoral level of research in their field(s). These requirements must be completed by the end of the semester that the student takes the oral comprehensive exam. For students in Computational Biology, this requirement is satisfied by completion of [BINF 701](#) , [BINF 702](#), collaborations in the Center for Computational Biology, and student research presentations.

Oral Comprehensive Exam

By the end of the second year, the student should have completed all course work requirements for the degree. At that time, the student completes and submits a research proposal for the comprehensive oral examination. The proposal must develop a research topic related to the general areas of computational biology. The topic of the research proposal is decided upon by the student in consultation with the thesis advisor. Upon completion of the comprehensive oral examination, the student carries out research in the laboratory of the dissertation advisor.

Dissertation Defense

The Ph.D. degree is awarded once the student has written a final dissertation and carried out a successful defense of it before a committee.

Master's Curriculum

M.S. General Requirements

1. Attendance at Computational Biology seminar each semester.
2. Students must complete and submit a research thesis for the Master's thesis defense.
3. Students must defend their Master's thesis.
4. Students must complete the degree within 4 years. Exceptions to this requirement require a recommendation for extension of study by the program's Graduate Program Coordinator and the Director of Computational Biology Program and approval by the College Graduate Office.

Computational Biology M.S. Required Courses

At least one laboratory rotation is required during the first year. In addition, each of the following courses should be completed. Waivers from these requirements will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Executive Committee and the Major Advisor may recommend additional required coursework and may waive any requirements based on student's previous academic coursework.

Core Courses:

BINF 701	Computational Biology I (5)
BINF 702	Computational Biology II (5)
BINF 709	Topics in: _____ (1-3)
BIOL 636	Biochemistry I (4)
BIOL 638	Biochemistry II (4)

CHEM 816 Careers in the Biomedical Sciences (1-3)
or BIOL 817 Rigor, Reproducibility and Responsible Conduct in Research

Computational Biology M.S. Elective Courses

Student must complete a minimum of 12 credit hours of elective coursework (generally, 6 of Biology/Chemistry and 6 of Analysis/Mathematics/Statistics). Other courses may be used to substitute these requirements with the approval of the thesis advisor and the Executive Committee.

Biology/Chemistry

BIOL 772	Gene Expression
BIOL 750	Advanced Biochemistry
CHEM 510	Biological Physical Chemistry
CHEM 760	Introduction to Chemistry in Biology
CHEM 860	Principles and Practice of Chemical Biology
CHEM 914	Computational Methods in Physical Sciences

Analysis/Mathematics/Statistics

C&PE 778	Applied Optimization Methods
MATH 526	Applied Mathematical Statistics I
MATH 581	Numerical methods
MATH 590	Linear Algebra
MATH 605	Applied Regression Analysis
MATH 727	Probability Theory
MATH 728	Statistical Theory
MATH 781	Numerical Analysis I
MATH 865	Stochastic Processes I
EECS 649	Introduction to Artificial Intelligence
EECS 658	Introduction to Machine Learning

At least 50% of the coursework taken to fulfill the degree requirements must be 700 level or above.

Master's Thesis Defense

Once master's students have successfully completed the required formal courses, research proposal requirement, the Master's thesis defense will be scheduled. This defense must be held in the same semester as the final semester of coursework. Exceptions to this deadline require approval by the student's Committee and the Graduate Studies Coordinator. The defense is given by the Master's Thesis Defense Committee. The student's Advisor must be a member of the Committee. At least two Computational Biology Program core faculty members must be on the Committee. The Committee must be chaired by a member who is a core faculty member of the

Computational Biology Program, but not the student's Advisor. The Master's thesis must describe completed research done by the student that is either experimental/computational or research on existing literature in the computational biology field. The student must provide each committee member with a final copy of the thesis at least 3 weeks before the exam takes place. After the exam, the committee members will decide whether or not the student passed. The Graduate Program Coordinator will forward this decision to the College Graduate Office. The defense must be scheduled with the College Graduate Office at least three weeks before the exam actually takes place. This means that, after receiving approval from the Advisor and Master's Thesis Defense Committee, the student must notify the Graduate Program Coordinator to get scheduling assistance and complete the Progress to Degree form to send to the College.

