

**Graduate Education Standards and Procedures Manual  
of Ramapo College of New Jersey**

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**GRADUATE EDUCATION  
STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES  
Ramapo College of New Jersey**

**ADMISSIONS**

**Matriculation**

To be considered for admission as a fully-matriculated student, an applicant must provide all of the following:

1. A completed application for admission including the fee;
2. Minimum 3.00 cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) earned in baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. If a student does not meet the GPA requirement, he or she must demonstrate exceptional professional experience as determined in writing by the dean of the respective academic unit determining admission.
3. Official transcripts from all institutions previously attended. (Baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution required)
4. Official copies of scores earned on the GRE, GMAT, TOEFL as required by individual programs.
5. Two letters of reference attesting to personal and professional qualifications (individual programs may require more than two letters of reference).
6. A two-page personal statement (as described by the individual program requirements).
7. Any additional materials specified by the individual programs.

**Non-Matriculation**

Acceptance as a graduate non-degree student does not imply future admission to a degree program. To be considered for admission as a non-degree student, an applicant must provide all of the following:

1. A completed application for admission including the fee; and
2. Official transcripts from all institutions previously attended. (Baccalaureate degree required from an accredited institution).

*Non-Degree Students* (students taking courses for personal enrichment and/or to obtain certification from a state or outside agency):

- A student may enroll as a Non-Degree student in a maximum of two (2) courses in a program before being required to matriculate in that program. Program directors will monitor the progress of non-matriculated students to ensure that these students do not exceed the two-course maximum.
- Only courses that meet program requirements at the time of matriculation will be considered for transfer from a non-degree program to a degree program.

## **TRANSFER CREDIT**

If a syllabus indicates that a graduate course taken elsewhere is equivalent to one given in a program at Ramapo College, application for transfer credits may be submitted. The criteria for acceptance are different for each program; therefore, students must discuss transfer of credits with the Program Director. Only two (2) graduate courses, not to exceed eight (8) credits (including GLEX) may be considered for transfer into a Ramapo College graduate program provided the courses are from another accredited institution of higher education.

Students who transfer from a non-degree program to a degree program must fulfill the degree requirements in place at the time of matriculation into the degree program.

## **GRADUATE PRIOR LEARNING EXPERIENCE (GLEX)**

Graduate students at Ramapo College of New Jersey may acquire credit for graduate level knowledge that they have gained outside the traditional academic setting through work, training, community service, or other accomplishments. The process of Graduate prior learning assessment involves the development of a portfolio and an interview that confirm that the learning the student has achieved through his/her life experience is relevant to the programs learning goals.

1. Prior learning experience may be substituted for up to two (2) courses (not to exceed 8 credits) in the graduate program.
2. Criteria for acceptance of prior learning experiences include:
  - The experience must be relevant to the programs learning goals.
  - The experience must be comparable to graduate-level coursework.
  - The experience must have taken place after the awarding of the bachelor's degree and before enrollment in the graduate program.
  - The student must document and apply for credit for the learning experience.
  - The student must attend the portfolio development workshop offered by CAFYE.
3. GLEX credit is considered transfer credit; therefore the combination of transfer credit and GLEX credit cannot exceed two (2) courses or eight (8) credits.
4. Students must successfully complete (2) courses at Ramapo before they are eligible to take GLEX.
5. Since GLEX credits are considered 600-level, they must be completed before registering for 700-level courses.
6. The Program Director or designee reviews and evaluates applications for prior learning credit and recommends the number of credits to be awarded. The Dean makes the final approval.
7. GLEX credit may be granted for equivalent coursework offered at Ramapo College.
8. When the experience does not compare to a Ramapo course but falls within the purview of the evaluator's expertise, credit is granted as an elective. This type of prior learning

credit is recorded on the transcript as GLEX 699 with the course name “Graduate Life Experience.”

9. GLEX credits are awarded without a grade, so they are not calculated with the students’ GPA.
10. Once the GLEX portfolio is approved by the Director and Dean, the student must pay the associated costs.
11. All GLEX documentation including the portfolio and interview notes are kept in the student’s permanent record.

