



**LEHIGH**  
UNIVERSITY

**College of Arts  
and Sciences**

**Graduate Student Handbook  
2023-2024**

This *Graduate Student Handbook* is prepared and issued by the *College of Arts and Sciences Office of Research and Graduate Programs* to serve as a reference for graduate students and those involved in graduate education in the College. Additional program specific information can be found in departmental handbooks. The original and official sources of the policies and procedures detailed herein are the Lehigh University *Faculty Rules and Procedures* and the *Lehigh Catalog*. The Office of Financial Aid provides information pertinent to Federal and State Financial Aid. The University and the College reserve the right to change at any time the rules governing admission, tuition and fees, courses, the granting of degrees, or other regulations affecting graduate students.

**Every attempt has been made to provide accurate and timely information of use to the graduate community. Comments and questions should be brought to the attention of:**

**The Office of Research and Graduate Programs  
College of Arts and Sciences**

**490 Maginnes Hall  
(610) 758-4280  
incasgrd@lehigh.edu**

**For more information on graduate studies in the College of Arts and Sciences, please visit our [website](#).**

Lehigh University does not discriminate against any person based on age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital or familial status, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. For students, this applies to educational programs, residential environments, athletics and other co-curricular programs, social and recreational programs, and student services. For faculty, staff, and student employees, this applies to all employment decisions, including selection, benefits, compensation, tenure, training and educational programs, transfer, promotion/demotion, layoff, return from layoff, and termination.

# Table of Contents

*Please Note: The Table of Contents is bookmarked for your convenience and ease of locating information. Click on a specific topic below to access the page.*

<b>College of Arts and Sciences</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Lehigh University Non-Discrimination Statement</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>6</b>
Regular Graduate Students	6
Associate Graduate Students	7
Non-Degree Graduate Students	8
Lehigh University Undergraduates	8
Continuous Registration and Readmission	9
<b>Graduate Student Orientation</b>	<b>9</b>
International Student Orientation	9
Health Insurance	9
University ID Card	10
Parking	10
<b>Registration</b>	<b>10</b>
Procedure	10
Schedule Limitations	11
Full-time Status	11
Auditing a Course	11
Late Registration Penalties	12
Degree Registration	12
Tuition Awards	12
Additional Services Provided by the Registrar	12
<b>Graduate Student Petitions and Grievance Procedures</b>	<b>12</b>
Graduate Student Petitions	12
Grievance Procedures	13
Appeals	13
<b>Graduate Student Leave of Absence</b>	<b>14</b>
Leave of Absence Policy	14
Important Information about Requested Leaves of Absence:	14
Important Information about Involuntary Leaves of Absence:	16
Returning from Leave/Resuming Graduate Studies	16
<b>Graduation</b>	<b>16</b>
Registration Requirements	16
Application for Degree	16
Graduation Clearance Procedures	17
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>17</b>

Tuition and Fees	17
Tuition Payment	17
Tuition Refunds	18
Living Accommodations	18
<b>Academic Awards</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Scholarships and Fellowships</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Teaching Assistant Appointments</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Teaching Assistant Requirements</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Graduate Assistant Requirements</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Research Assistants/Project Assistants</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Office of Financial Aid</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Academic Standards and Grades</b>	<b>22</b>
Grades	22
Minimum Academic Standards	22
Academic Probation	22
Dropping or Withdrawing from a Course	22
University Withdrawal	22
Incompletes	23
Absence from a Final Exam	23
Repeating a Course	23
<b>Master's Degree Requirements</b>	<b>24</b>
Time and Registration Requirements	24
Program for the Master's Degree	24
Transfer Credits	25
Thesis and Comprehensive Examination	25
<b>Doctor of Philosophy Degree Requirements</b>	<b>26</b>
Time and Registration Requirements	26
Concentrated Learning Requirement	27
Language Requirements	27
Qualifying Examinations	28
Doctoral Dissertation Committee	28
Admission to Candidacy	28
General Examinations	29
Dissertation and Defense	29
<b>Office of Research and Sponsored Programs</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Office of Research Integrity</b>	<b>30</b>
Protection of Human Subjects in Research	30
Humane Care and Treatment of Laboratory Animals	31
<b>Office of Technology Transfer</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: Policy Statement for Graduate Assistantships</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: Policy Statement for Graduate Fellowships</b>	<b>36</b>

# College of Arts and Sciences

## Office of Research and Graduate Programs

R. Michael Burger, PhD	Associate Dean and Professor of Biological Sciences
Mandy Fraley	Manager of Graduate Programs & Research Initiatives
Mandi Alford	Graduate Recruitment/Communications Manager
Daniel Goonewardene	Student Experience Specialist
Alexandra Farkas	Administrative Coordinator
Joe Bates	Senior Grants Administrator
Natasha de Luna	Director, Corporate and Foundation Relations

## Departments and Programs

[Biological Sciences](#)

[History](#)

[Chemistry](#)

[Mathematics](#)

[Earth and Environmental Sciences](#)

[Physics](#)

[English](#)

[Political Science](#)

[Environmental Policy](#)

[Psychology](#)

## Interdisciplinary Graduate Certificate Programs

[Africana Studies](#)

[Environmental Justice](#)

[Cognitive Science](#)

[Environmental Law and Policy](#)

[Documentary Film](#)

[Sustainable Development](#)

[Environmental Health  
Planning](#)

[Urban Environmental Policy and  
Planning](#)

[Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies](#)

# University and College Procedures

## Lehigh University Non-Discrimination Statement

Lehigh University upholds [The Principles of Our Equitable Community](#) and is committed to providing an educational, working, co-curricular, social, and living environment for all students, staff, faculty, trustees, contract workers, and visitors that is free from harassment and discrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital or familial status, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Such harassment or discrimination is unacceptable behavior and will not be tolerated. More information can be found on the [Office of General Counsel website](#).

## Admissions

A student who has completed a bachelor's degree or a degree in technology at any recognized college, university, or technical institution may be considered for admission as a graduate student.

To be considered for admission as a graduate student, the prospective student [applies](#) to the department or, in some cases, directly to the program. The decision to admit a student normally rests with an admissions committee and/or the departmental chair or program director. An offer of admission stands for one year following the semester for which the offer was made. If more than one year has elapsed, the department reserves the right to reconsider the original offer of admission.

There are three categories of graduate students: regular, associate, and non-degree. Only students so classified, or qualified Lehigh undergraduates, may register for graduate courses (those designated 400 level) and take such courses for credit.

## Regular Graduate Students

Only regular graduate students are candidates for graduate degrees. Application deadlines for admission as a regular graduate student are as follows: fall semester, January 1 (to be considered for financial aid) or July 15 (no aid consideration); spring semester, December 1; summer I, April 30; summer II, May 30. **Departments may have earlier deadlines, please confirm deadlines with the individual departments**. The materials required for admission as a regular graduate student are consistent across the College, although some departments require or recommend additional materials. Each department determines its own admissions standards once the minimum CAS requirements are met. Only complete applications will be processed and reviewed. A complete application consists of the following items:

1. Completed online application
2. Transcripts for all post-secondary education (unofficial are acceptable for admission review, final official will be required upon admission)
3. Two letters of recommendation (may differ based on department requirements)

4. TOEFL, IELTS, Duolingo, or the Cambridge Test of English scores for prospective students whose native language is not English. The [full policy and minimum scores](#) are available on the College website.
5. \$75 application fee

Please check admissions information for individual departments regarding materials that may either be optional or required, including:

1. Official GRE scores
2. Supplemental essay questions or writing samples
3. Additional letters of recommendation

In order to be considered for admission as a regular graduate student, an applicant must satisfy **at least one** of the conditions noted below. Satisfying at least one of these five conditions is necessary to be considered for regular admission. However, it does not guarantee admission as a regular student. Departments may choose not to offer admission or to offer associate admission to qualified students. **Some departments may require additional criteria.**

1. An undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.75 out of 4.0;
2. a GPA of at least 3.00 for the last two semesters of undergraduate study;
3. scores at or above the 75th percentile on the GRE or other recognized exam;
4. a graduate GPA of at least 3.00 on a minimum of twelve hours of graduate work at other institutions;
5. successfully completed the probationary conditions as an associate graduate student

If a department wishes to offer admission to a student who fails to meet any of the above five requirements, then the department is required to submit its recommendation to the associate dean and the manager of graduate programs & research initiatives with an explanation. Cases that cannot be resolved by the chair, program director, or the associate dean will be referred to the Graduate & Research Committee for a decision.

