



UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH DAKOTA

# Graduate-Student-Handbook 2019-2020

## Mathematical Sciences Department

General Information, Policies, and Procedures for  
Graduate Students

**Contact Information**  
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Vermillion SD 57069  
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## Application Procedures

### General Application Information

Applicants holding a baccalaureate or equivalent degree in mathematics are eligible to seek admission to a program of graduate study in the Mathematical Sciences Department at the University of South Dakota. Candidates seeking admission to our graduate program must display evidence of academic aptitude, achievement and motivation. Additionally, previous behaviors contrary to or in violation of ethical or professional standards of the degree program being sought may be cause for denial of admission to a program by the Graduate Dean.

Application materials may be obtained from the Graduate School, McKusick Technology Center, Room 211, 414 East Clark Street, Vermillion, SD 57069-2390. Prospective candidates can also reach the office of Graduate Admissions by calling 1-800-233-7937 or (605) 658-6140, emailing [grad@usd.edu](mailto:grad@usd.edu), or referring to the website at [www.usd.edu/graduate-school/](http://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/). Once a packet containing the required materials has been submitted, it becomes property of the University of South Dakota Graduate School. Students may request to defer admission for up to one calendar year (three consecutive semesters) using the materials submitted. The Graduate School does not keep transcripts on file from prospective students who do not defer admission.

1. **Complete Application.** The application can be completed online at: [www.usd.edu/apps/grad-app](http://www.usd.edu/apps/grad-app). The application must be completed and signed. A \$35.00 non-refundable fee must accompany the application form. The application fee can be paid via check, money order, or credit card. Checks and money orders must be made out to the University of South Dakota. Credit cards can only be used online with the online application. The fee cannot be waived, and application packets will not be processed until the University has received the \$35.00 fee.
2. **Letters of Recommendation.** Three letters of recommendation are required of applicants. Recommendation forms are available on the Graduate School website at <http://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/apply-now>. The applicant must complete the first section of the form and sign in the designated area. The person writing the recommendation may complete the form; seal it in an envelope and write his/her name across the flap on the back of the envelope. The sealed envelope is to be returned to the applicant and enclosed along with the application materials. Alternatively, the recommendation forms may be sent directly to the Graduate School, McKusick Center, 414 East Clark St., Vermillion, SD, 57069-2390 or via email attached to [grad@usd.edu](mailto:grad@usd.edu).
3. **Official Transcript(s).** Official transcript(s) (in English or with translation) verifying receipt of an undergraduate degree or an equivalent degree from an institution with regional accreditation for that degree and previous graduate credit and degrees must accompany an application. Official transcript of all academic work at the undergraduate and graduate levels are required for international students. Applicants who apply before receiving the baccalaureate degree will be required to submit their final transcript directly to the Graduate School before their graduate studies begin, thereby demonstrating that the degree has been conferred. Students will not be fully admitted until the Graduate School has received the final baccalaureate official transcript(s). The USD Graduate School

and/or academic units retain the right to require credential evaluations from organizations, such as Educational Credential Evaluators/World Education Services (ECE/WES), for a student if such an evaluation is deemed necessary. Official transcripts must be sent directly to the Graduate School from the issuing institution(s) (see address above). Official transcript(s) may be sent in paper or electronic format. A paper official transcript must bear the original seal and signature of the official in charge of records at that institution. An electronic official transcript must be transmitted directly between institutions using the electronic transcript service authorized by the issuing institution and acceptable to the receiving institution. A transcript delivered by the student or issued to the student is **not** official. **For applicants who have received their baccalaureate or graduate degree from USD or from any of the South Dakota Regental institutions, transcripts will be printed by the Graduate School, USD and included in the application.**

4. **Official Test Scores.** At this time, the Department of Mathematical Sciences does not require GRE or other test scores.
5. **Statement of Purpose:** Applicants are encouraged to provide information about their reason for pursuing graduate studies, interest in research or creative activity relevant to mathematics, and goals for the future.
6. **Applicants with Degrees from Other Countries:** There are three approved English Proficiency exams: Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language Testing Service (IELTS), and Pearson Test of English (PTE). A minimum score of 79 on the Internet-Based TOEFL (iBT) or 550 on the Paper-Based TOEFL (PBT), a minimum IELTS score of 6.0, or a minimum PTE score of 53 is required for graduate admission. Applicants from or who have obtained an undergraduate or graduate degree from English-speaking countries are not required to submit an approved English Proficiency exam score if their academic records indicate that English was the classroom language for their schoolwork. Foreign students who have obtained an undergraduate or graduate degree from an American college or university are not required to submit an English Proficiency exam score.