*Process:*

In order to obtain GLEX credit, graduate students must follow the following steps:

- Application for approval: A GLEX proposal is presented to the Director including the following items:
  - o Current resume.
  - o Documentation supporting the students’ claim to prior learning (i.e. job descriptions and samples of work).
  - o Narrative explaining in detail the correlation of prior learning experience to a specific course.
  - o If the Director considers the proposal to be viable, the student is invited to interview.
  - o The Director signs the Application for Approval and a timeline is developed for completion of the portfolio for Initial Assessment.
- Initial Assessment:
  - o The Director or assigned faculty member meets with the student to review the initial documentation and discuss strengths and weakness of the proposal.
  - o The student and the Director of the program or faculty member come to a clear understanding of the criteria that will be used to assess the specific area of expertise. They determine how the student can best indicate the kinds of knowledge, competencies and skills he/she has acquired in prior experience.
  - o A timeline is developed for completion of the portfolio.
  - o An agreement of expectations is developed and signed by the director and the student.
- Submission and Review:
  - o The student submits the portfolio for review.
  - o The Director, faculty member, or advisor conducts an interview with the student.
  - o The Director and Dean approve the posting of the credit and submit the appropriate form to the Office of Graduate and Adult Admissions. A copy is given to the student.

- Credit Posting:
  - o The student pays for the GLEX credit at the Bursar's Office.
  - o The "paid" form is returned to the Office of Graduate and Adult Admissions.
  - o Credit is posted for the agreed semester.

## **ACADEMIC STANDING**

### **Policy**

Graduate students (matriculated and non-matriculated) must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 to remain in good academic standing. Only graduate courses taken at Ramapo College will be used in the GPA calculation. Courses transferred from other colleges count only as credits earned; accompanying grades are NOT calculated toward the grade point average at Ramapo.

The standards used and the actions prescribed are as follows:

- Students who have a cumulative GPA below 3.00 for ONE semester are placed on Academic Probation.
- Students who have a cumulative GPA below 3.00 for TWO consecutive semesters are placed on Academic Dismissal, and will not be allowed to register for graduate courses in subsequent semesters.
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- A student must be in Good Standing in order to enroll in Thesis or final project courses.

Students placed on Academic Probation may not appeal their standing.

### **Procedures for Determining Academic Standing**

At the close of each fall and spring semester, once final grades have been posted, the Registrar's Office generates Academic Standings and provides the report to the Program Directors. The Program Directors review records of all graduate students enrolled at the College. Those students whose academic performance has fallen below the College's established standards (above) are advised of the deficiency in writing by the Program Director.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Admission to a Graduate Program does not mean acceptance to candidacy for the Master's Degree. In order to be eligible for graduation, the student must have:

1. Attained "matriculation" status.

2. Completed all the degree requirements with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.
3. Filed a completed degree evaluation and graduation application.

### **SATISFACTORY PROGRESS**

- Graduate students must complete program requirements within five years. Students who wish to appeal this time limit must do so in writing to the Program Director who will make recommendation to the Dean..
- Students must make satisfactory academic progress (i.e., completion of a specified number of credits per year) within their program, unless a Leave of Absence has been granted. ‘Satisfactory Academic Progress’ is determined by each individual program and stated on the program website.
- Individual programs may specify a minimum acceptable grade for a course which serves as a prerequisite for another course.

### **GRADING POLICY**

Course work is evaluated using the following grading scale:

Grade	Grade Points per Credit	Credit toward Program Requirements
A	4.0	Yes
A-	3.7	Yes
B+	3.3	Yes
B	3.0	Yes
B-	2.7	Yes
C+	2.3	Yes
C	2.0	Yes
F	0.0	No
U	N/A	No

#### **IP In-Progress<sup>1</sup>**

This grade is assigned in Thesis courses such as Thesis Research, when course requirements are not completed at the end of the term. In-Progress (IP) grades must be resolved within two (2) additional semesters (spring/fall) after the initial term when the IP was issued. IP grades not

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<sup>1</sup> As of Fall 2010, IP grades can only be assigned to: EDTC 710, LIBS 710, LIBS 711, SUST 710, SUST 720. The Continuation courses are EDTC 711, LIBS 712, SUST 721.

resolved after three (3) consecutive semesters (including the initial term) will be converted to a “U” or an “F” grade, depending on the individual program’s standards. Students must register for a Thesis Continuation course (0 credits, 2 billing hours). Thesis continuation is not graded.

- If the student’s Thesis remains unfinished at the end of the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) semester under IP status (i.e., the initial term when the IP was issued plus two additional terms), the student must consult with both the Thesis Advisor and the Program Director. This consultation must take place no later than the day that grades are due for that semester. At that consultation, one of the following actions will be taken: The student is dismissed from the respective program with a final grade of “U” or “F” (depending on the individual program’s standards) for the Thesis course. The student has a right to appeal the decision, as indicated below. If a student does not appeal the decision within 5 business days of this consultation, the Program Director will process the dismissal.
- The student appeals in writing to the Program Director within 5 business days of the consultation for an extension of one additional semester (for a total of three semesters beyond the initial semester) to complete the original Thesis. At the end of this extension, if granted, the student will receive a final grade of “U” or “F” (depending on the individual program’s standards) and will be permanently dismissed from the program if the Thesis is still not completed.
- The student appeals in writing to the Program Director within 5 business days of the consultation for permission to enroll in a new Thesis course. If the appeal is granted, the student accepts a “U” or an “F” (depending on the individual program’s standards) for the original Thesis course and is permitted one semester only to complete the second Thesis course. If the student fails to complete the Thesis under two distinct Thesis courses, the student will be dismissed from the respective program.

