

05.00 Graduate Academic Policy

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[05.01 Residency](#)

Normally all work for a graduate degree will be done in residence. This includes the thesis for programs and majors in which such a document is required. In rare cases, permission will be granted for credit to be transferred for courses taken at other institutions, as noted in section 05.04 ([Graduate Transfer Credit](#)). Students may register for thesis work in absentia, provided that the basic research has been completed, all residency requirements have been met and satisfactory arrangements can be made for close supervision of the work by the advisor. In such cases, the permission of the advisor must be obtained in advance. *An exception to this graduate degree residency requirement is made for the MA in Music Leadership.* The MA in Music Leadership is an online degree, and all coursework can be completed remotely from any location or while residing in Rochester.

Full-time residence is defined as two consecutive semesters exclusively devoted to graduate study. A full-time course load consists of at least 9 units per semester.

In the rare instance that a student is in residence for only one year, it is strongly urged that the candidate arrange their residence plans so as to be in residence writing the thesis during the academic year.

Students should refer to the sections below pertaining to their specific degree and major for additional

information regarding residency requirements, expected time to completion, and time limits for completion.

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05.02 Continuous Graduate Registration

Continuation of Graduate Enrollment and Inactive Status Forms

The University of Rochester has established a principle of continuous registration for graduate students. This means that graduate students must register every fall and spring semester from their first semester of study until their degree is completed, within the following time limits on degree completion:

- Master's degree: five years from first registration
- Doctoral degrees: six years from first registration following a master's degree, or seven years from first registration following a bachelor's degree (i.e., for DMA students, the time limit is six years).

The exception to the continuous enrollment requirement is that music education graduate students who are admitted with "Summers Only" status (program code: MES) must be continuously enrolled during consecutive *summer* sessions, but are not required to register during fall or spring semesters.

Traditional music education graduate students (program code: MTL) who wish to change their status to 'Summers Only' must first obtain approval from the chair of the department of music teaching and learning. See: [\(Music Education 'Summers Only'\)](#).

There are three registration options that enable graduate students to maintain continuous enrollment when not registered for coursework or thesis/dissertation credits. All three require approval from the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. Students intending to register for one of these three registration options must submit the appropriate form to the Graduate Studies Office prior to the end of second full week of classes for each semester or they will be charged a late registration fee. The three registration options are as follows:

ESM 895/995: Continuation of Graduate Enrollment (part-time status). For graduate students who are completing non-credit-bearing requirements (e.g., writing a dissertation, preparing a recital, taking qualifying exams, etc.) after all coursework and thesis or dissertation credits (if applicable) have been completed. Students are not considered to be in residence and therefore comprehensive, activity, and health fees **are not** charged. Students registered for ESM 895/995 are considered to have less than half-time status and are not eligible for financial aid or student loan deferment.

ESM 899/999: Continuation of Graduate Enrollment (full-time status). For graduate students who are completing non-credit-bearing requirements (e.g., writing a dissertation, preparing a recital, taking qualifying exams, etc.) after all coursework and thesis or dissertation credits (if applicable) have been completed. With approval from the Office of Graduate Studies, ESM 899/999 may be taken with coursework in certain cases. Students are considered to be in residence and therefore **are** subject to comprehensive, activity, and health fees. Students registered for ESM 899/999 are considered to have full-time status and are eligible for financial aid and student loan deferment, and are strongly encouraged to consult with the Financial Aid Office regarding their loan status and load.

ESM 899/999A: Continuation of Graduate Enrollment (full-time status, staying in US, not in Rochester). For graduate students who are completing non-credit-bearing degree requirements (as above). Students are considered to be in residence (United States) but are not on-campus and therefore **are not** subject to health fees. Carries no credit; students are considered full-time and are eligible for financial aid.

ESM 899/999B: Continuation of Graduate Enrollment (full-time status, not in United States). For graduate students who are completing non-credit-bearing degree requirements (as above). Students are considered to be in residence (internationally) and therefore **are not** subject to health fees. Carries no credit; students are considered full-time and are eligible for financial aid.