**\*Please Note: Permanent residents and American citizens whose first language is not English and do not have a degree from an American University, must also submit an English Proficiency exam score for admission to the University of South Dakota.**

**Please note:** Enrollment in a course does not guarantee acceptance into the program. Enrolling as a non-degree pursuant student is easy. Simply complete the online registration form at <https://www.usd.edu/usd-online/non-degree-seeking-students> during the registration session open to the public.

### Application Requirements for International Students

Before a foreign applicant's file can be evaluated, the following items must be submitted to the Graduate School.

1. Completed application form and non-refundable application fee of \$35.00 U.S. dollars.
2. Three completed recommendation forms. One official transcript of all academic work at the undergraduate and graduate levels (with English translation stating a 2.7 or better undergraduate grade point average based on a 4.0 system and/or a 3.0 or above cumulative GPA of graduate work). The USD Graduate School and/or academic departments retain the right to require an Educational Credential Evaluators/World Education Services (ECE/WES) evaluation for a student if such an evaluation is deemed necessary.
3. Financial Ability Form (form available at <http://www.usd.edu/~media/files/graduate-school/international-admissions/international-graduate-financial-ability-form.ashx?la=en> ) and certified bank statement or sponsor's letter showing that student is financially self-supported.
4. English Proficiency Test Scores: **Proficiency Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)** score of 79 on the Internet-Based TOEFL (IBT) or 550 on the written TOEFL is required for graduate admission. **The International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) Exam** is also accepted with a minimum score of 6.0. **The PTE Academic English Test** is also accepted with a minimum score of 53. Applicants from or who have obtained an undergraduate or graduate degree from English-speaking countries are not required to submit an approved English Proficiency exam score if their academic records indicate that English was the classroom language for their schoolwork. Foreign students who have obtained an undergraduate or graduate degree from an American college or university are not required to submit an English Proficiency exam score.

After an admission decision has been made, the Graduate School will notify the student by email to the address provided on the application. Once the student has been accepted to USD, financial ability must be proven to receive the Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 Form). The Financial Ability Form, available at <https://www.usd.edu/~media/files/graduate-school/international-admissions/international-graduate-financial-ability-form.ashx?la=en> , and certified bank statement or sponsor's letter showing that student is financially self-supported are required before the Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 Form) can be issued. Applicants are strongly advised to submit the Financial Ability Form and bank statements at the same time as other application materials to avoid delays. If the student has been admitted into the Graduate School and has provided all proper financial documents, the P/DSO will send the Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 Form), and other information to the student who will use these materials to obtain a visa.

An international student should not depart from home to attend the University of South Dakota until notification of admission has been received and the Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 Form) has been issued to the student. **All non-United States citizens must report to the International Student Services Office, I.D. Weeks, Academics Commons, Room 103, upon initial arrival to the campus. Additional information can be found at <https://www.usd.edu/graduate->**

[school/international-admissions](#). You can also reach the International Office ([usd.edu/international](#)) by emailing [isso@usd.edu](mailto:isso@usd.edu) or by calling 605-658-6255.

**If you have questions about the International Student Graduate Application process, please contact International Admissions at 800-233-7937 or by e-mail at [isrt@usd.edu](mailto:isrt@usd.edu).**

## **Application Review**

The Graduate School forwards completed application to the appropriate academic department for review. The department will then recommend the admission status of the applicant to the Dean of the Graduate School, who will make final decision on admission. Students may be accepted to the University of South Dakota with full or provisional admission.

## **Disability Services**

If you are a prospective student with a disability and need assistance or accommodations during the admission/application process, please contact the Director of Disability Services, 119B Service Center North, USD, Vermillion, SD 57069.

