
A series of new policies were approved by the Graduate Faculty Executive Committee (GFEC) on October 11, 2013 and the University Academic Planning Council (UAPC) on October 24, 2013. Although prompted by the Higher Learning Commission’s (HLC) institutional accreditation criteria, these policy changes are one of the many ways in which our campus ensures the integrity of its degrees and the quality of the student experience.

The approved vote items to be effective Fall 2014 included policy changes in the following categories:

- Minimum Graduate Residence Credit Requirement
- Minimum Graduate Degree Credit Requirement
- Minimum Graduate Course Work Requirement
- Prior Course Work
- Maximum Credits per Term
- Effective Dates

To facilitate the implementation process, several resources are available in the Graduate School’s Admin KnowledgeBase (GSAdminKB) including these FAQ’s and the creation of a “Program Update Template for HLC-Related Policies.” The KB and these FAQ’s will continue to be updated as clarifications are needed. While the Graduate School sets baseline requirements, in many cases, graduate programs can set more rigorous requirements.

The FAQs are divided into the following categories and are hyperlinked so you can jump directly to that topic:

1. Minimum Graduate Residence Credit Requirement FAQs
2. Minimum Graduate Degree Credit Requirement FAQs
3. Minimum Graduate Course Work (50%) Requirement FAQs
4. Prior Course Work FAQs
5. Maximum Credits per Term FAQs
6. Effective Dates and Implementation Process FAQs
7. Higher Learning Commission FAQs

1. Minimum Graduate Residence Credit Requirement FAQs

   a. How does the minimum graduate residence credit requirement differ from the minimum degree credit requirement?

   It is believed that the current policy of 16 credits for a master’s degree, 24 credits for the MFA, and 32 credits for a doctoral degree in the Graduate School’s Academic Policies and Procedures may have originally implied that these were the minimum number of credits a student must earn at UW-Madison while enrolled in the graduate career (or in residence). There is now a set of explicit residency minima: 16 credits for a master’s degree, 24 credits for the MFA, and 32 credits for a doctoral degree. Credits applied to the graduate residence minimum must be earned while a graduate student is enrolled at UW-Madison for the new degree credit minimums (30 credits for a master’s degree, 42 credits for the MFA, and 51 credits for a doctoral degree). This definition of residency would include any online courses, as well as any remote field experience, practicum, and research credits, taken as a graduate student at UW-Madison.
b. Will students need to satisfy the graduate residence credit requirement in order for a student to achieve dissertator status?

Yes, students must have completed all requirements for their doctoral degree except for the dissertation AND have satisfied the minimum graduate residence credit requirement in order to achieve dissertator status.

2. Minimum Graduate Degree Credit Requirement FAQs

a. Why shouldn’t our institution have a master’s credit minimum lower than 30?

Our peer institutions overwhelmingly require a minimum of 30 credits for the master’s degree. The current 16 credit minimum is an extreme outlier. Thus, we do not feel we have a good argument for having a minimum below 30. Furthermore, data on student outcomes shows that the current practice with 92% of master’s programs across campus is consistent with a 30 degree credit minimum.

b. Has the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) and doctoral minimum degree credit requirements changed?

Yes, there are minimum degree credit policy changes at all degree levels (master’s, specialist certificates, MFA, and doctoral degrees). The current policy requires a minimum of 16 credits for a master’s degree, 24 credits for the MFA, and 32 credits for a doctoral degree. GFEC determined that requiring 30 credits for a master’s degree and keeping the minimum MFA/specialist certificate and doctoral degree credit requirements unchanged was not reasonable. The body of work expected for an MFA or doctoral degree is substantially different from other master’s degrees. Peer institutions have doctoral credit minimums that range from none to 96 credits at the doctoral level. Furthermore, data on student outcomes shows that the current practice with most MFA and doctoral programs across campus are consistent with higher degree credit minimums.

The GFEC subcommittee has approved a new graduate degree credit minimum of 30 credits for a master’s degree, 42 credits for a MFA/specialist certificate and 51 credits for a doctoral degree, with residency requirements at 16, 24, and 32 credits respectively. The credits used towards a master’s degree, a doctoral minor, or taken as a dissertator may count towards the related doctoral degree credit.

c. Will credits taken while a dissertator be allowed to count towards the doctoral degree credit requirement? Do the minimum doctoral degree credits (51 credits) have to be taken before or after dissertator status?