### **Associate Graduate Students**

Prospective graduate students who do not qualify for regular student status may be considered for admission with **Associate Graduate Student** status. Applications for admission that are considered in the late admission period—between the end of the regular admission period and the first day of classes—will only be granted associate status. However, since each department's classification and requirements of associate status is different, you must check with the department to determine if you qualify to be considered for admission under associate status. Individuals who applied during the late admission period and are deemed eligible for regular admission by the department are initially admitted to associate student status. These students may petition for regular status after the start of classes, provided all documents have been received and are in order. There is no late application fee.

Other associate graduate students must meet the following conditions before they may petition for regular status: completion of the first nine credit hours of courses numbered 300 or higher with at most one grade of below B-. Students receiving a grade lower than C- will be dropped

from the program. Students should note that individual departments may impose more rigorous probationary standards.

After the probationary period of nine credit hours is completed, an *associate* student must petition for regular student status in order to continue graduate studies at Lehigh. The *regular* status admission documents must be submitted at this time, if they have not been previously submitted. Courses completed during a successful probationary period may count toward a graduate program if they are part of an approved program.

Associate graduate students are not eligible for departmental, college, or university-based financial aid.

### **Non-Degree Graduate Students**

Students who do not wish to enter a degree program may also seek admission with non-degree status. Regular non-degree admission is for students who wish to take up to 12 credits of graduate coursework without seeking a degree. A student pursuing only a certificate should apply as a non-degree student. The admission criteria for non-degree graduate students are:

1. A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with an overall GPA of at least 3.0. Applicants with undergraduate GPAs below 3.0 may be admitted with the approval of the department in which they wish to take courses; **or**
2. Evidence that the applicant is presently a student in good standing in an appropriate graduate program at an accredited institution; **or**
3. Evidence that the applicant has received an appropriate graduate or other advanced degree from an accredited institution.

Applicants whose first language is not English are required to demonstrate English language skills equal to those required of all degree-seeking students in the College. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language Test System (IELTS), or Duolingo scores are accepted. The [full policy and minimum scores](#) are available on the College website. Unofficial transcripts will be accepted for initial admission, but final official transcripts must be on record before the student may receive any transcript or grade report from the University or enroll for additional courses. Non-degree students who wish to become degree-seeking must complete a formal application to the department or program they wish to join.

***Non-degree graduate students are not eligible for departmental, College, or University-based financial aid.***

### **Lehigh University Undergraduates**

A Lehigh undergraduate student with a 3.0 cumulative GPA, who has achieved junior standing, may [request permission](#) to take any 400-level course for which they are qualified. The qualifications are defined by the department and are certified by the course instructor and department chair through petition to the Graduate & Research Committee. Undergraduates at Lehigh who are within a few hours of meeting the requirements for a baccalaureate degree may,

with the special approval of the Graduate & Research Committee, enroll for 12 credit hours of study for graduate credit.

Lehigh undergraduates may apply course credits taken in the undergraduate program toward a graduate degree under the following conditions:

1. The course credits are not submitted as part of the requirement for an undergraduate degree; and
2. The courses for possible graduate credit are approved in advance by the course instructor, department chair, and the associate graduate dean of the college. The student must receive a grade of B- or better in order for the course to be applied toward a graduate degree. Students should submit a [Petition to Reserve Credits for Graduate Degree](#) form with the required approvals.

### **Continuous Registration and Readmission**

A student who has not been registered in a Lehigh graduate program for one year must petition for readmission. [Petitions](#) must be approved by the student's department of study and forwarded to the Office of Research and Graduate Programs to be reviewed and then forwarded to Registration and Academic Services.

A student who has attained the status of doctoral candidate must maintain continuous registration either in courses or maintenance of candidacy except in the case of a leave of absence.

### **Graduate Student Orientation**

Graduate student orientation and teaching and research assistant training sessions are offered the week before classes begin each semester. All new graduate students are invited to attend the orientation, which is designed to acquaint students with University resources and with members of the academic community, including administrators, faculty, staff, and fellow graduate students. Special training sessions are offered for all new teaching assistants. Lab assistants are required to attend the session on lab safety. For information on dates and details of the graduate orientation program, check the [Graduate Student Life website](#).

### **International Student Orientation**

An orientation focused on the experience of international graduate students will be hosted by the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS). This program will provide practical information about visa/immigration issues, health, adjustment, programming, and living in the community. Information about OISS and orientation is available [here](#).

Students who will be TAs are required to pass a test of presentation and speaking skills (TOPSS). The test is administered by the International Center for Academic and Professional English (ICAPE) at Lehigh. For more information, please visit their [website](#).

## Health Insurance

***Lehigh University requires all graduate students to show proof of health insurance.*** In order to make health insurance affordable and accessible, Lehigh offers a student health insurance plan available for purchase to eligible students. Registered graduate students should either enroll in the plan or waive it by July 31 to ensure the earliest possible coverage. ***Please be aware that inaction will result in automatic enrollment in the student health insurance plan and a charge for the premium will be posted to your account. Please note that all international graduate students with an F-1 or J-1 visa are required to purchase the insurance provided by Lehigh.*** Domestic students, however, may waive the requirement to purchase this insurance if they submit proof of coverage from another ACA-qualified plan, such as one offered by an employer, spouse, or parent. More information on the student health insurance policy, including who is required or eligible to enroll, plan benefits and details, and enrollment procedures can be found on the [Bursar's website](#).

The University has established a [subsidy program](#) and a payroll-deduction option to help eligible graduate students pay for health insurance in regular installments.

Lehigh does not cover spouses and dependents under the insurance plans offered to students. However, for 2022-2023, to help afford the dependent coverage, the University will provide a subsidy of \$250 per semester, (\$500 per student/family per academic year) to the eligible graduate students with a dependent child and/or spouse; minus the appropriate taxes for each semester during which they qualify. More information can be found on the [Provost's website](#).

## University ID Card

Incoming graduate students must obtain an identification card. Graduate students must wait one day after registering for classes to obtain a university ID card at the Ideal Office. However, no ID cards will be released prior to one month before the start of classes for the semester the student is registered for, with the exception of those students living in university housing. The process for submitting a photo for your ID card can be found on the Ideal Office [website](#).

## Parking

You may be eligible for one of the various types of parking permits available to graduate students. Permits are issued by Parking Services at 622 Brodhead Avenue or (610) 758-7275. You can learn more about the types of permits and how to obtain them on the Parking Services [website](#).

## Registration

### Procedure

Registration is scheduled to begin in November and April at a time designated on the [University calendar](#). Students should check with their departments for registration and semester class schedules. Graduate students register using the online system after consultation with their

advisor. A course advisor will discuss course selections with students and provide the registration PIN. New graduate students should consult their home department or program for information regarding the registration process. Students preparing to enter candidacy in the next semester should register for 3 credits of dissertation during the registration period, and then drop credits as needed once they are admitted to candidacy. Additional information can be found on the [Registration and Academic Services](#) website.

### **Schedule Limitations**

All graduate students using Lehigh resources and facilities must be registered. No graduate student may register for more than 16 credits per semester. However, students must have advisor approval of their schedule and, in most cases, no more than 12 credits will be recommended. Graduate students who are full-time employees of the University may register for, at most, two courses per semester with appropriate approval. Half-time graduate student employees of the University (e.g., half-time teaching assistants or half-time research fellows) may not take more than ten credits of graduate work in any one semester. Graduate students under contract to devote not more than one-third of their time to University employment may take a maximum of twelve credits in any one semester. Graduate students who are employed elsewhere and can give only part of their time to graduate work must restrict the size of their course load accordingly. The maximum registration in a summer session is two concurrent courses and no more than 14 summer credits across all summer sessions. More explanation can be found in the Policy Statement for Graduate Assistantships and the Guidelines for Graduate Fellowships found in the handbook appendices A and B.

### **Full-time Status**

In order to maintain full-time enrollment status, a graduate student must ordinarily register for a minimum of nine credits each for Fall and Spring semesters or six credit hours in a summer session. Full-time students may not be employed full time. After fulfillment of degree credit hour requirements, full-time status may be maintained with fewer than nine credit hours under select circumstances. In such cases, status must be certified by the department and by the associated dean of the College using the graduate student request for [Full-Time Certification form](#), found on the Important Forms page on our website. ***This form should be completed, approved and submitted to the registrar's office no later than the tenth day of classes during the fall and spring semesters.*** Full-time status for a graduate student is important for: 1) eligibility for financial aid or deferment of student loan payments; 2) compliance with visa requirements for international students, 3) for university and national graduate enrollment data, and 4) less than full-time status may affect a student's loan status and financial aid. Students should check with their loan company to see how many credits are required for full-time student status.