Phone: 605-677-6389

Fax: 605-677-3172

E-Mail: [disabilityservices@usd.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@usd.edu)

## **Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy**

In accordance with the South Dakota Board of Regents Policy 1:19, the institutions under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents shall offer equal opportunities in employment and for access to and participation in educational, extension and other institutional services to all persons qualified by academic preparation, experience, and ability for the various levels of employment or academic program or other institutional service, without discrimination based on sex, race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, gender, gender identification, transgender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status or any other status that may become protected under law against discrimination. The Board reaffirms its commitment to the objectives of affirmative action, equal opportunity and non-discrimination in accordance with state and federal law. Redress for alleged violations of those laws may be pursued at law or through the procedures established by the provisions of 1:18 of this policy. For additional information, please contact the Director, Equal Opportunity and Chief Title IX Coordinator, Room 205 - Slagle, Vermillion, SD 57069. Phone: 605-677-5651 E-Mail: [equalopp@usd.edu](mailto:equalopp@usd.edu).

Admission decisions are made without regard to disabilities. All prospective students are expected to present academic credentials at or above the minimum standards for admission and meet any technical standards that may be required for admission to a specific program. If you are a prospective student with a disability and need assistance or accommodations during the admission/application process, please contact the Director of Disability Services, 119B Service

Center North, USD, Vermillion, SD 57069. Phone: 605-677-6389 Fax: 605-677-3172 E-Mail: [dservice@usd.edu](mailto:dservice@usd.edu)

Federal Law prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act of 2009). The University has designated Ms. Roberta Ambur, Vice President of Administration & ITS, as the Coordinator to monitor compliance with these statutes. This obligates USD and Ms. Ambur to provide equal access for all persons with disabilities.

## **TA and RA Support**

For a graduate teaching assistantship, the stipends are quite competitive, current stipends are \$16,000 per year and the student pays a portion of the instate tuition rate but full fees. Approximate tuition and fee costs can be found online under the graduate website <http://www.usd.edu/financial-affairs/business-office/tuition-and-fees/graduate>

Duties are to teach the equivalent of two classes in the fall and one class in the spring. If you have questions please feel free to inquire.

The application for the assistantships can be found at the link <http://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/graduate-assistantships>

As funds are available, the department awards one Research Assistant Position. The goal of this scholarship is to promote research at the graduate level. The award is open to all returning graduate students pursuing the MS option.

The recipient of this RA position will not have any teaching duties for the duration of the award but will have to conduct research leading toward a thesis in their MS degree option. Part of the obligations of this position is to make a presentation at our departmental seminar and one at Idea Fest. The current stipend amount for this position is \$21,000 but subject to current funding levels and the University and Board of Regents' policy for the Graduate Assistantship program. Students interested should submit a research proposal of maximum two pages where they identify a thesis professor along with a research topic. This proposal should be submitted to the department secretary by March 27. Current standing in the graduate courses of applicants will also be considered in the selection process. The winner will be announced by the end of April.

## Degree Requirements

**The Department of Mathematical Sciences offers programs for the degrees of Master of Science (M.S.) and Master of Arts (M.A.)**

### **Program Description:**

Mathematics has been called the universal language. It is a language used in nearly every aspect of our lives, from balancing checkbooks to calculating the distance to the stars. Part logic, part problem solving, part philosophy and part exploration, mathematics opens the door to an amazing world of questions still to be asked and answered. Mathematicians are increasingly in demand as teachers, statisticians, modelers, actuaries, researchers - any position requiring an analytical and quantitative thinker. Graduate students desiring to work toward a Master's degree in mathematics should have completed a departmental undergraduate major in mathematics equivalent to the one offered by USD. Students who do not have a sufficient background in mathematics may be required to complete course work that will not apply towards a Master's degree (e.g., linear algebra and differential equations). The department offers non-thesis M.A. (Plan B) and thesis and non-thesis M.S. programs (Plan A and Plan B, respectively). The M.A. supports growth and professional development for high school teachers and exposure to additional math content for people who seek employment in other fields but do not have an interest in a terminal degree. The M.S. programs are intended for students who plan to pursue doctoral studies in mathematics and cover advanced topics that will prepare graduates to take qualifying exams in Math Ph.D. programs without the need for additional coursework. Additionally, students can prepare themselves for Ph.D. programs in related fields, such as Computational Science and Statistics.