In both cases of appeal, an unfavorable decision by a Program Director is final; a favorable decision must receive final approval from the dean. The Program Director will monitor a student’s progress and will ensure that the student does not exceed the time limits described above.

### **I Incomplete      No credit awarded**

Given extenuating circumstances (for instance, reasons of illness or other emergency) when approved by the instructor and when requested by a student who has satisfactorily completed at least two-thirds of course requirements prior to the end of a term. The default deadline for completion of course work is posted on the Academic Calendar for each semester (typically February 26 for Fall semester incompletes and October 15 for Spring and summer incompletes, or the next business day); however, the instructor may set an earlier deadline at the time the Incomplete grade is requested. When the work is completed prior to the completion deadline, the instructor completes a ‘Grade Adjustment Request’ form; the new assigned grade replaces the I. If work is not satisfactorily completed by the completion deadline, the grade is changed to F. A student may not graduate with an I grade outstanding.

**U No credit awarded**

A “U” grade may be assigned to a Thesis course when an In-Progress (IP) grade is not resolved within two (2) semesters (spring/fall) after the initial term when the IP was issued (see “*IP - In Progress*” section above). A “U” grade is NOT factored into the student’s cumulative GPA.

**W Withdrawn No credit awarded**

Given in exceptional circumstances, with permission of the instructor, for withdrawal from a course. The withdrawal form should be submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the withdrawal deadline posted on the semester's Academic Calendar.

Cessation of class attendance or notification to the instructor is NOT considered an official withdrawal. Unless students officially withdraw from a course through the Registrar's Office, they are still registered for the course and will receive a grade of "F" even though classes were not attended.

Students should also refer to the ‘Leave of Absence’, ‘Medical Leave of Absence’, and ‘Withdrawal from Ramapo College’ policies in the College Catalog.

**RF grading**

RF grading is not applicable to graduate level courses.

**COURSE LOAD LIMITATIONS**

Full-time status is nine credits; for student loan purposes, student must typically be enrolled for 5 or more credits. Full-time students in good academic standing may enroll for up to nine (9) credit hours. Permission to exceed this limit must be secured from the Program Director. Students on academic probation should consider reducing their credit hour load until such status is removed; however, students should consider whether a reduced course load will enable them to achieve Good Standing by the end of the semester in they are on probation. Students on academic probation should ensure that they discuss their course loads with their Program Directors.

Non-degree students may only take up to two courses before being admitted to a program.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Up to four (4) credits of independent study work may be applied towards graduation requirements, with the permission of the Program Director. Only students in good academic standing may enroll for independent studies.

## **GRADING APPEALS**

The faculty of the College establishes course requirements and performance standards. Faculty evaluation of students' academic performance is a qualitative judgment and is expressed through the submission of final course grades to the Registrar at the close of each semester. Under certain limited circumstances, a student may appeal a grade.

### ***Procedures for Student Appeals Regarding Grades***

#### **Circumstances for which students might appeal grades**

Grade appeals will only be considered if a student can provide documentation supporting his/her case. Circumstances that might justify a grade appeal include (but are not limited to): computational error; factual information not in evidence at the time the grade was posted (for example, an assignment that the student can document was submitted, but was not graded by the faculty member and therefore not factored into the final grade); or an alleged violation of College Policy. Appeals that will not be considered include those based on a student's perceived need for a higher grade (for instance, in order to raise his/her GPA, or to enable the course to transfer to another institution).

#### **Procedure**

If circumstances such as those described above can be documented, the graduate student may appeal a grade by taking the following steps:

- No later than twenty calendar days after the posting of grades, a student must bring his/her appeal to the attention of the faculty member, in writing, by email or certified letter. Supporting documentation must be provided. Both parties should make good faith efforts to share viewpoints and mediate differences of opinion.
- If it is mutually agreed that a grade adjustment is warranted, the faculty member forwards a Change of Grade Request, including explanatory reasons and all supporting documentation, to the Dean of the academic unit which sponsored the course. Upon the Dean's approval, the Change of Grade Request is forwarded to the Registrar.

If a student and faculty member cannot reach an agreement and a student wishes to further pursue a grade appeal, the student must present a written appeal (by email or certified letter), including pertinent course materials or course work, to the Director of the graduate program which sponsored the course in question, within twenty calendar days of the final determination conference between the student and faculty member.

