

## 2.3 Graduate School Admissions

- A. [Types of Admission](#)
- B. [Full Graduate Status](#)
- C. [Provisional Admission](#)
- D. [Graduate-Unclassified Status](#)
- E. [Eligibility for Student Status in a Graduate Program](#)
- F. [Process of Admission or Denial](#)
- G. [Advanced Enrollment Deposits](#)
- H. [Exceptions to Standard Admission](#)
- I. [Date of Admission](#)
- J. [Readmission](#)
- K. [Conditional Admission Pending Receipt of Documents](#)
- L. [NC State Faculty Enrollment in Degree Programs](#)
- M. [Post-Baccalaureate Studies \(PBS\) Classification](#)
- N. [Teaching Certificate Renewal](#)
- O. [English Proficiency Requirements for International Students](#)

### A. Types of Admission

The criteria used for admissions decisions vary by program, reflect an evaluation of the applicant's potential for graduate work, and consider the ability of a program to accommodate additional students. Departmental admissions committees consider requests for admission and forward their recommendations to the Graduate School. However, Graduate School regulations govern the criteria for the classification of graduate student status. Programs should first determine the appropriate status of the student before forwarding their admission recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School.

There are three types of admission to graduate study at NC State:

- Full-graduate standing
- Provisional
- Graduate-unclassified

### B. Full Graduate Standing

To be considered for admission in full graduate standing, applicants must have:

- (a) a four-year bachelor's degree (or equivalent) from a regionally accredited college or university. Exceptions to standard accreditation may be granted for applicants with international degrees, including applicants with three-year degrees from institutions in Europe participating in the [Bologna Process](#).
- (b) a GPA of at least 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) in their undergraduate degrees.

### C. Provisional Admission

Students may be granted provisional status when they do not fully meet all the necessary

requirements for admission to the Graduate School, but their circumstances warrant provisional admission.

### **1. Students with related bachelor's degree and overall bachelor's GPAs that fall below 3.000 on a four (4)-point scale)**

- Provisional admission may be granted to students with related bachelor's degrees from regionally accredited institutions whose GPAs fall below 3.00 standards for admission to full graduate standing when:
  - (a) unavoidable, extenuating circumstances affected their undergraduate averages, or
  - (b) progressive improvement in their undergraduate work warrants provisional admission.

Students can attain full-graduate standing after completing nine or more graduate credit hours with a minimum 3.000 GPA. Courses taken for S/U grade cannot be used as part of the minimum.

- A graduate student is not eligible for appointment to an assistantship or fellowship while on provisional status.

### **2. Students with non-related bachelor's degrees (from accredited institutions)**

- The Graduate School may grant provisional admission to applicants with bachelor's degrees from accredited institutions who lack undergraduate work considered essential for graduate study in a major field.
- The Graduate School grants full-graduate standing when the deficiencies responsible for the provisional status are corrected through additional coursework. The student must also maintain a satisfactory academic record (3.000 GPA) on all coursework taken in a graduate classification. The graduate program must also recommend that full graduate standing be granted to the student seeking admission.

### **D. Graduate-Unclassified Status**

The Graduate-Unclassified status is a **temporary classification** for students, such as foreign visitors (see [Section 2.4](#)), who are **not candidates for degrees**. Students may take courses for graduate credit but may not apply more than 12 credits to any program leading to an advanced degree at NC State.

Unclassified graduate students must meet the same admissions requirements that apply to graduate students in full standing. Individuals interested in applying for admission as Graduate-Unclassified Students should contact the graduate program of interest.

### **E. Eligibility for Student Status in a Graduate Program**

Students who graduate from a degree program can no longer register as students in that program unless they are formally admitted to a new graduate classification (e.g., from a master's to a

doctoral degree). Students with specific educational goals not encompassed by traditional degree programs may request admission in the "[Graduate-Unclassified Status](#)" or register in the "[Post-Baccalaureate Studies](#)" program through [Registration and Records](#).