### **For More Information:**

For more information, please visit [www.usd.edu/grad](http://www.usd.edu/grad) or contact:

**Math Department**

**Phone: 605-658-5970**

**E-Mail: [math@usd.edu](mailto:math@usd.edu)**

**URL: [www.usd.edu/math](http://www.usd.edu/math)**

## Program Requirements

M.A. in Mathematics Program Total: 32 Credit Hours

Master of Arts (M.A.) in Mathematics (Non-Thesis)

Required Courses

Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
MATH 513	Introduction to Abstract Algebra I	3
MATH 523	Advanced Calculus I	3
AND		
MATH 514	Introduction to Abstract Algebra II	3
OR	OR	
MATH 524	Advanced Calculus II	3

Master of Arts (M.A.) in Mathematics (Non-Thesis)

Elective Courses: Select 15 credit hours from the following:

Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
MATH 514	Introduction to Abstract Algebra II (if not taken above)	3
MATH 516	Combinatorics	3
MATH 524	Advanced Calculus II	3
MATH 571	Numerical Analysis I	3
MATH 575	Operations Research	3
MATH 581	Probability and Statistics	3
MATH 585	Theory of Statistics	3
MATH 590	Seminar	3
MATH 591	Independent Study	3
MATH 592	Topics in Mathematics	3
MATH 713	Advanced Algebra I	3
MATH 714	Advanced Algebra II	3
MATH 721	Complex Variables	3
MATH 723	Real Variables	3
MATH 724	Real Variables II	3
MATH 731	Partial Differential Equations	3
MATH 735	Mathematical Modeling	3
MATH 761	Introduction to Topology	3
MATH 791	Independent Study in Mathematics	3
MATH 792	Topics in Mathematics	3
Non-Dept	Required Electives	8

Elective Courses Total Credit Hours: 23

Master of Arts in Mathematics Program Total: 32 Credit Hours

M.S. in Mathematics (Thesis) Program Total: 33 Credit Hours

M.S. in Mathematics (Non-Thesis) Program Total: 33 Credit Hours

## Master of Science (M.S.) in Mathematics

## Required Courses

Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
MATH 713	Advanced Algebra I	3
MATH 723	Real Variables I	3
MATH 798	Thesis	6
AND		
MATH 714	Advanced Algebra II	3
OR	OR	
MATH 724	Real Variables II	3

## Master of Science (M.S.) in Mathematics (Thesis, Non-Thesis)

## Elective Courses

Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
MATH 513	Introduction to Abstract Algebra I	3
MATH 514	Introduction to Abstract Algebra II	3
MATH 516	Combinatorics	3
MATH 523	Advanced Calculus I	3
MATH 524	Advanced Calculus II	3
MATH 571	Numerical Analysis I	3
MATH 575	Operations Research	3
MATH 581	Probability and Statistics	3
MATH 585	Theory of Statistics	3
MATH 590	Seminar	3
MATH 591	Independent Study	3
MATH 592	Topics in Mathematics	3
MATH 714	Advanced Algebra II (if not taken above)	3
MATH 721	Complex Variables	3
MATH 724	Real Variables II (if not taken above)	3
MATH 731	Partial Differential Equations	3
MATH 735	Mathematics Modeling	3
MATH 761	Introduction to Topology	3
MATH 791	Indep. Study in Mathematics	3
MATH 792	Topics in Mathematics	3
Non-Dept	Electives	0-6

Master's Thesis: Total Credit Hours: 6

Elective Courses Total Credit Hours: 12-18/18-24 (Thesis/Non-Thesis)

Also, (a) all students in the M.A. or M.S. program are required to complete a final written exam as part of the Master degree requirements and (b) students pursuing the M.A. or the M.S. non-thesis option will be required to complete a final oral exam. Students pursuing the M.S. thesis option will defend their thesis as their oral exam

## Comprehensive Examinations

### Final Written Exam

Students in the MS and MA program are required to take a final written exam as part of their program of study. The exam consists of two parts: **part 1** of the exam is on either the Algebra sequence or the Analysis sequence (Abstract or Advanced Calculus for MA and Advanced Algebra or Real Variables for MS); and **part 2** of the exam is over any other two mathematics courses that the candidate and his/her committee selects, not necessarily sequenced.

