

Academic Requirements

Candidacy

Degree Candidacy is a status students receive after the successful completion of 12 credits at Buffalo State. By this time, all provisions that were stipulated at the time of admission must be removed, and students must be in good academic standing. (NOTE: Not all students have provisions placed on their record at the time of admission.) Students are automatically moved to candidacy unless provisions have not been removed or there are holds on the student record.

All graduate program completion requirements include:

1. Completion of at least 6 credit hours of graduate-level coursework at Buffalo State.
2. Completion of all required prerequisite courses.
3. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B grade) in all graduate-level coursework.
4. At the graduate level, grades of C (2.0) or higher may be applied toward credit requirements for a master's degree. Typically, no more than 9 credit hours with a grade of C can be accepted toward a master's degree, and some degree programs permit even fewer than 9 credit hours of C work. Grades of C– (1.67) or lower are not used to satisfy degree requirements.
5. Removal of all deficiencies and incomplete (I) grades.
6. If requesting transfer credit, the transfer course(s) should be indicated in the note section of Degree Works. (For other policies effecting transfer credit, see the Transfer Credit section.)
7. A minimum of 15 credit hours of coursework at the 600- or 700-level is required in all degree programs.
8. A maximum of 6 credit hours of independent study (XXX 590) may be included in a degree program.
9. Coursework taken to fulfill degree requirements for one degree may not be applied to an equivalent degree.
10. A maximum of 6 credit hours of special topics (XXX 587/687) may be included in a master's degree program.
11. A maximum of 6 credit hours of workshops (XXX 594), conferences (XXX 596), and/or microcourses (XXX 598) may be included in a master's degree program.
12. A maximum of 6 credit hours of credits received through course challenges may be included in a master's degree program.

Students should periodically check with advisers to review the anticipated completion dates.

Degree Audit System

Student academic progress toward meeting graduation requirements is recorded in the Degree Works online audit system. Students should review their audit in Degree Works prior to an academic advisement meeting. Audit sheets can be viewed by logging in to [Degree Works](#). Students should inform their academic advisers of any necessary corrections as soon as possible or consult advisers with any audit sheet questions.

Students should review Degree Works regularly to ensure they are enrolled in courses that will fulfill degree requirements. Only courses that fulfill degree requirements are eligible for federal and/or state financial aid, including loans.

Changes to Approved Degree Candidacy

Once the degree program has been approved, changes can only be made with the approval of the student's department and should be registered in [Degree Works](#). Any request for transfer credit must be indicated in the note section in Degree Works.

Graduate Thesis/Project Continuation Policy

Graduate students who do not complete their capstone thesis or project requirement by the end of the term in which they have registered will receive an IP grade on their transcript contingent on development of a completion plan approved by the instructor of record. This policy is applicable to students starting fall 2024 and after.

- Once a graduate student has received an IP grade in the required thesis or project course(s), the student must register for 722 Thesis/Project Extended * (non-credit-bearing and billable for 1 credit at existing graduate tuition rates) each of the following academic (fall and spring) semesters until the thesis or project has been completed. If a student does not register for the 722 course, then the student's status will become inactive, and the student will be required to reapply for admission to graduate their graduate program and pay an application fee before the capstone project or thesis can be completed. Students must also register for the 722 Thesis/Project Extended course the semester they are reapplying and every semester thereafter until the capstone requirement is completed. Reapplication must be made in accordance with the established deadline dates and current admission requirements.
- 722 Thesis/Project Extended courses will receive a grade of NR.
- Once a student has completed the thesis or project, the thesis or project advisor will submit change of grade request to change the IP to the appropriate grade.

Graduation Requirements

For a graduate student to be awarded a graduate certificate, master's degree or certificate of advanced study, the following minimum requirements must be met:

1. Completion of the online graduation application in Self-Service Banner by the published deadline for desired degree conferral semester. Failure to apply by the deadline may delay the granting of the degree and may result in the omission of the student's name from the commencement program and exclusion from the commencement ceremony.
2. Completion of all degree requirements within the six-year period immediately preceding the date of graduation, unless a waiver is granted.
3. Completion of all required courses and resolution of any courses with a grade status of I, IP, N, or X.
4. Completion of ancillary courses for which the student has registered but are not required for the degree.

5. Completion of at least the minimum of required graduate-level credit hours as determined by each academic program.
6. Completion of a minimum of 15 credit hours of 600- or 700-level coursework.
7. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (B) in all graduate coursework.

Additional requirements for degree conferral:

1. Students who write a master's thesis must submit their thesis and have it approved through the institutional repository (e.g., Digital Commons) before a diploma can be issued. Students should discuss the submission process with their thesis adviser.
2. Graduate Admissions must receive official transcript(s) of approved transfer credit. Transfer credit must meet all requirements as defined in the Graduate Catalog.
3. Coursework taken to fulfill degree requirements for one degree may not be applied to an equivalent degree. In rare cases, double counting coursework may be permitted for equivalent degrees in different professional areas contingent on department approval.
4. Students who do not meet the requirements for graduation by the semester for which they applied must submit a new online graduation application in accordance with established deadlines, for the semester in which the requirements will be completed.