The student will defend his/her research to the Master's Thesis Defense Committee.

Defense Format – The student will orally present their thesis to the committee, and the committee will examine the student on the research presented in their Master's Thesis. Performance on the defense will be rated as "Honors," "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory" and this rating will be submitted to the College Graduate Office. If the student receives a rating of "Unsatisfactory" on the first Master's Thesis Defense, he/she may retake the defense no earlier than one (1) month, but no later than five (5) months after the date of the first defense. If the student does not retake the defense by the five-month time limit, he/she will not be allowed to complete the Master's program. If there are unusual circumstances, the student may, with approval from the mentor and the Master's Thesis Defense Committee petition the Executive Committee of the Program to retake the Master's Thesis Defense after the five-month time limit. Under no circumstances the student will be allowed to take the Master's Thesis Defense more than twice. If the student fails to receive a rating of at least "Satisfactory" after the second attempt, he/she will not receive a master's degree.

Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy

Academic integrity requires honest performance of academic responsibilities by students. Academic responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the preparation of assignments, reports and term papers, the taking of examinations, and a sincere and conscientious effort by students to abide by the policies set forth by instructors. Any subversion or compromise of academic integrity thus constitutes academic misconduct. Academic misconduct by a student shall include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work; unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures; falsification of research results; plagiarizing of another's work; violation of regulations or ethical codes for the treatment of human and animal subjects; or otherwise acting dishonestly in research.

When an instructor determines that a student has violated academic integrity as described above, the instructor may charge the student with academic misconduct.

In addition to informing the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the KU Office of Research Integrity will be informed of all charges filed alleging dishonesty in research. KU Human Resources will be informed of all charges filed alleging sexual harassment.

The possible sanctions for academic misconduct are detailed below and are within the provisions of Article II, Section 6, of the University Senate Rules and Regulations. When a student wishes to appeal a sanction or dispute a misconduct charge, hearings may be held at two possible levels within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences depending primarily on the recommended sanction(s) for the misconduct in question.

Department/unit level hearings will routinely review cases in which recommended sanctions are:

Censure - A written reprimand (warning) for actions which constitute academic misconduct.

Reduction of Grade for Specific Work - Treating as unsatisfactory any work that is a product of academic misconduct. Reduction of grades may include the assignment of an "F" for that specific work. The student may be permitted to withdraw from the course within the approved withdrawal period.

Reduction of Grade for the Course - Reduction of grade may include the awarding of an "F" for the course. The student will not be allowed to withdraw from the course. The student will not be allowed to apply the Course Repeat Policy to remove the assigned grade from his/her grade point average calculation.

After a charge of misconduct is filed, department/unit hearings will be scheduled ONLY if the student wishes to deny the charge and/or appeal the recommended sanction. If the student admits to the charge and does not wish to appeal, the sanction may be imposed immediately.

The initial hearing of academic misconduct can be deferred to the College level only under certain circumstances: 1) if the unit is too small to hold the hearing; or 2) if there is a conflict of interest at the unit level. The student or the instructor can request an initial hearing before the College or the Judicial Board should a party believe that there is an issue of fairness of the hearing being held at the usual unit level.

College level hearings will review all cases in which recommended sanctions are:

Transcript Citation for Academic Misconduct: The student's transcript will state that the student has been cited for academic misconduct. This sanction will include a determination of the final grade in the course. This grade may be an "F." The statement

will be permanent unless the student applies to the University Provost for removal of the statement and the application is granted.