EXAM TIME: Each semester (Spring, Summer and/or Fall), the department graduate committee will schedule one day for the exam. The date will normally be the Saturday approximately four weeks prior to the Graduate School deadline for graduation approval (the exact day of the exam will be announced with ample time to study for the exams). When sitting for the exam, candidates can take both parts of the exam at the same time (part 1 **and** part 2 above) or only one complete part (part 1 **or** part 2 above). Under the circumstance that a candidate fails any portion of the exam on the first attempt, they will retake only that/those portion(s) on the Saturday two weeks after the first attempt. A sample time frame would be the following: if 11/30 is the graduation approval deadline for the semester, the final written exam will be scheduled for Saturday 11/3 and the retakes will be scheduled for Saturday 11/17. **No exam will be taken over a course you are currently enrolled in unless it is the sequential exam in the semester in which you are graduating.**

RETAKE POLICY: Candidates will be given **one** opportunity to retake the portion(s) that they failed the first time. If they do not pass the failed portion on the retake, they will be dropped from the program.

### Final Oral Exam

Upon successful completion of both parts of the written exams, students will schedule the oral exam (or thesis defense) with their committee. They may view and copy their graded written exams to determine which questions to study for.

## Graduate School Policies and Procedures

The following is part of the Graduate School policies and procedures. The complete policies and procedures can be found at <http://catalog.usd.edu/content.php?catoid=26&navoid=1339>

### Academic Standards and Progress

*The graduate student admitted to a graduate program must make satisfactory academic progress each term toward completion of the graduate degree being sought. Students who fail to make satisfactory progress are subject to academic probation and possible dismissal. If the cumulative GPA of graduate students receiving assistantships falls below a 3.0, the student will not continue to receive the assistantship without the expressed approval of the program director/coordinator and the Graduate Dean.*

### Grades

In addition to overall satisfactory performance, graduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA average of 3.0 or above in all work included in the program of study submitted for their degrees. Furthermore, no more than one-third of the credit hours with grades of “C” are permitted. Many programs further restrict grades of C. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher is required to progress in the Graduate School. All grades of “Incomplete” on the program of study must be removed prior to graduation. Grades of “D”, “F”, or other unsatisfactory designations are not acceptable for graduate credit. This does not mean that grades of “D” and “F” may not be assigned to graduate students but that credit for courses in which such grades have been earned will not be counted toward a graduate degree although they are included in GPA calculations. For repeated courses at the undergraduate and graduate level, only the last grade is used in computing the grade point average. Repeated courses are marked with an “R” or “Repeated.”

The candidate’s graduate committee, with approval of the Graduate Dean, may approve up to three credit hours, to be taken at the graduate level for a grade designation of “S” (satisfactory). Graduate programs approved by the SDBOR to offer more credits within their degree program are exempt from this rule.

Students at the University of South Dakota who wish to audit a course may do so with the approval of the instructor and the dean of the school/college in which the course is offered, providing that there is space in the classroom after all registered students for credit have been accommodated. No USD credit is granted for courses that are audited. All auditors must submit a “Request for Audit” form to the Registrar’s Office found at <https://www.usd.edu/-/media/files/registrar/forms/academic-forms/auditrequest.ashx?la=en>. Regular tuition and fees are charged for audited courses. An auditor wishing to change registration from audit to credit must do so during the 100% refund/last day to add deadline. The auditing fee is non-refundable after the 100% refund period.

## **Academic Standing, Probation, and Dismissal**

If a student has more than one course of unsatisfactory work and/or has not maintained a 3.0 term or cumulative graduate GPA, the academic program places the student on warning, or probation or dismisses him/her from the program in keeping with department and Graduate School policies. Degree programs and the Graduate School review the academic standing of all graduate students each term, and program leaders notify students directly of academic warning, probation or dismissal. The Graduate School is copied on all student communication. A graduate student may be dismissed from the program at any time for failure to meet the academic performance and progress standards of the degree program's or Graduate School. The department is required to provide students a written notice of the issues and an opportunity to meet with the program director (face-to-face, teleconference, virtually) before dismissal action.