The Director will confer with the student and faculty member, jointly or independently, as he/she sees fit, review pertinent documents and course materials, and confer with other faculty or administrative staff members as appropriate.

If it is mutually agreed that a grade change is warranted, the Director will forward a faculty-

endorsed Change of Grade Request with explanatory reasons, to the Dean who supervises the program. The Director's decision is a recommendation to the Dean for final approval. In cases where there are multiple Deans associated with a graduate program, the Director's recommendation will be submitted to the Dean of the unit that sponsors the courses first, and then the Dean who supervises the program.

If the Director renders an opinion which does not support the student's grade appeal, the student may petition for a review by the Dean who supervises the program. The petition would be initiated by the submission of a written statement by the student that explains his/her position and includes any evidence the student has that contradicts the Director's decision or contains information that had heretofore been unavailable. The Dean's Office will reject any request for review that does not offer clear evidence that the Program Director made a factual mistake, violated school policy, or otherwise acted outside the purview of the Director of the program.

The Dean will consider only those grade appeals which have previously received full deliberative discussion at the faculty and Program Director level.

After conferring with the student, Program Director, and faculty member and reviewing the pertinent documentation, the Dean may take one of the two following actions:

- (a) approve or decline the student's grade appeal; or
- (b) request that the Graduate Council review the appeal and render a recommendation to the Dean who, in turn, will advise the student, the professor, and the Program Director of his/her final decision.

In both step (a) and (b), the decision of the Dean is final.

## **APPEALS OF ACADEMIC STANDING**

The faculty of the College establishes course requirements and performance standards. Faculty evaluation of students' academic performance is a qualitative judgment and is expressed through the submission of final course grades to the Registrar at the close of each semester.

In those instances where a student wishes to appeal an Academic Dismissal, the student should appeal in writing to the Graduate Council within five business days of the posting grades at the end of the fall or the spring semester. The student should explain any unusual circumstances which contributed to the academic difficulty, and describe how he/she will be able to make better progress if reinstated. An academic plan for the following two semesters must be included. Supporting documentation may include, but is not limited to, letters of recommendation from Ramapo faculty/staff and/or letters from medical practitioners documenting that the student was receiving care during the current semester.

The Graduate Council, after having considered the appeal, recommends either (1) that the student may remain at the College on academic probation one additional semester or (2) that the student will be permanently dismissed from the College's graduate programs. A student who does NOT appeal to the Graduate Council in writing by the designated deadline is viewed as accepting the permanent dismissal.

The decision of the Graduate Council is final. Program directors will communicate the decision to the student.

### **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

Refer to College Catalog [[http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog\\_10\\_11/academic-policies.html](http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_10_11/academic-policies.html)]

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Refer to College Catalog  
[[http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog\\_10\\_11/academic-policies.html](http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_10_11/academic-policies.html)]

### **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

Refer to Ramapo College's Immunization Requirements website:  
<http://www.ramapo.edu/students/health/student-info.html>

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Refer to Ramapo College's Office of Specialized Services (OSS) website:  
<http://www.ramapo.edu/students/oss/index.html>

### **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

Refer to Ramapo College's Student Life Handbook. Handbook can be found on the Student Life website: <http://www.ramapo.edu/students/>

## **GOVERNANCE**

### **Ramapo College Graduate Council**

The Graduate Council shall (1) recommend standards and regulations affecting Graduate curricula and work leading to a graduate degree and (2) institute standards and regulations as delegated by the faculty. The Graduate Council shall serve and act on behalf of the faculty and students in the Graduate Programs. Members of the Graduate Council include the Deans of the Schools and of the Library, the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment, the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, the Registrar, Graduate Program Directors, the Associate Director for Admissions: Adult Learners and Graduate Programs, and representatives from ARC and the Faculty Assembly. The Graduate Council shall meet monthly during the academic year. Special meetings can be arranged.

The Graduate Council shall perform the following duties:

- Review and recommend minimum standards for graduate student admission.
- Review and recommend basic requirements for graduate degrees.
- Review and recommend new and revised graduate degree programs.
- Recommend policy on financial support for graduate students.
- Develop strategies for increasing financial support for graduate students and graduate programs.
- Hear appeals of academic dismissal and time limits. A subcommittee may be convened to hear these appeals.

### **Graduate Directors Committee**

The Graduate Council Directors Committee will be composed of the graduate Program Directors. The committee members shall appoint one of its members as the committee chair. The charge of this committee is to (1) review and recommend graduate course proposals for submission to ARC, and (2) review and discuss other academic (e.g. curricular and assessment) and programmatic issues for submission to the Graduate Council.

### **Parliamentary Procedure**

Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the conduct of all meetings.