Leave of Absence. The University Leave of Absence policy is set by the University Registrar's Office. A leave of absence is a temporary separation from the University initiated by the student, and may not exceed three consecutive semesters, including summer. For the complete policy and to access forms, visit: <https://www.rochester.edu/registrar/students/leave-of-absence-and-withdrawal.html> Questions may also be directed to the Graduate Studies Office.

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05.03 Orientation, Placement Examinations, and Remediation

Orientation

Orientation is **mandatory** for all new graduate students. In addition to familiarizing students with degree requirements and important school policies, orientation provides a time and place for you to take placement exams and get setup to be paid for any assigned assistantships. Students who miss these appointments will not be allowed to register for classes and risk not being able to begin or be compensated for their assistantship duties. It is also at orientation that new international students complete their immigration check-in with the International Services Office.

Placement examinations

All entering graduate students are required to take the music theory placement examinations and the music history advising survey before registering for any course (except where noted). Students majoring in jazz studies & contemporary media and contemporary media/film composition should also refer to their individual degree requirements for information regarding additional placement exams within their department. International students whose first language is not English will be required to complete an English assessment interview (see below).

Details about content of the music theory placement exam, and suggestions about how to prepare for it, will be made available to new students by the admissions and graduate studies offices once the student's enrollment has been confirmed. Faculty members of the music theory department grade the theory exam. The Graduate Studies Office reviews the music history advising survey in coordination with the musicology department. Results are made available to the students prior to course registration.

Students who are unable to take the placement examinations on the prescribed date due to a documented emergency may, with the permission of the Graduate Studies Office and the chairs of the music theory and musicology departments, be able to take them after classes have begun. Those who follow this procedure will, as a result, register late, miss class sessions, and may find that space is no longer available in some classes.

Remedial coursework

Students who are determined not to be ready for graduate-level theory work at Eastman will be required to take one or both of the two-semester remedial music theory courses: TH 117 and TH 118: Theory, Analysis and Musicianship Review I and II (1.5 credits each). These courses will not count toward the total units of any degree program nor fulfill any degree requirement, and they may not be used as electives. However, units earned in these courses will count toward the student's credit load during the semester that they are taken. Students may be placed into either TH 117 (in which case both TH 117 and TH 118 must be taken) or into TH 118.

Masters students who must take TH 117 and/or 118 may not enroll for any 400- or 500-level music theory courses until TH 118 has been satisfactorily completed.

If a doctoral student receives a grade of "B+" or better in TH 118 they will have met the DMA Theory Skills Exam requirement. Should a doctoral student fail to pass the Theory Skills Exam upon matriculation, and should they not attain at least a grade of "B+" in TH 118, they will be required to retake TH 118 (preferably in the subsequent summer session) before they are allowed to register for any theory courses at the 400 or 500 level.

MM and MA degree students who continue on to a DMA or PhD program will be required to take only Part 3 of the Graduate Placement Exam in Theory (Counterpoint/Style Composition), as distinct from Parts 1-2, which they previously took when entering the masters degree.

The results of the music history assessment will be used to advise students into appropriate coursework. Some students may be required to take one or more of the music history courses numbered MHS 421 through MHS 426, each of which concentrates on a specific historical period. Master's students may use these courses to satisfy their required courses in music history, or as elective credit.

The music theory department does not allow a student to retake any portion of the music theory placement exam.

English-language proficiency of international students for whom English is not the first language will be evaluated during the admissions process and in individual or group sessions during orientation. Based on these assessments and review of each international student's file, some students may be required to take EAP 101G and 102G: Graduate English for Academic Purposes I and II (3.0 units each, billed as 1.5 units each). These courses are review courses that do not count toward the total required credits for any degree, and may not be used as elective credit. However, the course will count toward the student's credit load during the semester in which it is taken. Other students may be required to take EAP 201G and 202G: The Versatile Musician I and II (4.0 units each, billed as 4.0 units each). These courses may be used towards elective credit for a master's or doctoral degree. If the number of required credits of course work in music history and electives is fewer than the number of credits of EAP courses required of a student (following the individual language interviews), the courses must be taken above and beyond the degree requirements. If a student does not attend the individual interview, assessment will be based solely on review of the student's admissions file. Students who are required to take EAP 101G and/or 102G may not enroll for 200-level EAP courses until EAP 102G has been satisfactorily completed.