It is the policy of the Graduate School that any academic graduate department, through due process, may deny a graduate student continued enrollment in a program in accordance with department policies. The reasons for dismissal include: (1) academic performance that does not meet the standards of the department and the Graduate School, or (2) conduct in violation or unfavorable of the ethical or professional standards of the degree program or discipline involved. Academic appeals are handled through the Graduate Academic Appeal Policy (SDBOR Policy 2:9, see below) and/or the Student Code of Conduct Policy in the event of an allegation of misconduct (SDBOR 3.4; see below). In addition, general campus rules and policies relating to student conduct are found in the Student Handbook available at <https://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/student-resources/graduate-handbooks>. For further information, call the Graduate School (605) 658-6140; 800 233 7937.

## **Graduate Academic Appeal and Grievance Procedures**

A procedure has been established for impartial review and hearing of any academic grievance. The University's graduate academic appeal procedures can be found at <https://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/student-resources>.

## **Grievance Processes**

### **Please see Board of Regents Policy 2.9 and/or Board of Regents Policy 3.4**

SDBOR 3.4 policy refers to situations involving the Student Conduct Code. SDBOR 2.9 policy governs academic disputes involving students. Such disputes most commonly arise as a result of student dissatisfaction with assigned grades, but students may also invoke the standards and procedures provided under this policy to challenge academic responses to instances involving alleged student academic misconduct or to challenge other decisions, justified on academic grounds, that affect their participation in or completion of university academic programs. After the investigation, the Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities should provide confirmation to the Graduate School if misconduct occurred or if the charges were not valid.

For students: Academic Appeal Form (log into myU.portal): myU.portal>Academics > Academic Policies & Forms> Academic (Registrar)> Academic Appeal Form or [link.usd.edu/194](http://link.usd.edu/194).

## Timelines from Admission to Graduation

*The student is responsible for ensuring that the following requirements have been completed and should stay in close contact with his or her advisor throughout the graduate program. Students can obtain a list of deadline dates for the semester in the Portal.*

1. **Admittance:** Student is admitted to the Graduate School either fully or provisionally. Any student admitted provisionally must attain full admission status prior to being considered as a candidate for a graduate degree. To change status from provisional to full, the student must meet all provisions of the initial admission.
2. **Immunization verification: An Immunization Form must be completed for all on-campus and center-based students before the student may register for classes (both Vermillion Main Campus and University Center in Sioux Falls, University Center - Rapid City, and Capital University Center in Pierre).** This policy also applies to special students. Once a student has been admitted, the University of South Dakota's Student Health Department will send the required form to the student's residence to be completed immediately.
3. **Advisor assignment:** An initial advisor is assigned at the time of admission. Committees are assigned by the department.
4. **Meet with advisor:** The student meets in person or virtually with advisor to register for classes, discuss program of study, and overall plan for the program.
5. **Program of Study:** A Program of Study must be filed with the Graduate School as soon as feasible. The Program of Study is determined after a student has consulted with his/her advisor. **The Program of Study presented for fulfillment of degree requirements must be comprised of all graduate work and at least 50 percent of the coursework at the 700-course level or above, unless otherwise approved by the South Dakota Board of Regents.** Any substitutions or exceptions to the catalog requirements must be noted on the program of study and require pre-approval of the Department Chair. If more than one substitution is made, Graduate Dean approval is required. No more than two workshop courses may be included on a Program of Study without permission of the Graduate Dean. Approved transfer credits should be indicated on the Program of Study. The transfer approval and official transcript must accompany the Program of Study, if not already on file in the Graduate School. Only twelve credit hours may be transferred from other institutions as part of a Program of Study. Forms are available electronically in the myU.Portal at <https://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/student-resources>. The Graduate School cannot accept the Program of Study until the student's advisor has approved.