Suspension from a Specific Course - An instructor may suspend a student from the instructor's section of a course for academic misconduct. In cases involving physical violence or disruptive behavior, the suspension should occur immediately. In cases where a physical threat is made, the suspension should be reported to the KU Police Department. During suspension, a student is not permitted to withdraw, pending decision by the hearing committee. A suspended student may complete work for the course only if reinstated. Conditions for reinstatement to the course shall be stated by the instructor at the time of the suspension. These initial conditions are subject to review by the hearing committee. When suspending a student, the instructor shall, before the next meeting of the course, inform the chairperson of the department in which this course is offered. The department chairperson shall notify the student in person or by certified mail (postmarked on or before the day of the next class meeting) of the opportunity to be heard on the suspension. The department chairperson shall also inform the Office of Student Success and other appropriate offices according to guidelines of the academic unit involved. The student's appeal will be heard through academic misconduct proceedings. The hearing panel will consist of one faculty member within the division, one associate dean, and the director of the College Advising & Student Services Office or his/her representative. The suspension will remain in effect pending review. Because this sanction places an immediate burden upon the suspended student, the College is obligated to act promptly. Options in such review include: reassignment of the student to another section of the course; reinstatement of the student into the course; upholding the suspension. In case of suspension through the end of the semester, a grade will be assigned by the instructor, subject to review by the hearing committee.

Suspension - Immediate exclusion from all courses and other specified privileges or activities for a definite period not to exceed two years, subject to review by the hearing committee. The student's transcript will state that the student is suspended for academic misconduct.

Expulsion - Termination of student status for an indefinite period. The conditions of readmission, if any, shall be stated in the order of expulsion. The student's transcript will state that the student is expelled for academic misconduct.

All transcript statements will be permanent unless the student applies to the University Provost for removal of the statement and the application is granted.

College level sanctions imposed by the hearing panel may include all sanctions above including those typically addressed at the department/unit level. More than one sanction may be imposed for the same offense.

Hearing Panel and Appeals

For sanctions that require a hearing at the College level, or if a student wishes to, the Dean will appoint a hearing panel consisting of a minimum of three faculty members to conduct a hearing for all parties involved. This hearing shall be scheduled during one of five sessions during the academic year (August, October, December, February, and May). Attending the hearing are the charged student, the charging instructor(s) and his/her department chairperson, the hearing panel, and the director of the College Advising & Student Services. The hearing will be held even if the charged student fails to appear for the hearing.

Individuals attending the hearing will be kept to a minimum to ensure confidentiality of the proceedings. The charged student and/or charging instructor may request that an observer/advisor or witness(es) attend the hearing. The College scheduling officer must be notified in writing 10 calendar days prior to the hearing of any observer/advisor and/or witness(es) that will be attending the hearing. An observer (a supportive family member, advisor, or friend) may not directly participate in the hearing. Witnesses may be present only during their testimony to respond to questions from the panel, charged student, or charging instructor(s).

Typically, students do not bring legal counsel. However, if the student has an attorney, University General Counsel will be contacted and asked to attend the hearing also. The hearing may be delayed until such time as all parties, including legal representatives from both sides, can attend.

The hearing panel, having heard the charges and the student's response, will determine the validity of the charge of academic misconduct. If the charge is found to be valid, the panel will determine which of the above sanctions are to be imposed, based on the severity of the offense and any record of previous academic misconduct. The panel will notify the Dean and the Provost of its decision.

If either party to a charge of academic misconduct or to a grade appeal involving a charge of academic misconduct is dissatisfied with the resolution of the charge, he or she may seek review by the Judicial Board. All appeals must be made within 30 calendar days of the initial decision.

Per USRR 2.6.2, the College may establish procedures to address, process, and file academic misconduct charges occurring in conjunction with courses delivered by the College. The College reserves the right to review cases in which these procedures have not been appropriately applied by individual College departments.

Maintenance of Records

Written records of the charge will be maintained in the Office of the Provost using the Charge of Academic Misconduct form provided by the College.

All hearings must be audio recorded. Audio recordings of misconduct hearings will be kept by the unit conducting the hearing for sixty days following the decision of the hearing panel unless the decision is appealed in which case the recordings will be retained until the student's final appeal is completed.

Grievance Procedure

Note: This procedure does not apply to graduate students in matters related to their employment as teaching assistants. A separate grievance procedure outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement between the University of Kansas and the Board of Regents and the Kansas Association of Public Employees is available for that purpose.