#### **F. Process of Admission or Denial**

Using the online DGP Decision Recommendation form, the Director of Graduate Programs (DGP) indicates via a checkbox on the form that all information is accurate (including GPA information) and that the decision recommendation is ready for communication to the applicant.

After reviewing the applicant's file and, if necessary, consulting with the appropriate DGP, the Graduate School notifies the applicant of acceptance or denial of admission. The DGP and the applicant will have access to this letter via the online system. DGPs should only notify an applicant regarding admission **after** the official notification of admission is posted online by the Graduate School. A [template](#) departmental admission letter is available for that use.

#### **G. Advanced Enrollment Deposits**

- **1. Some graduate programs require a deposit for newly admitted masters and doctoral students to enroll.** Admitted students must confirm their intent to enroll via the link in their online decision letter by filling out the enrollment form and paying their enrollment deposit. Payment options include credit card and check. The non-refundable deposit will be credited toward tuition for the student's admit term; there is also a processing charge. The deadline to submit the enrollment deposit will be **June 15 for Fall and Summer terms/sessions, and November 15 for Spring**, or within two weeks of an admission decision rendered after these deadlines.
- **2. Advanced enrollment deposits are term specific.** Should a student receive approval for deferment of their admission to a future term **after** having paid the advanced enrollment deposit, they must request a deferral of their enrollment deposit by notifying the Graduate School by **September 1** of the year in which they were originally admitted. **Failure to request a deposit deferral by the due date** will result in forfeiture and a new deposit will be required for the future term. **Exceptions cannot be granted** to this policy.
- **3. Sponsored students (research assistants, teaching assistants and fellows) are required to pay the enrollment deposit.** When tuition awards are posted to these students' financial accounts, the amount of the advanced enrollment deposit will go toward student fees. If student fees are covered under the sponsorship, then the deposit amount will be refunded by the University Cashier's office.

#### **H. Exceptions to Standard Admission**

- **1. Doctoral applicants with previous doctoral degrees.** An individual who has a doctoral degree will be denied admission to a doctoral program at NC State. The Dean of the Graduate School may make exceptions based upon departmental recommendations.
- **2. Applicants to graduate programs without bachelor's degrees but with professional degrees.** The Graduate School may consider an applicant who does not possess a bachelor's degree, but who has earned a D.D.S., D.V.M., J.D., PharmD, or M.D. degree from a regionally accredited institution for admission to a graduate program.

- **3. Applicants who have a previous Master's degree in the program to which they are seeking admission.** The Graduate School will not admit or transfer a student to a Master's program if the student already holds a Master's degree in the same discipline. Exceptions may be considered if a statement of justification is provided by the DGP and is then approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

## **I. Date of Admission**

- **1. Deferral of Admission.** Registration is automatically canceled when students do not enroll for the semester or summer session for which they received admission. Any applicant wishing to defer the admission date must submit a written request to the graduate program. Both the graduate program and the Graduate School must approve the request. The maximum time that a student may be granted a deferral is one year.
- **2. Ineligibility for leave of absence prior to enrollment.** Leaves of absence are available only to currently enrolled students or students already on an approved leave of absence. Students who are admitted for an upcoming semester, but are unable to register, must request a deferment in writing to their graduate program and Director of Graduate Programs.

## **J. Readmission**

Students must reapply if they are terminated at NC State because of non-compliance with the continuous registration policy and wish to resume study in their original graduate program. The student must submit a new application and pay the application fee, submitting all materials as if applying for the first time. However, letters of recommendation and GRE scores less than five years old that are on file in the Graduate School or department may be transferred to the second application, upon request.

If the program approves the student's request for readmission, the Director of Graduate Programs must submit both a letter of justification and an online DGP Decision Recommendation form to the Graduate School on the student's behalf. The Graduate School makes the final decision on the student's readmission.

## **K. International Admission Pending Receipt of Certain Documents**

International students cannot be admitted until the Graduate School receives additional documentation required by both the [US Citizenship and Immigration Services \(USCIS\)](#) and the Graduate School (see Section xx).