Commencement

commencement.buffalostate.edu/

Commencement is held each May at the end of the spring semester to honor the current Buffalo State graduating class. Graduate students should file an application for degree or certificate by the posted deadline for the anticipated term of program completion.

The Academic Affairs Office sends commencement ceremony information to eligible participants, typically during spring recess, via Buffalo State student email and/or student permanent mailing addresses. It is possible that candidates who submit their graduation applications after the posted deadlines may not receive commencement information and/or have their names listed in the ceremony program. The commencement website provides ceremony details, ticketing procedures, cap and gown information, a section for families, and related events.

The commencement ceremony celebrates the recent graduates and spring and summer candidates for the current academic year. A student becomes a graduate once a successful degree/certificate audit is completed and the degree or certificate is awarded. Diplomas and certificates are not distributed at the commencement ceremony; they are mailed to permanent addresses up to six weeks following the final term of study. Students should be sure their address of record is up to date to avoid delay in receiving commencement information or their diplomas or certificates. The change of address form is provided on the [Registrar's website](#).

There are no academic honors distinctions or gold honors cords at the graduate level.

Initial/Professional Certification in Education

Buffalo State's graduate degree programs in education are registered with the New York State Department of Education. All graduates who meet state certification requirements are recommended by the university for

the appropriate certification. for more information, visit the [Teacher Certification Office](#), Chase Hall 222, 716-878-6121.

Project, Thesis, Comprehensive Examinations, and Defense of Graduate Portfolio

Degree programs require a project, thesis, comprehensive examination, or defense of graduate portfolio as evidence of mastery in the chosen field. Individual program descriptions in this catalog contain specific degree requirements. Contact hours stipulated for projects and theses will vary, depending on the nature of the work and departmental requirements.

Electronic Thesis Submission

Buffalo State University requires the electronic submission of final approved theses through [Digital Commons](#), an electronic publishing mechanism sponsored and maintained by [E.H. Butler Library](#). The submission is free to students and allows for wide distribution of student work. Students should discuss the submission process with their thesis adviser.

Time Limit for Degree Completion

All coursework and degree requirements must be completed within the six-year period immediately preceding a student's graduation. Coursework completed more than six years prior to date of graduation cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements unless approved by their adviser and department chair.

Transfer Credit

There is no automatic transfer of credit toward a graduate degree or certificate of advanced study. A maximum of 12 graduate-level credit hours of transfer work from an approved regionally or nationally accredited institution may be applied to a degree program or certificate of advanced study upon departmental/adviser approval. Academic departments reserve the right to allow fewer transfer credits. The applicability of transfer credit to a graduate certificate program is solely determined by the department. The 12-credit maximum does not apply to the master's degree program in multidisciplinary studies, which allows a maximum of 15 credit hours of transfer work upon the principal adviser and advisory committee (if required) approval.

Transfer credit requests should be presented for consideration at the time the student applies for admission to the college or as soon as the coursework is completed. Approved transfer credit(s) will be included in the Degree Audit System and communicated to Graduate Admissions.

Specific restrictions:

1. Transfer work must be a coherent part of the required program of study and be approved by the major department.
2. Transfer work must be completed within the six-year period immediately preceding the date of graduation.
3. Only courses with grades of B (3.0) or better are acceptable for transfer. Grades of S (satisfactory) or P (pass) are not acceptable.

4. Coursework taken to fulfill degree requirements for one degree may not be applied to an equivalent degree. In rare cases, double counting coursework may be permitted for equivalent degrees in different professional areas contingent on departmental approval.
5. For graduate certificate programs, at least 50% of the total credits must be completed through study at Buffalo State. Departments reserve the right to require more than 50% be completed through study at Buffalo State.
6. Official transcripts must be submitted to Graduate Admissions from the institution where the coursework being requested for transfer was completed.
7. Transfer credit requested from institutions using the quarter system will be converted to semester hours using the following equation:

Quarter Hours		Semester Hours
1 quarter hour	=	2/3 (.66) semester hours
2 quarter hours	=	1-1/3 (1.33) semester hours
3 quarter hours	=	2 semester hours

Upper Division Criteria for Graduate-Level Courses

A course that has upper-division designation (600- or 700-level) reflects evidence of at least two of the following criteria:

1. Prerequisite course or instructor permission.
2. Course content, assessment, and learning outcomes demonstrating evidence of greater focus or depth in the content than 500-level graduate courses.
3. Course content, assessment, and learning outcomes targeting a higher order of critical thinking (greater application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of subject) than 500-level graduate courses.

Course numbers indicate the level of the course and restrictions as follows:

- 500–599: Introductory or survey graduate courses (knowledge, understanding, and application of subject)
- 600–699: Courses that go beyond introductory level and involve in-depth study of a subject at the graduate level and that usually have prerequisites
- 700–799: Courses designed for and restricted to students matriculated in the departments' degree or certificate programs