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, the Computational Biology Program establishes the following procedure for the hearing of grievances within the Program. This procedure shall be the sole procedure available to members of the Program short of appealing to the University Judicial Board. No person shall be subjected to discharge, suspension, discipline, harassment, or any form of discrimination for having used or having assisted others in the use of this grievance procedure. Information concerning this procedure shall be easily available to all persons employed or studying in the Program. Before embarking on the following procedure, all Program members are urged to seek solutions to their grievances through traditional channels. For example, students should consult their instructor, and staff employees should consult their superior.

1. Any complaint should be addressed in writing first to the Director of the Computational Biology Program. If the Director determines that the complaint is the responsibility of the Program, he or she will interview all parties concerned, secure any additional relevant documents, and try to seek a conciliatory solution. If the problem is not solved in this fashion, the Director of the Computational Biology Program shall refer the complaint to a committee as described below. If the complaint is referred to a committee, the Director of the Computational Biology Program shall make available to the committee that information which he or she has collected concerning the complaint. "This procedure shall not be used to hear disputes assigned to other hearing bodies under USRR Article VI, Section 4."

For disputes involving academic misconduct or alleged violation of student rights, the initial hearing will normally be at the unit level. There is an option to hold an initial hearing at the Judicial Board level if both parties agree, or either party petitions the Judicial Board chair to have the hearing at the Judicial Board level

and the petition is granted. The petition must state why a fair hearing cannot be obtained at the unit level; the opposing party has an opportunity to respond to the petition (USRR 6.4.3.1).

Prior to scheduling a hearing, the parties shall participate in mediation of the dispute unless either party waives mediation. Mediation shall be governed by USRR 6.2.3.

If mediation is successful, the mediator will forward to the Program Director, the committee chair, and all parties a letter describing the outcome of the mediation and the terms upon which the parties have agreed to resolve the dispute. This letter shall be a recommendation to the Program Director. The Program Director will notify the mediator, the committee chair, and the parties that the recommendation has been accepted, modified, or rejected.

If mediation is not successful the mediator will notify the Program Director, the committee chair, and the parties that mediation has terminated. If mediation is not successful, or if it is waived by either party, the grievance committee will schedule a hearing no later than 30 calendar days from the written submission of the complaint. The 30-day period may be extended for good cause as determined by the chair of the committee. The 30-day period shall be suspended during the mediation process. The hearing will be closed unless all parties agree that it shall be public.

2. If the complaint deals with academic matters, the Director shall designate, the Committee on Graduate Affairs, a permanent standing committee of the Department, as the grievance committee.
3. All other complaints shall be referred to a committee constituted as follows: one person recommended by the complainant, one person recommended by the other party, and one full-time faculty member of the Computational Biology Program selected by the Director of the Program. This latter faculty member shall serve as the chairperson of the grievance committee. All Committee members must be members of the University community.
4. The grievance committee as constituted in (2) or (3), hereinafter called the Committee, may establish procedures in addition to those listed in this document concerning the operation of the Committee's activities. The basic requirements of the grievance procedures as stated here, however, may not be altered by the Committee's procedures. All procedures shall ensure prompt and fair handling of complaints but shall avoid the formalism of legal process.
5. No complaint shall be considered by the Director of the Computational Biology Program or the Committee if more than six months have elapsed since the occurrence of the action or event in question. A complaint must be submitted in

writing to the Committee and a copy sent to the other party. The written statement of the complaint or grievance shall set forth the facts upon which the complaint or grievance is based and shall indicate the provision or provisions of the Departmental or University rules and regulations alleged to have been violated, or the acts of established University bodies or officials alleged to have been unlawful, arbitrary or capricious. The complainant and the other party must make available copies of materials to be used in the hearing and must submit the names of supporting witnesses prior to a hearing of the complaint or grievance. Material which might violate the privacy of non-interested parties will not be admissible.