### **Auditing a Course**

With the consent of the instructor, advisor, department chair, and associate dean a graduate student may audit one or more courses outside the approved program of studies for the intended degree. A student who has attended a course as an auditor shall not be given an anticipatory

examination for credit in that course and *may not register for the course for credit in the future*. The course will not count for credit towards any graduate degree.

A graduate student who wishes to audit a graduate course should complete a [graduate student petition form](#). Tuition fees for auditing are the same as for a regular course.

A graduate student may attend selected portions of graduate courses with the prior approval of the course instructor and the advisor. *Non-degree graduate students are not permitted to audit courses.*

### **Late Registration Penalties**

Registration after the designated period during the prior term for continuing full-time graduate students or between the second and tenth day of class during the fall and spring semesters, and the second and fifth day of class during the summer sessions will require a late registration fee (\$100). Students who have not completed the registration process by the tenth day of the regular academic semester or by the fifth day of the summer session will not be permitted to attend classes.

If payment of tuition is in the form of an award from the department or dean's office, then registration must be completed no later than the tenth day of class.

### **Degree Registration**

A student must be registered in the semester in which the degree is conferred.

### **Tuition Awards**

Once registration is complete, fellowship and scholarship holders will need to have their tuition awards approved. Students whose tuition is covered through some form of Lehigh's employee benefits should contact the Office of Human Resources at (610) 758-3900. Research assistants, whose tuition is paid for by research projects, will have tuition award forms forwarded by their departments to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs for approval prior to being sent to the Bursar's Office. Other graduate students must pay their tuition bills through the Bursar's Office. Receipts will be issued upon request.

### **Additional Services Provided by the Registrar**

In addition to maintaining student academic files, the registrar also handles requests for transcripts. All [transcript orders](#) must be submitted electronically, regardless of when you attended Lehigh University.

# Graduate Student Petitions and Grievance Procedures

## Graduate Student Petitions

The right of petition is open to all students at all times. A petition is a request for a change or exception to be made to University policy and procedure, and, therefore, is evaluated on an individual basis. The [Graduate Student Program Petition](#) form must be prepared completely and signed by the student's advisor, department faculty graduate coordinator, department chair, and associate dean of graduate programs. The form is then submitted to the registrar for final action. Following is a partial list of situations that require approval through a graduate petition:

1. Change of status from an associate to a regular graduate student
2. Readmission as a graduate student following an absence of one year
3. Removal of an incomplete (N) grade after one calendar year has elapsed
4. Changing members of the doctoral committee
5. Extension of time to complete master's or doctoral degree requirements

## Grievance Procedures

Concerns about various issues may arise from time-to-time in graduate school. This document outlines grievance procedures for graduate students in the College of Arts and Sciences. On occasion, it may be necessary to initiate a more formal grievance resolution process. Generally, for issues regarding grades, courses, or other aspects of a graduate program, students should first seek resolution directly with the faculty member(s) involved. If resolution cannot be reached with the faculty member(s), then the student should bring the issue to the attention of the program's graduate director and department chair. If resolution cannot be reached within the department, then the student should bring the issue to the attention of the associate dean for research and graduate programs in the College of Arts and Sciences.

We encourage all relevant parties to try to resolve issues first by meeting to discuss the situation. If this is unsuccessful, however, students should submit formal grievances in writing, with a description of their concerns and a requested course of action. The faculty member(s) and (if subsequently involved) the graduate director and department chair will evaluate the student's request and provide written responses. If resolution is not reached within the department/program, then these written records should be submitted in full to the associate dean for research and graduate programs. The associate dean, in consultation with the dean of the College, will gather information and provide a decision.

If, at any point in this process, you are unsure how to proceed or have concerns about raising issues within your department/program, we encourage you to reach out to the Office of Research and Graduate Programs. You may also skip a step in the hierarchical grievance process if you have serious concerns about approaching a particular individual. For advice outside of the College, you can also contact the associate dean and director of graduate student life or the [University Ombuds Office](#).

## Appeals

Students who are not satisfied by the resolution provided by the procedures above may appeal by [petition](#) to the Committee on Standing of Graduate Students (SOGS). This committee deals only with academic issues. The SOGS committee includes the graduate associate deans of the Colleges, the director of graduate student life, and a representative from the graduate and research committee (GRC). The committee meets regularly with the registrar and considers all graduate petitions. The registrar's office notifies the petitioner of the committee's decision.

If a student is not satisfied with the decision of the SOGS committee, they may appeal the decision to the graduate and research committee, an elected committee of the University faculty. Appeals to the GRC are, however, rare and the petitioner must make clear in writing why the decision of the SOGS committee was inappropriate and why the resolution proposed by the petitioner is more appropriate.

## Graduate Student Leave of Absence

### Leave of Absence Policy

During the course of graduate study, students may find themselves in circumstances that require them to interrupt their graduate work. When these occasions arise, the University allows students to request a leave of absence for either personal or medical reasons. The information provided below is designed to assist students in making a smooth transition away from graduate study and then back again.

Students are required to submit the [Leave of Absence Request](#) form to the office of graduate student life. If the student is eligible, then the office of graduate student life will then notify the academic advisor, program director, department chair, graduate associate dean of the appropriate college and the registrar. In order to enhance their successful return to graduate school, students are strongly encouraged to meet with their advisors to discuss their plans and to keep the lines of communication open.

Please note that a "withdrawal" indicates the student intends to discontinue graduate study, whereas a "Leave of Absence" indicates that the student intends to return at a specified later date. This policy addresses leaves after which the student intends to return and resume their studies.

### Important Information about Requested Leaves of Absence:

- Only students who have successfully completed at least one semester of graduate work and are in good academic standing are eligible for a leave of absence. Students in their first semester who request a leave will need to petition for readmission.
- Funded students who are requesting a leave due to the birth or adoption of a child should apply for a [Graduate Student Parental Leave](#).
- The University will grant a leave of absence for up to one year. If more time away is required, then students may request a second year of leave. Should students require more

than two years away from the University, they will be required to apply for readmission to the program at the end of their time away. A leave that commences during the semester will count as an entire semester away in terms of total leave time allowed.

- If students take a leave during the semester, Registration and Academic Services will withdraw the student from their courses once the notice of leave is received.
- An approved leave of absence extends the time-to-degree deadline for the length of the approved leave, but only up to the university-mandated maximum of two years.
- While on leave, students are not registered with the University. This has important implications:
  - The student may not submit work, take exams, propose or defend theses or dissertations, or use faculty time.
  - The student will not have access to University services, including the health and counseling centers, the fitness center, and library and technology services (LTS). This means the student's Lehigh email account will be suspended and they will be unable to use library services. However, the College Dean's Office may request that the email account and library privileges remain active during the term of the approved leave, up to a maximum of two years.
  - Funded students cease to receive stipend payments from the start of the approved date of the leave. Students receiving funding provided to the University by external grants or contracts should consult with their funding-related advisor/supervisor about applicable rules, procedures and possible limitations. While those who have provided financial support for students who go on leave will do their best to support those students when they return and resume their studies, it is not possible to guarantee such support will be available when the student returns.
  - Student loans may come out of deferment and the student may be required to begin repaying loans. Please consult with the [Office of Financial Aid](#).
  - Immigration status may be affected for international students. Please consult with the [Office of International Students and Scholars](#).
  - Students living in campus housing will need to make other living arrangements, since only registered students in good standing are eligible for such housing. Unfortunately, residential services also cannot guarantee space upon the student's return.
  - Students enrolled in the University health insurance plan may be able to keep their health insurance during the term of the health insurance contract. In this case, students can contact the health center to obtain a list of primary care doctors in the community to use during their leave of absence. Please consult the [student health insurance brochure](#) for eligibility restrictions.
  - Students requesting a leave for medical or psychological reasons must include documentation from their health provider that indicates a recommendation for the leave and expected time away. The documentation is submitted to—and is only available to—the director of graduate life. Such documentation remains confidential.
  - Students who need to be absent within the semester (no more than a few weeks in duration) must consult with their professors about the possibility of making up missed classwork and, if applicable, work related to their funding support. In

these circumstances, students do not need to submit an official leave of absence request. Students may contact the director of graduate student life with questions and concerns.

- To formally request a leave of absence, students must complete this [form](#).
- Extended periods of absence may entail changes to Dissertation Committee composition, academic requirements, or other factors concerning progress toward the degree depending on changes to University Policy and/or faculty resource availability to support graduate study.

### **Important Information about Involuntary Leaves of Absence:**

- The University may require an involuntary leave of any student who appears to have a serious physical, psychological or emotional disorder that offers reasonable cause to believe the student may be a danger to self or others, or may disrupt proper activities of the University community and its members, or may be unable to look after their affairs adequately. An involuntary leave of absence is included in the maximum leave of two years. In these situations, the [Dean of Students](#) would determine the outcome.
- Time-to-degree deadlines are not extended for students who are suspended due to [Code of Conduct](#) violations.