In addition to the courses mentioned above, please check your specific degree and major requirements for any additional remedial courses that may be required. **Remedial courses do not count toward the total required credits for any graduate degree, and may not be used as elective credit.** However, they will count toward the student's credit load during the semester that they are taken. Courses at the 100 level may not be used as elective credit and are not covered by tuition scholarships.

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05.04 Graduate Transfer Credit

A maximum of six semester hours of graduate credit taken not more than five years before matriculation at Eastman may be accepted for graduate degree requirements. The subject(s) taken must form an integral part of the student's academic plan, and the student must have earned a grade of "B" or better in the courses in question.

Normally, no transfer credit is given for applied music or ensemble taken at another institution, as these courses must reflect the unique resources of the Eastman School. Academic credit, such as music history or music theory, may be eligible for transfer. Students should submit an official transcript and other supporting documentation (such as papers, projects, assignments, a syllabus, etc.) for the courses in question to the appropriate department chair for evaluation. If the department chair approves graduate credit or credits for transfer, written approval should be forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies along with the student's academic transcript for final review.

Permission to transfer credit from another school must normally be secured before the student registers for those course(s). In rare cases, transfer credit is granted retroactively, provided such credit has not been used toward another degree.

In addition, any transfer credit requested by doctoral students must be for coursework taken above and beyond a 30-credit master's degree. Requests coming from doctoral students will be forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies who will forward them to the Graduate Professional Committee (for DMA students) or the Graduate Research Committee (for PhD students) at the same time the student proposes their academic plan.

Additional information concerning the transfer of credit is available from the Office of Graduate Studies.

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05.05 Graduate Credit and Grading

As of Fall 2024, retroactive registrations will not be allowed, per University policy. Students must be registered for a course in the semester in which they complete the work for the course in order to receive credit. It is the responsibility of the student to register for all courses in which they are participating. Faculty are also responsible for checking rosters to ensure that all students in the course are registered.

Each faculty instructor determines the grading criteria for their courses and must publish them in the class syllabus. The syllabus must include learning outcomes, assignments and exams, specific stipulations for successful course completion, a statement on disability accommodations, a statement on Eastman's academic integrity policy, and attendance policies for the course.

Semester hours of credit are assigned to courses in accordance with the recommendations of the National Association of Schools of Music and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. In general, for classroom subjects, one semester hour of credit is assigned for each hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work per week per semester. Exceptions to this policy are made for large ensembles and chamber music, where less out-of-class time is required; and applied lessons, where significant out of class work is expected. For large ensembles and chamber music, two to four hours of instruction per week may be required for each hour of credit, while weekly applied lessons will receive two to four credit hours due to the significant amount of preparation required for each meeting.

Grades for graduate studies are reported on one of the following two systems:

- Letter grades: “A” excellent; “A-“; “B+“; “B” good; “B-“; “C” poor; “E” failure
- “S” satisfactory; “E” failure

A grade of incomplete (I) will be assigned when a student, due to serious illness or other similar incapacitating circumstances, is unable to complete all course requirements within the prescribed period and receives the instructor’s permission to complete certain requirements at a later date, not to extend beyond the end of the next academic session. (Summer session will be considered the next session only if the student is in attendance during the summer). Before the end of the examination period of the semester during which the “incomplete” is to be given, the student will negotiate with the instructor a mutually acceptable method for completing the class work, and an agreement signed by the student and the instructor outlining the agreed-upon method must be submitted to the Registrar. This requires the approval of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. The instructor has the option of specifying an alternate grade, other than a failing grade, that will be awarded to the student if the remaining work is not submitted by the agreed upon date. If no alternate grade is specified, and if the student does not complete the outstanding work in the specified time, a failing grade will be recorded. The final grade, once recorded, will replace the “I” on the official transcript. Students with outstanding incompletes on their records are ineligible for Dean’s List and Graduation honors.

Request an “Incomplete” grade: https://www.esm.rochester.edu/registrar/files/2021/12/Incomplete-only-REV_05_04_2022.pdf

“S” and “E” grades:

Required registrations that carry no credit are to be graded on the “S/E” basis. These include degree recitals (ESM 401, 402, 405, 406, and 501-506), continuation registrations (ESM 995/999), and studio accompanying (ACY 100G).