6. The Committee shall schedule a hearing within 30 calendar days of the submission of a complaint or grievance unless the Committee determines that there is good cause to schedule the hearing later.
7. No member of the Committee for whom hearing a complaint constitutes a conflict of interest shall sit with the Committee while that complaint is being heard nor shall any party involved in the complaint participate in the rendering of any decision on the complaint or grievance.
8. All proceedings provided for in this grievance procedure shall be closed to all but the parties involved. Witnesses may be called to the hearing subject to the discretion of the Committee.
9. A party against whom a complaint or grievance is brought shall have the privilege of remaining silent and refusing to provide information and he or she shall be informed of this privilege during the initial stage of the proceeding.
10. Each party to a proceeding shall be entitled to a full examination of material presented by the other party, including the opportunity to question witnesses.
11. The chair of the committee shall have the authority and responsibility to keep order, rule on questions of evidence and relevance, and shall possess other reasonable powers necessary for a fair and orderly hearing.
12. The hearing shall not be governed by the rules of evidence, but the chair of the committee may exclude information he or she deems irrelevant, unnecessary, or duplicative.
13. The Committee will make an audiotape of the hearing but not of the deliberations of the committee. The audiotape will be available to the parties, their authorized representatives, the committee and the Director of the Computational Biology Program. If a party desires a copy of the audiotape or a transcript of the tape, that party will pay for the cost of such copy or transcript. In the event of an appeal, the audiotape will be provided to the appellate body as part of the record of the case.
14. After the presentation of evidence and arguments, the committee will excuse the parties and deliberate. The committee's decision will be a written

recommendation to the Director of the Computational Biology Program. The committee shall base its recommendations solely upon the information presented at the hearing.

15. The committee will send its written recommendation to the Director of the Computational Biology Program and the parties as soon as possible and no later than 14 calendar days after the end of the hearing.

Within 14 calendar days of receiving the committee recommendation, the Director of the Computational Biology Program will notify the parties of the acceptance, modification, or rejection of the recommendation. The Director of the Computational Biology Program will advise the parties of the procedure available to appeal the decision.

Resources

Applied English Center – The Applied English Center (AEC) offers assistance to inter-national students through courses and testing. The SPEAK test is administered through this office. Contact them in Lippincott Hall, 864-4606 or [visit their website](#).

Bookstores – Textbooks can be purchased at the following bookstores or can be preordered online at their respective websites:

KU Bookstore, Kansas Union, Level Two (864-4640) KU Bookstore, Burge Union, Level Two (864-5697); kubookstore.com

Center for Teaching Excellence – The mission of the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) is to support excellence in teaching by graduate students and faculty. Throughout the year, CTE hosts various workshops, teaching conferences, and discussion fo-rums. They also have print and video resources for GTAs. The center sponsors the annual GTA Teaching conference each fall and spring semester. For further information, call 864- 4199 or visit cte.ku.edu.

Child Care – Graduate students with children are eligible to apply for childcare placement at three university facilities: [Hilltop Child Development Center](#), [Sunnyside Toddler Program](#), and [Educare](#). Hilltop cares for children from one to five years of age and offers an after-school program for kids in grade school. Sunnyside cares for children from eight weeks to three years old and is located in the John T. Stewart Children’s Center in Haworth Hall. Educare, located in Dole, provides care for preschoolers. Contact these programs for further information and applications for admission (Hilltop: 864-4940; Sunnyside: 864-0720; Educare: 864-3498).

Counseling and Psychological Services – Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides personal counseling services to help students with issues related

to adjusting to college and other psychological, interpersonal, and family issues. In addition to individual consultations, they also offer a support group called “Dissertation Dis-tress”. A first visit is free with a nominal charge for subsequent visits. CAPS is located on the second floor of Watkins Memorial Health Center. Call 864-2277 to make an appointment or visit caps.ku.edu for more information.

Degree Progress Report (DPR) – This form replaces the ARTs form. It is an online self-serve tool that allows you to track your progress toward completion of degree requirements. You will access the DPR through your myKU Portal using your KU Online ID and password. You will click the **Advising** tab, then **Progress**, then **Generate Report**.

E-Mail Account – A free e-mail account and web space (for classes and teaching) is provided to currently enrolled students. Visit KU Internet Technology (KUIT) at technology.ku.edu/email.

Computer Help – If you need help with IT or computer issues, including networking, printers, or software installation, please email Matthew Copeland at matthew@ku.edu.