### **Returning from Leave/Resuming Graduate Studies**

When ready to resume graduate study, students are required to complete the [Graduate Readmission Form](#). Returning students are encouraged to contact their program advisor as early as possible to discuss registration. Returning students may only re-enroll for a full semester or summer session. In order to meet this requirement, such students need to be aware of registration deadlines.

Students who take a leave from graduate study without requesting an official leave of absence will be required to petition the Standing of Graduate Students (SOGS) committee for readmission if they've been away from the University for more than one year. Unapproved leaves count toward the two-year leave maximum.

If you have any questions about this policy or its application, please contact the Director of Graduate Student Life Kathleen Hutnik at [kaha@lehigh.edu](mailto:kaha@lehigh.edu).

## **Graduation**

### **Registration Requirements**

A student must be registered in the semester in which the degree is conferred. If a student is not registered for a course, they must register for maintenance of candidacy. Candidates for September degrees do not need to be enrolled during the summer preceding the degree if they were enrolled in both the fall and spring semesters of the previous academic year.

## **Application for Degree**

Candidates for master's and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in May must apply on or before February 1; candidates for master's and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in January must apply on or before October 1; candidates for master's and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in September must apply on or before July 1. Students must apply online using the Banner Student Information System.

Applications submitted after the specified deadline will be charged a late application fee of \$50. No applications will be accepted within three weeks of the graduation date. Students who fail to submit an application must apply for the next available degree awarding date.

## **Graduation Clearance Procedures**

Prior to the awarding of a degree, graduate students must receive clearance from the University. In particular, the following obligations must be satisfied:

1. Students must complete all coursework; including any incomplete grades they have received;
2. Theses and dissertations must be cleared by the appropriate authority. Theses and dissertations are cleared by the Office of Research and Graduate Programs;
3. All financial obligations must be cleared with the bursar. Tuition fees, bookstore charges, library fines, and/or motor vehicle fines must all be paid prior to graduation;
4. All library books must be returned.

Additional information, deadlines, and requirements are available on the [RAS website](#).

## **Expenses**

### **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition and fees for the College of Arts and Sciences are listed on the [Bursar's Office website](#) and are subject to change on a yearly basis.

### **Tuition Payment**

Graduate students who register at least six weeks prior to the start of classes will receive an email notification to their Lehigh email account that their tuition bill is ready to view at the Student Account Suite. Students who register less than six weeks prior to the start of classes may not have a tuition bill generated prior to the start of classes. To remain in good standing, tuition charges must be paid prior to the start of classes, even if the student has not received a tuition bill because of their late registration for classes. Students can review their current account balance online 24/7 by logging into the Student Account Suite or the Campus Portal. Information about the payment options is available at the [Bursar's Office website](#).

Payments will be posted to the student's account by the College of Arts & Sciences Research and Graduate Programs Office if they are receiving University or College Fellowships, Teaching or

Graduate Assistantships, or Scholarship credits. Students receiving the Dean's Select Scholarship, Community Fellowship, or Educator's Rate will have payments posted to their accounts after the 10th day of class each semester. Students should take care of their portion or make payment arrangements with the Bursar's Office.

Research Assistants whose tuition is paid for by research projects are to have their tuition award forms forwarded by their departments to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs for approval. Any graduate students not receiving aid must pay their tuition bills either in person or by mail at the Bursar's Office. Receipts will be issued upon request.

### **Tuition Refunds**

A student in good standing who formally withdraws or drops a course(s) before 60% of the semester has been completed is eligible for a tuition refund. Academic fees are nonrefundable after the first day of classes. The "first day of classes" is considered the first day of the semester, not the first day a particular class meets. Courses not following standard semester dates will have percent-of-semester-completed refunds based on dates for that specific course. Online courses percent-of-semester-completed are based on access availability, not if/when students first accessed course material. No tuition refunds will be made for courses of one week or less after the first day of class.

Full tuition refunds will be granted for registration cancellations only when a properly authorized withdrawal or add/drop form is received by the registrar's office prior to the start, and including the first day, of the classes. Properly authorized cancellation and add/drop forms received after the first day of classes will be recognized based upon the calendar day in which they are received by the registrar. A student suspended or expelled from the University will not be granted a tuition refund.

### **Living Accommodations**

The University maintains graduate housing at three on-campus locations available for residents: Saucon Village, Packer House, and 230 West Packer. Additionally, Lehigh's affiliated housing complex, SouthSide Commons, may be an option. For more information, please contact Residential Services at (610) 758-3500 or [inrsd@lehigh.edu](mailto:inrsd@lehigh.edu).

## **Financial Aid**

Financial aid is available for regular, full-time, or part-time graduate students. Associate and non-degree graduate students are not eligible for Direct Loans or Graduate Plus Loans, but may be eligible for alternative loans. Teaching assistantships (TAs), research assistantships (RAs), graduate assistantships (GAs), fellowships, and scholarships are academic awards offered by the University, by individual academic departments, and by the dean's office.

Eligibility for all forms of financial support (stipends, tuition scholarships, travel, and research grants) provided within the College of Arts and Sciences are subject to revocation if a student is determined to be in poor academic standing, or under review or sanction by the University

Committee on Discipline. Poor academic standing may be determined on the basis of coursework grade performance or failure to make adequate scholarly progress as judged by either the Program Graduate Committee or Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs.

Several graduate assistantships unrelated to a particular area of study can be obtained by applying to administrative offices. Loan amounts are administered through the Office of Financial Aid and must be applied for by completing a Lehigh University Graduate Financial Aid Application and Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

## **Academic Awards**

New students will be informed of award offers during the admission process. Continuing students should contact their department early in the semester in order to discuss appointments for the following semester. Renewal of awards is determined by the office providing the support and is subject to satisfactory performance in duties, if any, as well as satisfactory academic performance in the program of study.

Students receiving a TA, GA or RA award or fellowship will receive a stipend and will also generally receive tuition remission. The details of the award and expectation of duties will be explained in the appointment letter.

Joint appointments such as teaching assistant and research assistant are permissible, but subject to appropriate approvals.

## **Scholarships and Fellowships**

Scholarships and fellowships are offered to graduate students who demonstrate superior qualifications and performance. There are three types of awards: 1) scholarships that consist of credit hour awards to be applied towards tuition; 2) College and University fellowships that provide both stipend and credit hour awards for tuition; and 3) named fellowships that have been designated by a donor for students in a particular discipline. Not all disciplines have these awards. They also consist of a stipend plus credit hour awards for tuition. In general, credit hour awards consist of nine credit hours per semester. Students who are on maintenance of candidacy status will be awarded the appropriate number of credit hours. Each year the Dean's Office receives an allocation of tuition credit hours for scholarships. These hours are in turn distributed to the individual departments to use at their own discretion. University fellowships are used to recruit outstanding new graduate students rather than to support continuing graduate students. These fellowships are distributed by a University Committee. Fellowships outlined in (3) above are awarded by the individual departments.

## **Teaching Assistant Appointments**

Teaching Assistant (TA) is a technical term used to describe a specific type of Lehigh University student employee. The duties of TA's are generally set by the departments or offices that employ them, but certain conditions must be satisfied before a student can be classified as a TA. These include:

1. Each TA must be a regular full-time Lehigh graduate student. This status normally requires registration for at least nine credit hours per semester.
2. A TA is a half-time position, and each TA provides services to Lehigh of up to 20 hours per week. No other employment on or off campus is allowed for TA positions without prior approval from the research and graduate programs office. Appointments for a part-time TA position or split between a TA and a fellowship, RA or other form of support are possible.
3. Each TA is paid a specific stipend which is set for the academic year by the University.
4. Qualified TAs receive tuition remission for nine credit hours in a regular semester. No TA may register for more than ten credit hours. A student who is a TA during both semesters of the preceding academic year is entitled to a maximum of three hours of thesis, research, or dissertation registration (not course credit) in the following summer without payment of tuition.
5. Each TA is appointed by a process that begins with a formal letter of appointment issued by the appropriate department chair. The appointment letter specifies standard University conditions, including stipend level, time of arrival, length of service, and the requirement of satisfactory academic progress and performance of duties. Each chair submits written notification of TA appointments to the dean.
6. Tuition remission for qualified TAs is authorized by the dean as part of the registration process.
7. To ensure sufficient time and effort for their academic studies, full-time graduate students holding a TA position may not accept any other assistantship or seek additional employment inside or outside the University without the prior written approval of the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs in the College of Arts and Sciences. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in ineligibility for further financial support from the University for an indefinite period.