6. **Application for Degree/Program of Study:** Students enrolled in a degree program must submit an Application for Degree no later than the designated deadline (usually during the first three weeks of the semester) for the semester in which the student expects to graduate. The deadlines and forms are available in the myU Portal at <https://my.usd.edu/SimpleContentPortlet/content/e112aae4-4e7e-4263-8b1c-cb8077f7b34b/Program%20of%20Study.pdf>. Failure to file an Application for Degree at the appropriate time may delay graduation.
7. **Application for Certificate/Program of Study:** Students enrolled in a graduate certificate program must submit an Application for Certificate/Program of Study no later than the designated deadline (usually during the first three weeks of the semester) for the semester in which the student expects to have the certificate awarded. The deadlines and forms are available in the myU Portal at <https://my.usd.edu/SimpleContentPortlet/content/e112aae4-4e7e-4263-8b1c-cb8077f7b34b/Program%20of%20Study.pdf>. Failure to file an Application for Certificate/Program of Study at the appropriate time may delay the awarding of the certificate.
8. **Final Evaluation of a Graduate Student:** The method of evaluation of graduate students is at the discretion of the degree program. It may be a written and/or verbal evaluation, or any other method that requires the student to demonstrate their depth and scope of knowledge. More information on the final evaluation of a graduate student is explained in each program section. Students writing a thesis or dissertation will be required to complete a verbal defense of their research. Devotion to the demands of advanced learning while utilizing a variety of intellectual skills is expected of the graduate student. While progress toward a graduate degree is continually assessed, every department is required to evaluate and assess the quality of the learning experience of each student at the end of the program of study. The final examination for Master's, Specialist, and Doctoral level candidates will be open to all members of the graduate faculty. Participation in this examination, however, is only with the prior consent of the chairperson of the committee.
9. **Graduation Approval:** The Graduation Approval form contains the results of the oral and/or written final evaluation of the graduate student, and thesis or dissertation grades and accepted credit hours. The form is to be retained by the chairperson of the advisory committee until degree requirements are completed, at which time the Graduation Approval is submitted to the Graduate School. The deadline for the approval is approximately one week prior to graduation. The approved form should be signed by the Chair of the Advisory Committee.
10. **Thesis/Dissertation Submission:** The final thesis or dissertation must be submitted to ProQuest at <https://my.usd.edu/SimpleContentPortlet/content/45e0d9c3-3498-4cb1-aecb-fea5ef835da2/ProQuest%20Process.pdf> for Master's degree students under Plan A and all Doctorate students. Failure to submit the thesis or dissertation at the appropriate time may delay graduation. A Guide to Preparing the Dissertation or Thesis and ProQuest Process documents are available in the myU Portal at <https://my.usd.edu/uPortal/p/graduate->

[school.ctf1/max/render.uP?tab=21025-graduate-thesis-guide](http://school.ctf1/max/render.uP?tab=21025-graduate-thesis-guide).

11. **Commencement:** Candidates are strongly encouraged to attend the commencement exercises for the degree that is being sought. Students have the option to request to attend a commencement prior to the one at which they will earn their degree or to “walk early.” In order to seek approval to walk early, graduate students must be within nine credit hours from actual completion of degree. Students must submit their Application for Degree/Program of Study with their Request to Walk Early. The Graduate School will review the request against the student’s Program of Study ensuring students will be graduating the following semester. The Graduate School will notify the student on the status of the request. Students who choose to walk early will not be listed in the commencement program or press release. Degrees are conferred at the end of the summer semester, fall semester, and spring semester; however, there will only be one commencement ceremony for each academic year held at the end of the spring semester. All candidates for graduation from the preceding summer and fall are invited to spring commencement. All summer and fall candidates will be listed in the following spring commencement program. A combined press release will be issued for all candidates for degree during the spring commencement term.
  
12. **Clearing Students for Graduation:** With the exception of the Law School and Medical School, the Graduate School audits programs of study against required curriculum and clears students for graduation each term. Auditing and posting of degrees occurs during the timeline below.
  - Spring Graduation: Week after Finals until the End of June (Diplomas mailed end of July)
  - Summer Graduation: Week After Finals of Session Three until the End of September (Diplomas mailed end of October)
  - Fall Graduation: Week After Finals until the End of January (Diplomas mailed mid-March)