Other courses that will be graded as “S/E” include: study abroad (SAB 400), theory colloquium (TH 591), jazz department forum (JCM 465), and thesis and dissertation registrations.

A grade of “E” in a pass/fail course is considered a failure and may cause the student to be placed on academic probation.

Graduate students may not receive degree credit for courses in the Arts Leadership Program unless the course is cross-listed with an academic department.

Exceptions to the above letter grade requirement must be approved by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. Minimum passing grades for graduate courses are “C” (except that “C” is considered a failure for a student on probation), or “S”. See ([Graduate Probation](#)).

The Eastman School of Music Registrar is responsible for ensuring accurate and reliable application of credit hour policies and procedures.

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[05.06 Satisfactory Academic Progress](#)

Graduate students must make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) towards completion of their degree in order to remain in good standing with the School. Every student's academic progress is reviewed at the end of the fall and spring semesters by the Office of Graduate Studies.

Graduate students maintain their eligibility for Graduate Scholarships and Stipends and Title IV federal aid by meeting the following requirements, which constitute the minimum standards for making Satisfactory Academic Progress:

- Graduate students must successfully complete at least 50% of their attempted coursework in any given semester. Courses in which a student has received grades of incomplete (I), withdrawal (W), or failure (E) will be calculated as attempted and not completed. Remedial courses are factored in this calculation, while credits transferred from another institution are not.
- A master's student may not accumulate six or more credits of C or E over the course of their degree program. A doctoral student may not accumulate three or more credits of C or E over the course of their degree program. All credits of C earned beyond these limits will not count towards the degree.

Note that the University of Rochester considers a grade of C to be a substandard grade for a graduate student. A student earning a grade of C will need to meet with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies to review the reasons for the substandard work and determine a plan for improvement.

Students who do not maintain SAP may face sanctions as described below. Students will be notified in writing should there be any concerns regarding their progress in their academic plan and an electronic notation will be put into their academic and financial aid records. The Registrar, Financial Aid, the Graduate Office, and the student's academic advisor will receive copies of any written correspondence regarding Satisfactory Academic Progress.

In keeping both with satisfactory academic progress and University time limits for degree completion, the following time limits have been established for all work toward the degree, including any non-credit bearing requirements (recitals, final orals, dissertations):

- Master's degrees: five years from the first registration
- Doctoral degrees:
 - Six years from the first registration for a student who enters with a master's degree or its equivalent for which the full 30 credit hours is accepted in the doctoral program (DMA students and some PhD students), or
 - Seven years from the first registration (PhD students who enter with only a bachelor's degree, or who have not had 30 units from a master's degree accepted toward the PhD)

Students who for good reasons have been unable to complete a program within the above stated limits may, upon recommendation of the faculty advisor (in the case of PhD students) and the department chair/program director, petition the associate dean of graduate studies for an extension of time. The graduate dean will in turn consult with the appropriate graduate curriculum committee. Such extension, if granted, will be of limited duration and must be reapproved at least annually. Requests for PhD extensions beyond 12 years must be approved by the University dean of graduate education. Students who petition the appropriate graduate committee to extend their time to degree will not automatically be

eligible for any additional financial aid if granted an extension. Students who are unable to finish their degree within 150% of the time limits outlined here risk losing eligibility for federal financial aid.

05.06.01 Financial Aid Warning

Graduate students who do not meet the minimum standards for SAP as defined above will be placed on Financial Aid Warning and will have one semester to return to good standing. Students will be notified in writing by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies of the requirements that must be satisfied in order to remove themselves from Financial Aid Warning status. Students on Financial Aid Warning lose 25% of their scholarship and risk losing any assistantship assignment(s).

A student who is unable to remove themselves from Financial Aid Warning status after one semester will be placed on Financial Aid Probation.

05.06.02 Financial Aid Probation

Graduate students on Financial Aid Warning who do not satisfy the requirements outlined by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies to remove themselves from warning status within one semester will be placed on Financial Aid Probation. A student placed on Financial Aid Probation is ineligible to receive Title IV federal aid, including federal student loans. In addition, the students will become ineligible to receive a graduate scholarship and stipend or to represent the Eastman School in non-curricular University-sponsored events.