## **Teaching Assistant Requirements**

The graduate and research committee endorses academic guidelines for new TAs that exceed minimum admission requirements. Each TA should satisfy one of the following:

1. A GPA of 3.0 or better in the undergraduate major field of study
2. A GPA of 3.5 in the senior year major field of study
3. Rank in the 85th percentile or higher on the GRE or other standardized test
4. A GPA of 3.5 in at least 12 hours of graduate work in the major field

Exceptions to these guidelines shall be made only with the approval of the associate dean.

In addition, each TA must make normal progress toward a graduate degree. The definition of normal progress may vary among departments, but the criteria for satisfactory progress are established by the departmental faculty and by the University graduate and research committee. TAs who fail to satisfy these criteria are ineligible for reappointment.

Teaching Assistants whose native language is not English are required to take the TOPSS (Test of Presentation and Speaking Skills) test before they may begin their teaching assignment. Students must attain minimum acceptable scores in order to hold a teaching assistantship. If the minimum scores are not attained, then the student is not eligible for a TA position. Please consult with the [International Center for Academic and Professional English](#) (ICAPE) for more information about score requirements.

## **Graduate Assistant Requirements**

Graduate students may be appointed to graduate assistantships unrelated to their areas of study on recommendation of the chair of the department concerned. GAs are normally expected to devote half-time to the service of the University and half-time to graduate work. Appointment is for one year and tuition fees are remitted.

The availability of these assistantships is based on the needs of individual departments or offices. GAs are employed regularly by the office of student affairs, the dean of students office, the counseling center, career services, and the athletic department.

## **Research Assistants/Project Assistants**

Graduate students employed on research projects are designated as either research assistants or project assistants and are not eligible for university benefits. Appointment is offered by the principal investigator or project director in consultation with the chair of the department in charge of the student's curriculum, and is reviewed by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. Research assistants are candidates for graduate degrees, devoting full time to a program of graduate work (which may include teaching, research, and other academic activity as well as courses), and are appointed to receive compensation for participating in a research program by which they meet requirements for the degrees sought. Compensation consists of a stipend, and/or tuition fees covered directly from the research project.

Graduate project assistants are appointed by research project directors, in each case in consultation with the chair of the department of the student's curriculum, and upon review by the contract and grant specialists in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. Graduate project assistants provide services to research projects for research work that does not fulfill degree requirements. Joint appointments such as teaching assistant, research assistant, and graduate project assistant are permissible up to half-time, subject to appropriate approvals.

## **Office of Financial Aid**

Students may apply for federal loans through the [Office of Financial Aid](#). Students may apply for loans by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Lehigh University Graduate Student Financial Aid Application. The Office of Financial Aid is also required to obtain information on all previous federal student loan borrowing from any other college(s) attended, as well as an indication that there are no prior defaults on educational loans or refund due the government for overpayment of federal aid. To do this, Lehigh will depend on the information that will be displayed on the Student Aid Report (SAR), which will be obtained

from the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) after the student files the FAFSA. This is a federal requirement.

Eligibility for student loans is based on the number of credits to be taken and the total amount of assistance received. Any change to the number of credits to be taken or the amount of aid received may affect loan eligibility. To avoid problems with your loan application, it is important that you notify the Office of Financial Aid of any changes in your enrollment or in the amount of aid received. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Office of Financial Aid of any changes.

## **Degree Requirements**

### **Academic Standards and Grades**

#### **Grades**

Course grades and weightings are as follows:

A (4.0), A- (3.7), B+ (3.3), B (3.0), B- (2.7), C+ (2.3), C (2.0), C- (1.7), D+ (1.3), D (1.0), D- (0.7), F (0).

#### **Minimum Academic Standards**

No grade below "C-" will be counted toward a graduate degree. No regularly admitted student who receives more than four final course marks below a B- in courses numbered 200 or higher is allowed to continue registration as a graduate student. Individual degree programs may have higher standards. Pass-fail registration for graduate students is not permitted and grades are not reported for dissertation registration.

#### **Academic Probation**

Academic Probation Letters will be sent to students who have earned 2 or more grades below a B- in 3 stages: Warning, Probation, and Dismissal. The Graduate Office will review grades for graduate students each semester after the 10th day of class and prior to registration.

#### **Dropping or Withdrawing from a Course**

A student dropping a course within the first ten days of the semester (three days for summer sessions) will have no record of the course on their transcript. Schedule changes prior to the tenth day of class must be done online in the Banner system.

A student who withdraws from a course with the approval of their advisor and section instructor, after the tenth day of instruction and before the end of the eleventh week of instruction, will have a grade of "W" assigned to the course. A [Course Withdrawal form](#) signed by the student's course instructor and advisor must be submitted to Registration and Academic Services before the

deadlines noted above to be official. No course may be dropped after the eleventh week of classes during a term as noted on the University calendar.

### **University Withdrawal**

A student withdrawing from the University (dropping all courses during a given term) must complete a [Graduate Permanent Withdrawal Form](#). The student should also discuss this with their advisor, graduate director, or the Office of Research and Graduate Programs. A withdrawal from a course within the first ten days of classes is not recorded on the student's record.

Withdrawal after registration and during the first eleven weeks of instruction will be noted on the academic transcript by assigning a grade of "W" to all courses. A withdrawal after the eleventh week of instruction and before the end of classes will result in the coursework receiving the appropriate letter grade. The date of the withdrawal will be noted on the academic transcript for a withdrawal at any time during the term.

### **Incompletes**

An incomplete grade (N) is used to indicate that one or more course requirements have not been completed. It is the obligation of the student to explain, to the satisfaction of the instructor, that there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness or emergency) that justify the use of the N grade. If the instructor feels the N grade is justified, then they should assign a grade of N supplemented by a parenthetical letter grade (e.g. N(B)). In such cases, the instructor calculates the parenthetical grade by assigning an F (or zero score) for any incomplete work unless they have informed the class in writing at the beginning of the course of a substitute method for determining the default grade. Parenthetical grades are not required for thesis or research courses.

Graduate students have a calendar year to remove course incomplete grades unless an earlier deadline is specified by the instructor. Incomplete course grades that are not removed remain as N or N (grade) on the student's record for one year. After one year, the N grade will be converted to an F and the N (grade) will be converted to the parenthetical letter grade. Incomplete grades may be extended an additional year with approval of the course instructor and the graduate coordinator. After two years, outstanding incomplete grades will be converted to an F or the parenthetical mark. After two years, students may appeal to the Committee on Standing of Graduate Students (SOGS) with a timeline and plan for completion. Thesis or research project N grades may remain beyond one year until the work is completed.

### **Absence from a Final Exam**

The X grade is used to indicate absence from a final examination when all other course requirements have been met. The grade in parentheses is determined by including in the grade calculation an F (or zero score) for the missing final exam. The X grade may be removed by a make-up examination if the absence was for good cause (e.g., illness or other emergency). To be eligible for a make-up examination, a graduate student must file a petition that is approved by SOGS. The instructor schedules and administers the make-up exam.

## Repeating a Course

If a graduate student repeats a course, then the course and final grade received will appear on the official student academic transcript each time it is taken. All final course grades assigned are included in the calculation of the student's cumulative grade point average. Course credits from a repeated course, however, count only once towards satisfying graduation credit requirements. A student may repeat a course only twice - a total of three attempts. Withdrawal from a course counts as an attempt (effective Fall 2017).

## Master's Degree Requirements

### Time and Registration Requirements

The master's degree is granted to properly qualified students who complete satisfactorily at least two full semesters of advanced work. Candidates for the master's degree have six years in which to complete their programs. The time to complete the degree begins when the student first registers for courses. Students should confer with their advisors to be certain that specific department and program course requirements are met.

### Program for the Master's Degree

In meeting the requirements for the degree, the student complies with the following regulations:

1. In your 3rd semester, prior to registering for the final semester, confirm that you are on pace to meet all course requirements and submit a [Master's Program Form](#). The form must include:
  - a. A total of 30 - 33 credit hours with at least 18 credit hours at 400 level
  - b. At least 15 courses in the program
2. The "minimum" program for the master's degree includes:
  - a. not less than 30 credit hours of graduate work; audit credits may not be used toward the degree; research or thesis registration counts as part of the 400-level coursework requirement
  - b. not less than 24 credit hours of 300- and 400-level coursework of which 18 credit hours must be at the 400-level
  - c. not less than 18 credit hours in the major field; of which 15 credit hours must be at the 400-level
3. The 18 credit hours required in the major field are ordinarily taken in one department with exceptions for those programs that are interdisciplinary. Specific exceptions to this rule are mentioned in the departmental statements at the head of course listings. The remaining hours of a "minimum" program, or any part of them, may also be taken in the major department, or they may be taken in any other field in which courses for graduate credit are offered, as the needs or interests of the student may indicate, subject to the approval of the chair of the major department. In all cases, the course work for the master's degree is taken under at least two instructors.
4. A graduate student may include in their program courses numbered 200 or higher outside the major field and courses numbered 300 or higher in the major field. A graduate student

registered in 200 or 300 courses may be assigned additional work at the discretion of the instructors. Advisor and/or department approval is required in order to register for a 200-level course.