Credits take while a dissertator can count towards the minimum doctoral degree credit requirement of 51 credits. The minimum doctoral degree credits (51 credits) can be earned before or after dissertator status. However, requirements for dissertator status remain the same including satisfying the minimum graduate residence credit requirement of 32 credits.

d. Can we consider providing credit for other required activities?

Yes, we would advise programs to examine the expectations they have of their students and work to formalize any informal or non-credited work as credits within the standards of UW-Madison curriculum policies. Examples include providing credit for practicum experiences such as internships and field work, required research currently not bearing credit, and required seminar attendance. Additionally, if master’s credits are part of the total required for the associated doctoral degree, a program may consider moving some of the doctoral credits into the master’s requirement.

e. Will the Graduate School impose a maximum number of credits allowed for research/independent study?

A new maximum on research/independent study credits is not part of these policy changes. Currently, there are no limitations on the number of research or independent study credits that a student can use.
towards a master’s degree except in the case of the minor (see below), although programs may choose to have limitations. Current Graduate School policies and procedures detail minimum enrollment requirements, but do not distinguish between classroom course credits and thesis/research credits.

Credit policy for doctoral minors: Doctoral minors require a minimum of nine credits. A maximum of three credits can be independent study credits, and research and thesis credits may not be used to satisfy the minor.

f. Can a degree be research-only, with no coursework?

The balance between coursework and research is not dictated as a general principle. At a broad research university like University of Wisconsin – Madison, it is important to have the flexibility to construct degree programs in ways that achieve the learning outcomes established by the program. At the master’s level, this may range from a course-work-only master’s program to a research-based master’s program with minimal course work requirements. In some cases, programs may choose to adjust the number of required courses based on an individual student’s prior preparation.

g. Can courses taken from a professional program or career (VMED, MED, LAW, PHARM) be used towards a graduate degree? Are there any changes to dual career/degrees programs?

Please note that dual degrees are two degrees that are each earned in a separate “career” as defined in ISIS. For example, a graduate/professional dual degree is where one degree is granted in a graduate program/career and the other in a professional program/career (e.g., M.D./MED, J.D./LAW, MPAS/MED, DVM/VET, D.Pharm./PHARM, MPH/MED). For students in a dual career or professional master’s program who may need to take practice-oriented courses, the program continues to have the latitude to determine which courses can be used toward the graduate degree.

h. Will the GFEC/Graduate School decide on a maximum degree credit requirement for graduate degrees?

Some peer institutions do provide a maximum in addition to a minimum (e.g. University of Michigan: master’s degrees must be between 24 and 72 credits; Minnesota: master’s degrees must be between 30 and 48 credits). Although a maximum has not been set, it should be noted that a master’s degree is a body of work that is substantially different from a doctoral degree and the credit requirements of a program should reflect this difference.

3. Minimum Graduate Course Work (50%) Requirement FAQs

a. Can programs meet the “50% graduate level work” rule by changing their existing courses to higher numbers (above 700)?

We recommend that, as a first pass, departments and programs focus on those courses that they need to create to provide credit for practicum experiences such as internships and field work, required research currently not bearing credit, and required seminar attendance, or revisions to existing courses that bring the number of credits assigned into alignment with expectations of the course.

In many cases, programs have specifically designed courses for their master’s program and numbered them at the 500 or 600 level. We do not expect that these courses be renumbered to the 700 level. It is an option to change course numbering, however programs may find that this will be a large-scale project that may take years to plan and complete given that some programs may find that they would want to renumber a significant fraction of their courses. No batch process is currently available to streamline this. Large scale course renumbering should only be done after consultation with the Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research.
New course approvals and course changes must go through the appropriate school/college Academic Planning Council(s) or Curriculum Committee and then through the Ad Hoc Interdivisional Curriculum Committee coordinated by the Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research. Please note that the on July 1, 2013, administration of the course proposal process moved from the Office of the Secretary of the Faculty to the Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research. For further details on the course approval process, please go to [http://apir.wisc.edu/courses.htm](http://apir.wisc.edu/courses.htm).

b. What does “courses designed for graduate work” mean?