Financial Aid – Most graduate students receive GTAs or GRAs that, typically, provide a stipend for 9 to 12 months. All GTAs receive full tuition assistance. GRAs are allowed to pay an in-state tuition rate, regardless of residential status. Some GRAs will receive full tuition assistance as well, depending on the source of GRA funding. **Requests to have tuition payment deferred until you receive your first full paycheck can be made to the Bursar’s Office located in 20 Carruth-O’Leary Hall.** GTAs are awarded on a competitive basis. Individual faculty members offer GRAs to students pursuing graduate research in their laboratory. University-wide fellowships are available from Graduate Studies. The Department nominates applicants for these fellowships. For further information about financial aid, students may contact the Office of Student Financial Aid, 50 Strong Hall, Lawrence, KS 66045-7535, email: osfa@ku.edu, phone: (785) 864-4700.

Health Insurance – Health insurance is offered to students at institutions governed by the Kansas Board of Regents. You can access health insurance information and enrollment at [KU HR website for Grad Student Health Insurance](#).

Health Services – The student health services provided at Watkins Memorial Health Center (864- 9500) include general medicine, gynecology, sports medicine, physical therapy, health education, immunizations, allergy clinic, dietary counseling, counseling and psychological services, pharmacy, laboratory, and x-ray. Student health fees cover many services and many others are provided at a reduced rate. Visit their website at studenthealth.ku.edu for more information.

Office of Civil Rights & Title IX – Offers confidential assistance. This office will

investigate, mediate, and help resolve complaints based on race, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, age, or veteran status. For more information, visit their website at [Home | Office of Civil Rights & Title IX](#)

International Student Services – International students should consult the Office of International Student Services (ISS), located in Strong Hall, Room 2. They provide assistance with immigration and visa advice, orientation, and counseling. Contact the ISS Office at 864-3617 or visit their website at iss.ku.edu.

KU Card – All students are issued a KU Card, which serves as an official identification card and is valid as long as students remain enrolled. Once enrolled, students may obtain an ID card at the KU Card Center (Kansas Union, Level 4). You must present an enrollment schedule and photo ID. The KU card also serves as a debit card by depositing cash at one of the cash-to-card machines located on campus. For more information, call 864-5845 or visit their website at kucard.ku.edu.

Building Access –After hours building access is granted by swiping your KU Card at Omni Lock doors. With faculty authorization, you may register your KU Card for building access with Ann Smith in 100A MRB.

Legal Services for Students – Legal Services is located in 312 Burge Union. They provide free legal services for currently enrolled KU students. Attorneys (or law students working under attorney supervision) interview and advise students. They provide three major services: advice, representation, and educational programs. Contact the office at 864-5665 or legals@ku.edu. For more information, visit their website at the [website for KU student Legal Services](#).

Libraries – KU Libraries are housed in several buildings on campus. You will likely use Anschutz Library the most. An overview of the library system can be found at lib.ku.edu.

Ombuds – The University Ombuds Office is a safe, anonymous, confidential, neutral place to express your concerns. The University Ombuds reviews each call without prejudice, and it is neither an advocate nor critic of any cause. The primary mission is to provide a confidential, neutral, and informal process that facilitates fair and equitable resolution to problems. For more information, call 864-7261 or visit ombuds.ku.edu.

Parking & Transit – Parking on campus requires a permit that can be purchased at the Parking Department (1501 Irving Hill Road). You must know your license tag at the time of purchase. Please note that a parking permit does not guarantee parking at any particular time (e.g., during KU basketball games). Find out more at

parking.ku.edu. Those who live off campus may prefer to take the bus. Bus rides are free with a KUID card!

Public Safety Office - The KU Public Safety Office is the crime investigation unit on campus. In addition, they conduct crime prevention and safety workshops. The most commonly reported crime on campus is theft. To aid in property retrieval in the event of a theft, the Public Safety Office allows students to check out engravers to mark personal property such as computers and stereos. For more information call 864-5900 (in an emergency, call 911) or visit their website at publicsafety.ku.edu.

Tuition & Fees - Information on tuition is available at registrar.ku.edu. In addition to tuition, campus fees are assessed depending on the number of credits of enrollment.