5. The master's degree is not granted unless the candidate has earned the grades of "B-" or better in at least eighteen hours of the work in the program AND in all 300 courses in the major field. No course in which the grade earned is less than "C-" is credited toward the degree.
6. All work that is to be credited toward a master's degree must be done through or approved by the appropriate academic unit of Lehigh University. A student who receives more than four grades below "B-" in courses numbered 200 or higher becomes ineligible to qualify for the master's degree and to register for any other 400-level courses.

### **Transfer Credits**

A maximum of nine credits taken at the graduate level elsewhere may be transferred from an accredited graduate college or graduate university to a Lehigh University College of Arts and Sciences master's program. All courses must be assigned a grade of "B" or better to be eligible, and may not have been used toward any prior degree. The credits must be completed within four years of first enrollment into a Lehigh graduate program. Credits transferred into a master's degree program will not count towards the minimum 72 (post baccalaureate) or 48 (post master's) Ph.D. credit hour requirement.

A [graduate course credit transfer petition](#) must be submitted along with course descriptions, an official transcript, and the recommendation of the department chair. The full University graduate transfer credit policy can be found on the approval form.

### **Thesis and Comprehensive Examination**

Candidates for the master's degree may be required to submit a thesis or report based on a research course of at least three credit hours, and/or to pass a comprehensive examination given by the major department. The department specifies whether one or both of these requirements apply. If a thesis is required, it must be based on a research course of at least 3 credit hours, with a maximum of 6 credit hours. The credits to be allowed are fixed by the chair of the major department.

Graduate school marks a student's transition from primarily being a consumer of knowledge as an undergraduate to being a synthesizer and creator of knowledge as a graduate researcher. For master's students, the thesis is a capstone accomplishment that represents a culmination of a student's own original and novel analysis of a body of data or literature, depending on the field of study.

To meet the high academic expectations of earning a master's with thesis, the thesis document is a sole author document. It is developed with the advice of an advisor or advisory committee composed of the student's major faculty. It is highly recommended that the advisors are consulted frequently during the thesis development so that the expectations of the evaluators are made clear. Ideally, a committee of at least three faculty will be selected to evaluate the thesis.

In some cases, the data or body of knowledge described within the master's thesis may be obtained in collaboration with a mentor or others in a research group. At times and in some fields, the body of work underlying a master's thesis or dissertation may be published in various forms with co authors who made significant contributions. Contributions of collaborators should be fully acknowledged and described within the thesis, however, this does not negate the requirement that the master's student represent the student's own coherent and independent interpretations and analysis in the thesis document.

The thesis must be prepared according to the rules outlined in [Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines](#). [University procedures](#) must be followed if the thesis or research project involves human subjects. The thesis must be approved by the thesis advisor and the department chair. The student must meet with the Office of Research and Graduate Programs for both a thesis draft meeting and a final draft meeting in accordance with the deadlines found on the [academic calendar](#). The student will upload their approved thesis to ProQuest 24 hours prior to their final draft meeting. Additional information regarding thesis preparation and submission can be found on the [Master's Graduation Checklist](#). A publishing fee must be paid by the student prior to the upload of their completed to ProQuest. Please refer to the Master's Graduation Checklist for additional information and contact Daniel Goonewardene at [dig321@lehigh.edu](mailto:dig321@lehigh.edu) with any questions or concerns.

Check the official [University Academic Calendar](#) for the exact date. A publishing fee must be paid to the Bursar, and the Bursar's receipt must be presented along with a copy of the thesis title page, abstract and approval page, including original signatures to the Office of Research and Graduate Programs. If you have any questions about the thesis submission process please contact Daniel Goonewardene, [dig321@lehigh.edu](mailto:dig321@lehigh.edu).

Lehigh accepts no restriction on the right to publish and disseminate master's theses developed as part of a sponsored or non-sponsored project. All theses must be fully accessible to the Graduate and Research Committee and to the faculty. Procedures and deadlines can be found on the [Master's Graduation Checklist](#).

## **Doctor of Philosophy Degree Requirements**

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is conferred on candidates who have demonstrated general proficiency and high attainment in a special field of knowledge and the capacity to carry on independent investigation in that field as evidenced by the presentation of an acceptable dissertation embodying the results of original research.

## **Time and Registration Requirements**

A candidate is ordinarily expected to devote three or more academic years to graduate study. In no case is the degree awarded to a student who has spent fewer than two full academic years toward graduate work. Graduate work done in residence at other institutions will be accepted in partial fulfillment of the time requirements, provided such work is approved by the Graduate and Research Committee and by the department concerned.

In accordance with the Rules and Procedures for the Faculty, Section 3.23.1, “Work of fragmentary character scattered over a long period of years, or work completed many years before the student becomes a candidate for the degree, is subject to special review by the University Graduate and Research Committee. The extent to which such work may be credited towards fulfillment of the time requirements will be decided by the committee.”

All post baccalaureate work toward the doctorate must be completed within ten years. A student beginning doctoral coursework after an elapsed period of at least one semester after the master’s degree has been conferred is granted seven years in which to complete the doctoral program. In accordance with the Rules and Procedures of the Faculty: time to degree limits make **no distinction** between students devoting full or part-time effort to their studies. Doctoral students whose graduate study is carried out entirely at Lehigh University must register for a minimum of 72 credits beyond the bachelor’s degree. Students who have earned a master’s degree at another institution must register for a minimum of 48 credits. The proportion of these credits that are to be allocated to courses, research, or dissertation are determined by the individual departments. Transfer credits used for a master’s degree cannot be counted toward the Ph.D. degree. Audit credits do not count in satisfaction of Ph.D. requirements.

Full-time students working toward the doctorate normally register for a minimum of nine credit hours per semester. If the minimum degree registration requirement of 72 or 48 credits is attained prior to formal admission to candidacy, continued registration of at least three credits per semester is necessary. Such registration does not automatically grant full-time student status, however. Full-time student status must be confirmed on the graduate [full-time certification form](#) each semester.

Students seeking to receive both a master’s degree and a doctoral degree must complete a minimum of 72 graduate credits at Lehigh and must meet all requirements of both degrees.

After admission to doctoral candidacy, a student must maintain candidacy by registering for at least one credit twice each calendar year. After completion of the minimum registration requirement, plus any additional requirements of the student’s department or program, registration is permitted for Maintenance of Candidacy Arts 499. The tuition charge is for one credit hour. Full-time status must be certified each semester.

### **Concentrated Learning Requirement**

Each Ph.D. candidate must satisfy Lehigh’s concentrated learning requirement. The concentrated learning requirement is intended to ensure that doctoral students spend a period of concentrated study and intellectual association with other scholars. Either two semesters of full-time graduate study or 18 credit hours (may be course or research credit) of Lehigh graduate study within a fifteen month period (either on or off campus) must be completed.

Individual departments may impose additional stipulations, and candidates should check with their advisors to be certain that they have satisfied their concentrated learning requirements.

## **Language Requirements**

Language requirements for the Ph.D. are the option of, and in the jurisdiction of, the candidate's department. Since proficiency in a language is not a University requirement, each department decides which languages, if any, constitute part of the doctoral program. However, students whose native language is not English must demonstrate proficiency.

## **Qualifying Examinations**

Many departments require students who wish to enroll in doctoral programs to pass qualifying examinations. Since these examinations vary in format and timing among departments, students should ask their advisors or department chair for more detailed information. If a qualifying examination is not required, students should find out how and when eligibility to pursue doctoral studies is determined. For those departments in which a qualifying exam is required, all decisions regarding format of the test, required performance to pass, and procedures for students who fail are left to the discretion of the department chair.

## **Doctoral Dissertation Committee**

The doctoral dissertation committee is a special committee formed to guide and supervise the student through the research required to complete a doctoral program. The committee is responsible for assisting the student in formulating a course of study, satisfying specific departmental requirements, submitting a suitable dissertation proposal, overseeing progress in research, and evaluating and approving the completed dissertation.