## **L. NC State Faculty Enrollment in Degree Programs**

Any NC State faculty member, regular or special, may enroll in an NC State program to pursue an advanced degree, provided they have the prior approval of their Department Head and Dean. Annual renewal or rescinding of approval must occur by letter in the faculty member's personnel file. The Department Head and Dean are responsible for ensuring that no conflict of commitment, conflict of interest, unethical or improper actions, or privileges are incurred in this process.

### **M. Post-Baccalaureate Studies (PBS) Classification**

Those who wish to undertake academic work beyond the bachelor's degree, but are not currently admitted to a graduate degree program, may enroll under the Post-Baccalaureate Studies (PBS) classification. This classification is open only to US citizens, permanent residents, and international students who are sponsored by an agency of the US government or are married to an NC State student. Registration is through [Registration and Records](#).

### **Rules for Participation in PBS**

The following are university minimum requirements, although home departments may have more restrictive requirements.

1. All applicants must have a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education.
2. All classes taken for credit by PBS students will be graded in the usual manner that applies for the particular course (A+ through F or S/U). All courses taken at NC State will appear on the student's transcript.
3. Registration is limited to a maximum of two courses per semester. Individuals who are employed full-time should limit their PBS registrations to one course per semester.
4. The GPA of a graduate student who has credits in the PBS category will be based on all courses taken at the 400-800 level. If PBS courses are included in a student's degree program, his/her degree clock for time-to-completion starts with the first course approved for inclusion in the Plan of Work.
5. If a student's graduate degree program is terminated, he/she cannot use courses taken in PBS status after termination for credit toward the same graduate degree program.
6. The student's advisory committee must approve all coursework accepted for degree credit. Requests for degree credit for courses completed in the PBS classification are considered after admission to a graduate degree program when the student's Plan of Graduate Work is filed with the Graduate School.
7. The PBS classification carries with it no implication that the student will be admitted to the Graduate School in any degree classification or that courses taken will be accepted for degree credit.
8. PBS students are required to familiarize themselves with Graduate School and departmental policies and to seek further advice or clarification as needed.

### **N. Teaching Certificate Renewal**

Public-school personnel who are primarily interested in "certification credit" may enroll in the PBS program without forwarding transcripts of previous work to the Graduate School. However, these students must be admitted in the Graduate-Unclassified status before completing their certification. The College of Education determines the applicant's qualifications for enrollment.

### **O. English Proficiency Requirements for International Applicants**

To be eligible for admission to graduate study at NCSU, all non-US citizen applicants (i.e., non-resident aliens **and** permanent residents) must demonstrate proficiency in English at a level necessary to be successful in a graduate program at NC State. This requirement can be met for most applicants in one of the following ways; however, some programs may require additional evidence of English proficiency:

- 1. Provide [Test of English as a Foreign Language \(TOEFL\)](#) with a total score of **at least 80** on the [Internet-based Test \(iBT\)](#), and with minimum test scores for each section of:
- 

Listening	18 points
Reading	18 points
Writing	18 points
Speaking	18 points - for admission
	23 points - for TA appointment where TA has direct verbal interactions with students
	26 points - for TA appointment where TA presents lectures in the class or laboratory

- **NOTE:** The current computer- and paper-based versions of the TOEFL test will be given until the iBT version is implemented in a particular location. Computer-based TOEFL scores must be 213 or higher (with at least 17 on three sections and no section score below 13). The paper-based test requires a score of 550 or higher (with scores of 50 on at least two of the three sections and no section score below 45).
- 2. Provide [International English Language Testing System \(IELTS\)](#) scores with an overall band score of **at least 6.5**. Minimum test scores for each section are listed below:
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Listening	6.5
Reading	6.5
Writing	6.5
Speaking	6.5 - for admission
	7.0 - for TA appointment

- 3. be a citizen of a [country where English is the official language](#) **and** the language of instruction in higher education;
- 4. have successfully completed at least one year of full-time study in a degree program at a regionally accredited four-year US College or university.

TOEFL or IELTS test scores must be **no older than two years** (24 months) prior to the beginning of the requested entry term.