Late fees are assessed for enrollment on or after the first day of classes.

Writing Center – The KU Writing Center offers free assistance to students at various stages of writing. This is a great resource for students working on a thesis or dissertation. Trained tutors are available by appointment (864-2399) in Anschutz Learning Studio, 4th Floor. For more information, visit [KU Writing Center website](#)

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

This section contains information on requirements and policies of the Office of Graduate Studies and the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, both 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 three 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 Studies' [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](#)
- [Graduate Credit](#)

Enrollment

For graduate students in the College, advising on enrollment and course selection take place at the department level. While units within the College 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.

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).

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 pay a fee 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 as 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 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 Office of Graduate Studies [policy](#) on Graduate Credit 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.

Additionally, the College has set a 2.5 minimum GPA for students to be eligible for a semester of academic probation. In cases where a student's GPA drops below the

minimum of 2.5, the student is considered ineligible for academic probation and will be dismissed by the College. Students are strongly advised to review the [College-specific policy on probation and dismissal](#) for more information about the 2.5 threshold for dismissal.

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 or dissertation
- 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, 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](#)
- [Probation and Dismissal \(CLAS\)](#)
- [Good Academic Standing policy](#)

Grading

The Office of Graduate Studies' [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 Graduate Studies. Students should also carefully review the [College-specific grading information](#), in particular the section on the SP/LP/NP grading scale for thesis & dissertation hours and the impacts of receiving a LP (limited progress) or NP (no progress). Students should also consult their adviser 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.

Additional information pertaining to graduate grading can be found on COGA's pages for [Retroactive Withdrawal](#), [Incomplete Grades](#), and [Graduate GPA](#). The Registrar's Office's also offers information on the [Credit/No Credit](#) option.

Related Policies:

- [University Senate Rules & Regulations](#)
- [Grading](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)
- [Probation and Dismissal](#)

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 link above and 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 the College's Mentoring Agreement is required for doctoral students who are within 2 years of exhausting their maximum time to degree. See the [College Graduate Regulations](#) or talk to your graduate program coordinator for more information.

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>

- [Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Oral Exams](#) (on exam expiration and recertification)
- [Doctoral Program Profiles with Time To Degree Information](#)
- [Graduate Degree Completion Agreement](#) (PDF)

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.

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; however, the only document that the College requires for the petition is the Leave of Absence form, linked below. 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](#)
- [CLAS Leave of Absence Petition Form](#) (PDF)

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 College is required in advance of the exam date. This pre-approval request will be submitted on your behalf by your department after the exam date has been scheduled. The 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 holding regular graduate 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.

Students are strongly advised to closely review the College's page on Post-Comp Enrollment. This page explains requirements in great detail.

[Review the Post Comp Enrollment Requirements](#)

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 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 (M.A. & 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.

COGA GRADUATION CHECKLISTS

COGA's graduation checklists provide a comprehensive list of all University requirements for graduation and should be consulted by every graduating master's or doctoral student in the College 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.

“MY GRADUATION CHECKLIST” CANVAS COURSE

If you are graduating with a PhD or a thesis option master's degree, you will submit documents and track the completion of your graduation requirements via your "My Graduation Checklist" site in Canvas. This site will be your online hub for all instructions and resources related to degree completion and graduation.

Your My Graduation Checklist Canvas site will be activated at one of these times, whichever comes first:

- On the 20th day of classes for students who have submitted an Application for Graduation via Enroll & Pay for that semester

- When your department submits your exam date and information for pre-approval
- During the week after the graduation deadline, for students who have applied to graduate for the upcoming semester

We strongly encourage students to submit an Application for Graduation as early as possible, but at minimum prior to the 20th day of classes of the semester you want to graduate so that you can get access to the information and resources in your Graduation Checklist site as early as possible!

If your Graduation Checklist has not been activated yet, you can utilize the Graduation checklists referenced above.

GRADUATE STUDIES FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

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

Dissertation Fellowships: intended for doctoral students who have passed their comprehensive examinations; for one academic year, non-renewable.

Summer Fellowships: 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.