The process of appointing doctoral committee members varies across departments; however, the minimum number of committee members is four. Of these, three, including the committee chair, are required to be voting (tenure-track) Lehigh faculty members. With the written approval of the dean of the college, one of the three aforementioned faculty members, each of whom must have a doctoral degree, may be drawn from categories that include departmentally approved adjuncts, professors of practice, teaching professors, university lecturers, and courtesy faculty appointees. The latter member may not serve as the committee chair. The fourth required member must be from outside the student's department. Committees may include additional members who possess the requisite expertise and experience but they must hold a doctoral degree. Doctoral students may not appoint outside committee members who have any appearance or actual conflict of interest with the student, other committee members, or the outcome of the dissertation defense. Committee members must be approved by the University's Graduate and Research Committee; such approval may be delegated to the department or program sponsoring the degree.

## **Admission to Candidacy**

Candidacy is the final stage in a Ph.D. program. It generally indicates that all requirements for the degree, except an approved and defended dissertation, have been completed. Ph.D. students must be admitted to candidacy no less than seven months before graduation. The application for candidacy must be completed by [specific deadlines](#) each semester. Please see the [Doctoral Graduation Checklist](#) for requirements for applying to candidacy.

Completed applications are routed to the Office of Research and Graduate Programs via DocuSign. When the candidacy application is processed, a mandatory candidacy interview is scheduled with the associate dean. If the dissertation research involves human or animal subjects, University procedures must be followed.

### **General Examinations**

The general examination for the doctorate is designed to test both the student's capacity and proficiency in the field of study. The examination is not necessarily confined to the content of courses that have been taken at Lehigh University or elsewhere. The examination is held no later than seven months prior to the date upon which the degree is to be conferred. The student's doctoral committee is in charge of the examination, which may be both written and oral. If a student fails the general examination, a second examination may be scheduled not earlier than five months after the first. If the results of the second examination are unsatisfactory, no further examination is set and the candidate is judged to have failed.

### **Dissertation and Defense**

Ph.D. candidates are required to write a dissertation prepared under the direction of a Lehigh University professor. The dissertation must address a topic related to the candidate's specialty in the major subject, show the results of original research, provide evidence of high scholarship, and make a significant contribution to knowledge in the field.

Upon approval of the advising professor and one other member of the student's special committee, the dissertation draft is submitted to the Office of Research and Graduate Programs in the CAS Dean's Office for adherence to format guidelines at least six weeks before the degree is to be conferred by [scheduling an appointment](#) with Daniel Goonewardene. The exact deadline to schedule draft review is published in the [University academic calendar](#). The dissertation must be prepared following the rules outlined in [Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines](#). Upon return of the draft, the student should distribute copies of the draft to the members of the doctoral committee for review and for suggestions for revision. The candidate then schedules an oral dissertation defense before the doctoral committee, additional faculty members, and the general public. At the end of the defense, members of the student's doctoral committee sign the [Report on the Doctoral Dissertation Examination form](#) voting "passed" or "not passed." Passing the defense requires signatures from the student's committee. After the dissertation has been defended and revised accordingly, the student must submit their approved dissertation using [ProQuest](#). This should be completed at least 24 hours before the final draft meeting. Required paperwork and instructions in preparation for this meeting can be found on the [Doctoral Graduation Checklist](#).

## **Research and Graduate Studies**

The Office of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Studies (OVPR) is here to champion and support the creative work of our distinguished faculty and capable, inquisitive students. We provide support for our academic community as we seek to have our work shaped by our society's challenges and work to devise solutions to real problems.

Some of the offices housed under the OVPR include Research and Sponsored Programs, Research Integrity and Technology Transfer.

## **Office of Research and Sponsored Programs**

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) is responsible for assisting the faculty in the preparation of proposals, and in the preparation and administration of sponsored contracts, grants, and agreements. It serves as a liaison between faculty and contracting federal, state and local agencies and industry sponsors; reviews and negotiates funding agreements; monitors all sponsored contracts/grants/agreements received by the University for fiscal integrity; and checks for institutional compliance with the sponsor and university policies and procedures. Each University department or center is served by a Contract and Grant Specialist from ORSP who can be found on their [website](#).

## **Office of Research Integrity**

The Office of Research Integrity is charged with overseeing ethical aspects of research, as outlined in the sections below.

### **Protection of Human Subjects in Research**

All research and experimental activities in which people participate as subjects must be approved by Lehigh's University Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to the involvement of the subjects. This applies to all sponsored and unsponsored research, continuing education courses, thesis/dissertation projects, and certain instructional projects and activities involving human subjects research conducted by University students, staff, and faculty.

The University's basic policy places the primary responsibility for the protection of the welfare and the right of privacy of the individual subject on the principal investigator. The responsibility is shared by the University as an institution and, where outside support is provided, by the sponsoring agency.

There are three types of human subjects research review: Exempt, Expedited, and Full committee review. If investigators have any questions about which type of review their proposal is eligible for, they should contact the Office of Research Integrity.

Each researcher involved in the study who will be interacting with the subjects must complete an [online training course](#) on the protection of human subjects.

To begin the review process, investigators should first visit the Human Subjects in Research website for information. IRB applications are submitted through the web-based system IRBNet. Information on IRBNet and a tutorial for getting started are available on the website. The completed Human Subjects Application (available at IRBNet.org), the consent form, any instruments to be used, a copy of the funding proposal or thesis proposal (if applicable), and a copy of the completion certificate from the online human subjects protection training course

must be included in the IRBNet package. The review process will not begin until the committee has all the required information.

The IRB recommends submitting applications at least six weeks in advance of the anticipated research start date, to allow adequate time for committee review and researcher response to committee questions. Studies which meet the criteria for Exempt or Expedited review are reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Studies requiring Full committee review must be voted on at convened IRB meetings. The IRB meets on the second Tuesday of each month. Full review studies should be submitted at least 30 days in advance of the next scheduled IRB meeting. Investigators will receive notification of the IRB's actions, comments, and recommendations through IRBNet.

For research protocols requiring Full committee review and certain Expedited protocols, approvals are granted for a maximum of one year. For these projects, annual renewals are mandatory in order to keep studies greater than 12 months in length active. For all projects, interim progress reports may be requested by the IRB. For renewals, the investigator should submit a continuing review form, a copy of all instruments to be used with any changes noted, consent form(s), and a written explanation of the study with a complete description of any changes to the study procedures. Changes to a previously-approved study or consent procedures must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before they can be implemented. Continuing Review and Amendment/Modification applications are processed via IRBNet. All adverse events and unanticipated problems must also be reported immediately through IRBNet.

A copy of an Informed Consent form and written explanation of the study must be given to each subject. This explanation may be incorporated at the beginning of the consent form or on the back of the form. In some studies, such as mailed questionnaires or on-line questionnaires, signed informed consent may be waived. However, the investigator must provide an informed consent document and an explanation of the study as before. A statement should be included that clearly states that by responding or participating, the subject is granting consent for use of their data. This can be provided in a cover letter that the subject may retain.

Contact the Office of Research Integrity with any questions regarding human subjects or IRB policies and procedures.

### **Humane Care and Treatment of Laboratory Animals**

Before ordering or beginning any research, research training, experimentation or biological testing involving live, vertebrate animal(s), the investigator must submit and have received approval on an animal use protocol. Allow four weeks for protocol review and approval.

Completed protocol forms should be sent to the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) via the web-based IRBNet system (available at IRBNet.org). The protocol form provides specific data concerning the species to be used, detailed information related to the use of the animals and justification for the use of the animals. Other procedures which need to be addressed in the form are surgery, procedures to minimize pain, use of anesthetics, animal housing and methods of euthanasia.

Any anticipated changes made to an approved protocol must be promptly reported through a modification form and requires IACUC approval.

Annual renewals are mandatory. Forms and tutorials can be found [here](#).

Access to the Central Animal Facility is restricted to investigators and the staff designated in the approved protocols on file and only after appropriate training and exams are successfully completed. Contact the Office of Research regarding IACUC policies and procedures.

## **Office of Technology Transfer**

The Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) assists with finding paths to widespread use of research results, especially through commercialization. OTT will help to determine when protection of intellectual property is likely to enable development of results for widespread practice through commercialization, manages Lehigh intellectual property, and assists in finding grant support for transitioning research results into commercial use.

Any member of the University faculty, staff, or student body who develops or conceives of a patentable, copyrightable or other intellectual property while employed at Lehigh as a direct result of regular university duties, or significant use disclose that property to the University through the OTT of university facilities, must using an [Invention Disclosure Form](#). The OTT website provides guidance, contact information, and forms that will help navigate the process of protecting intellectual property, fulfilling governmental reporting requirements and assisting in the commercialization of intellectual property. You can find the University Policy on Intellectual Property [here](#).