Students will be notified in writing by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies of the requirements that must be satisfied in order to remove themselves from Financial Aid Probation status.

05.06.03 Appeals

Students who are placed on Financial Aid Warning may appeal to have their funding reinstated. Students may appeal only in cases of extenuating medical or personal circumstances. The Graduate Academic Progress Committee, comprised of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Services Senior Advisor, and the Director of Financial Aid, will review all appeals.

Appeals must be made in writing no later than ten business days after the date on the warning letter. Students must document the reasons for the appeal, provide any supporting documents, and outline a plan for returning to good standing.

If the appeal is successful, the student will retain their Title IV funding and have their scholarship and stipend funding restored.

05.06.04 Dismissal

In cases where a student is unable to remove themselves from Financial Aid Probation after one full semester, they will be dismissed from studies at the Eastman School of Music. Once a student has been dismissed, they are not permitted to re-apply for future graduate studies at the Eastman School of Music

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05.07 Eligibility for Graduate Scholarships and Stipends

A graduate student with an assistantship must make satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion during the period in which they hold a scholarship and assistantship, as discussed in section 5.06 above. To maintain eligibility for Graduate Scholarships and Stipends, students must also adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy, earn a grade of B- or higher in any lessons on their primary instrument, pass any required performance juries, and carry out their assigned service to the school. Full-time enrollment is not necessarily required in order to hold an assistantship, but students need to be aware of the residency requirement and expected completion time for their respective degree.

Assuming satisfactory academic progress and satisfactory discharge of the duties of their assistantship, a student will be given favorable consideration for continuation of the assignment during the subsequent year on the basis of the following:

1. A maximum of four semesters of support during work on a master's degree
2. A maximum of six semesters of support while pursuing a doctoral degree.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students to inform the Financial Aid Office of aid they receive funding from non-Eastman/University of Rochester sources.

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05.08 Graduate Scholarships and Assistantships

Eastman awards a large number of scholarships and assistantships to help graduate students meet the cost of education. All awards are contingent upon satisfactory academic progress and may be impacted if satisfactory progress is not maintained (see above). Assistantships are considered to be part of the student's education, and also help the student gain critical skills and experience related to their studies. For more information on graduate scholarships and assistantships, see:

<https://www.esm.rochester.edu/admissions/grad/assistantships/>

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05.09 Graduation

Graduate degrees are conferred in August, October, December, February/March and May of each academic year. It is the student's responsibility to verify with the Graduate Services Senior Advisor that all degree requirements have been satisfied. The student must also complete a [Degree Application](#) with the Registrar's Office at least three months prior to the intended graduation date (e.g. - by February 1 for May commencement.) If the student's academic plan includes any major or primary applied study, the student also must present at least one jury examination to allow ratification of that applied study.

The actual diploma and transcript showing degree completion will be available from the School only after all degree requirements have been satisfactorily completed, and the degree(s) are officially conferred.

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05.10 Graduate Calendar

The Graduate Calendar is maintained by the Graduate Studies Office, and can be found on following web page: www.esm.rochester.edu/grad/current.

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05.11 Graduate Student Association

All graduate students at Eastman are automatically members of the Graduate Student Association (GSA), the primary purposes of which is to provide an effective forum for communication and connection among graduate students, and a communication channel between students and the faculty and administrative officers of Eastman and the University of Rochester. To this end, the officers of GSA have ready access to the School's administrative leadership, primarily through the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. Communication also may take the form of an informal exchange of ideas between faculty and students.

The GSA also has provided other services, including the funding of various educational projects, both curricular and non-curricular, proposed by and for individual graduate students. More information is available at <https://www.esm.rochester.edu/studentaffairs/sa/student-government/>

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05.12 Readmission into a Graduate Degree Program

Students who have been allowed their registration to lapse and have been withdrawn by the University, and who wish to be considered for reinstatement into their degree program must apply for readmission to the program. If the application, including audition and/or interview, is successful, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the appropriate curriculum committee, will determine how many units are applicable from previous coursework. Generally speaking, courses taken more than five

years prior to the date of application for readmission can no longer count toward the degree.

See section 05.02 ([Continuous Registration](#)) for more information. See also the [University of Rochester Regulations and University Policies Concerning Graduate Students](#).

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