# APPENDIX A: Policy Statement for Graduate Assistantships

(Draft Version: 9/7/2022)

Graduate students at Lehigh University may be appointed to three types of academic Graduate Assistantships (GAs):<sup>1</sup> Graduate Research Assistants (GRA), Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA), and Graduate Project Assistants (GPA). This document provides guidelines for the definition, appointment and reappointment, responsibility, grievance procedure, early termination, and health benefits and paid vacations days. Individual colleges and departments may develop their own policies in accordance with the university's policy guidelines.

## 1. Definition (From R&P Section 2.10)

Graduate students at Lehigh University may be appointed to three types of academic Graduate Assistantships: Graduate Research Assistants (GRA), Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA), and Graduate Project Assistants (GPA).

Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) are graduate students who receive a stipend and tuition remission for participating in a research program that allows them to meet requirements for the degrees sought or is supported by grants. GRAs must be candidates for graduate degrees who devote full time to a program of graduate work (which may include teaching, research and other academic activity as well as courses).

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) are graduate students who receive a stipend and tuition remission for assisting in the delivery of courses. The duties of GTA may include, but are not limited to, grading, monitoring, leading lab and/or recitation sessions, and offering office hour assistance to students. The duties are performed under the supervision of faculty. GTAs who are more educationally advanced or experienced may be appointed as senior GTAs to teach classes.

Graduate Project Assistants (GPAs) are graduate students who receive a stipend and may or may not receive tuition remission for providing assistance in administrative, educational, or research projects. A GPA does not teach a class, recitation or laboratory. The research project should not be part of the GPA's graduate work that fulfills the GPA's graduate degree.

## 2. Appointment and Reappointment

Appointments of GAs may be on a full or fractional basis. A "full appointment" allows for up to 20 hours per week of duties to be assigned to the GA. Additional time spent on research or teaching may be required to meet degree program requirements or milestones. The duties,

---

<sup>1</sup> Athletics Graduate Assistantships are excluded from this policy.

stipend and tuition remission for fractional appointment are in proportion to the fraction of a full appointment. The stipend must be equal to or greater than the [minimum stipend rates recommended by the Provost](#). GA with full appointment must register as a full-time student or be certified as a full-time student. Graduate students are not permitted to hold more than the equivalent of one full GA appointment within the University at one time. A combination of GRA, GTA and GPA appointments are permissible.

A GA must receive an appointment letter from the department, college, or research center, co-signed by the faculty advisor (for GRA and GTA) or staff supervisor. This letter should state the general conditions of the appointment, identify the student's supervisor, specify the stipend amount, general types of duties, duration, benefits, and any other pertinent terms of appointment. For appointments of GRAs supported on sponsored programs, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) should be consulted for any budgetary or special sponsor requirements. Duration of the appointment may be for one semester, two semesters, or an academic year, but not more than one academic year. Students may receive an appointment for the full summer term, or for summer session I or II. Appointments for periods of less than one semester are unusual and require approval of the Deputy Provost for Graduate Education.

Due to immigration regulations, when graduate students on J-1 or F-1 visas are supported by a stipend, the duties associated with this stipend cannot require more than 20 hours per week of work when school is in session during the fall and spring semesters. Students may have additional requirements related to progress in their academic program.

A GA may be reappointed depending on the need and resource availability. To the extent that reappointment is possible, priority should be given to those with superior academic qualifications and graduate assistantship performance. The same regulations that pertain to original appointments apply to reappointment.

### **3. Responsibilities**

GAs are expected to carry out their assigned duties satisfactorily and to follow the university, college, and department's policies. They are expected to meet enrollment requirements and to maintain satisfactory academic performance. The details of their responsibility are provided by the faculty advisor, staff supervisor, or the department in the form of an appointment letter.

For GRAs and GTAs, the faculty advisor should provide a written evaluation of the graduate student's performance to the student and to the department. The faculty advisor should strive to maintain continuous support for students making satisfactory progress, within the limitations of available funds. The students should be advised of the termination of such funds as far in advance as is possible.

#### **4. Grievance Procedure**

A GA who believes that university policies have not been followed or that he or she has been treated unfairly should first discuss the problem with the faculty advisor or the staff supervisor, and the departmental chairperson. If a resolution cannot be reached at the departmental level, the GA should present the formal grievance to the dean. The dean, in consultation with the provost office and/or the office of research, makes final decisions. The GA in some cases may wish to consult the University Ombuds to identify paths for resolving concerns.

#### **5. Early Termination**

Early termination refers to the dismissal of a GA before the end of the period of appointment. Early termination may be initiated only if the GA has received an appropriate and timely written warning with respect to his or her performance, or has clearly violated one or more of the major canons of institutional responsibility or university policy. The GA must be informed in writing by the faculty advisors and/or department chairperson of the reasons for termination, and the appeals procedure must be included.

The GA may appeal the early termination in writing within two weeks of notice of termination to the dean who will mediate the dispute and make a decision within six weeks. The dean's decision is final.

#### **6. Health Benefits and Paid Vacation/Personal Days**

All GAs are eligible to participate in the graduate student health insurance plan. The University will provide individual coverage at 70% (AY22-23) of the costs to GAs on stipends with at least half appointment (10 hours/week). The students are responsible to pay the remaining 30% of the costs.

The University will provide \$500 per student/family annually in subsidy for GAs on stipends with at least half appointment (10 hours/week) with dependents.

All GAs with full appointment may request up to 10 paid vacation days/personal time in an academic year without suspension of the stipend. The full policy and procedures for requesting paid vacation/personal time can be found [here](#).

All GAs with a full appointment are eligible for five weeks of paid parental leave due to the birth or adoption of a child. The full policy and procedures for requesting parental leave can be found [here](#).

## **APPENDIX B: Policy Statement for Graduate Fellowships**

(Draft Version: 9/7/22)

Graduate Fellowships are prestigious awards at Lehigh University used in recruiting and retaining outstanding graduate students to pursue doctoral studies and supporting those students' full success. This document provides guidelines for the definition, selection and appointment, responsibility, grievance procedure, early termination, and health benefits for the graduate fellows.

### **1. Definition**

Graduate Fellows (GF) are graduate students in research doctorate programs who are selected competitively by a committee and awarded financial support while pursuing their graduate degree. GFs have no service obligations, and may not accept employment within or outside the university. Graduate Fellowships may be established at the university, college or department levels. Establishing a new Graduate Fellowship needs approval from the Deputy Provost for Graduate Education (DPGE).

### **2. Selection and Appointment**

GFs should be selected through a selection process that is developed by the university, college or department in which the graduate fellowship is established. The stipend must be equal to or greater than the [minimum stipend rates recommended by the Provost](#).

GFs must receive an appointment letter from the department, college, or research center, co-signed by the faculty advisor, that states the general conditions of the appointment, specifies the salary, general types of duties, duration, benefits, and any other pertinent terms of appointment. Typical duration of the appointment is one academic year.

GFs are not permitted to simultaneously be appointed as GAs. GFs must register as a full-time student or be certified as a full-time student.

### **3. Responsibility**

GFs are expected to maintain satisfactory academic performance and to follow university, college, and department's policies. The details in responsibility are provided by the faculty advisor, or the department.

### **4. Grievance Procedure**

A GF who believes that he or she has been treated unfairly should first discuss the problem with the faculty advisor or the staff supervisor, and the departmental chairperson or graduate committee. If a resolution cannot be reached at the departmental level, the GF should present the formal grievance to the dean. The dean will make a decision in consultation with DPGE. The GF in some cases may wish to consult the University Ombuds to identify paths for resolving concerns.

## **5. Early Termination**

Early termination refers to the dismissal of a GF before the end of the contractual period of appointment. Early termination may be initiated only if the GF has received an appropriate and timely written warning with respect to his or her performance, or has clearly violated university, college or department policies. The GF must be informed in writing by the department chairperson of the reasons for termination, and the appeals procedure must be included.

For the departmental and college's GFs, the GFs may appeal the early termination in writing within two weeks of notice of termination to the dean who will mediate the dispute and make a decision within six weeks in consultation with DPGE. The decision is final. For the university fellowships, the GFs may appeal the early termination in writing within two weeks of notice of termination to the dean who will mediate the dispute and make a recommendation within six weeks to DPGE. DPGE will make a decision. The decision is final.

## **6. Health Benefits**

All GFs are eligible to participate in the graduate student health insurance plan. The university will provide individual coverage at 70% of the costs to GFs (AY22-23). The students are responsible to pay the remaining 30% of the costs. The university will provide \$500 per student annually in subsidy for GFs with dependents.