The GFEC has interpreted “courses” here to signify credits, which includes both course work and independent/research credits. Several attributes have been defined to identify courses designed for “graduate work.” Graduate course work can include UW-Madison courses:

- numbered 700 and above;
- numbered 300-699 that are specifically designed for graduate students in a graduate program;
- numbered 300-699 that assess graduate students separately from undergraduate students; or
- numbered 300-699 that have a graduate student enrollment >50% in any given semester.

Courses taken as a University Special student are not allowed to count toward the 50% graduate course work minimum unless taken at the 700 level or above.

Some course numbering changes may be appropriate, which will require governance action as described above. However, programs may identify and document their decisions about which courses will be allowed to count toward the 50% graduate work policy within the attributes above.

Note that current institutional policy currently states the following:

- “Courses in the 300-699 range may be taken for credit by both undergraduate and graduate students; courses in the 300-499 range are generally considered intermediate level and courses in the 500-699 range are generally considered advanced level. Graduate students taking courses numbered 300-699 are expected to do graduate-level work, though they are enrolled in an undergraduate-level course. The 300-699 range is not intended to include undergraduate-only, elementary level courses.
- Courses in the 700-999 range are open only to graduate students.”

There is no need to restrict 300-699 courses to only graduate students for them to be considered to be "designed for graduate work." Some programs have existing pre-requisites on these courses and others do not. This may or may not be advisable depending the wishes of the program, but it is not an explicit requirement (pre-requisite changes must go through the course approval process). Determining which 300-699 courses are specifically designed for graduate work is a program faculty decision. Programs know the content of their courses and whether they meet the bar of graduate-level work.

The important point is that programs have discussions about which program courses should be included on the "courses designed for graduate work" (50% graduate course work) list. The agreed upon list should be included on the Program Update Template, the program handbook/website, the program’s Graduate Catalog page (to be updated the 2013-14 academic year), and known to staff/faculty for advising purposes. Taking those steps and putting their list into practice are the means by which programs reach compliance. Beyond that, the quality and integrity of the graduate-level work of graduate programs continues to be a point of evaluation within institutional program review (required every 10 years).
d. What number should the 50% be applied to?

Because the HLC wording states that “at least 50% of courses applied to a graduate program are courses designed for graduate work,” the GFEC has interpreted this to be 50% of the credits designed by the program for the degree. For instance, if a program determines that students must complete a minimum of 40 credits for their M.S. degree, then 20 of those credits must be graduate work as defined above. For a program designed at the 30 credit minimum, 15 of those credits must be graduate work.

4. Prior Course Work FAQs

a. How will prior course (“transfer” credits) be handled?

The Graduate School does not articulate transfer credits (in other words, these credits do not appear on the graduate portion of the transcript). Programs may desire to accept prior work from graduate courses taken at other institutions and/or use credits from the UW-Madison while the student was enrolled as an undergraduate and/or University Special student toward the graduate degree requirements. The new policy for prior work allows for all of these explicitly with some limitations on the number of credits and to which minimum requirements they would apply. However, course work earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree or course work earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree would not be allowed to satisfy requirements. A summary of the prior course work policies and additional FAQs are provided below. Please note that an individual graduate program may choose to be more restrictive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Graduate Residence Credit Requirement</th>
<th><strong>Prior Graduate Course Work from Other Institution(s)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Course Work from Undergraduate Career at UW-Madison</strong></th>
<th><strong>Transfer from University Special Student Career at UW-Madison</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>*Allowed up to 15 credits numbered 300 or above if difference in tuition is paid.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Graduate Degree Credit Requirement</td>
<td>*Allowed</td>
<td>*Allowed up to 7 credits numbered 300 or above</td>
<td>*Allowed up to 15 credits numbered 700 or above if difference in tuition is paid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Graduate Course Work (50%) Requirement</td>
<td>*Allowed</td>
<td>*Allowed up to 7 credits numbered 700 or above</td>
<td>*Allowed up to 15 credits numbered 700 or above if difference in tuition is paid.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Fulfillment of requirements is allowed in these instances only if approved by the student’s graduate program up to any stated maximum.

**Course work earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree or course work earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

b. Can prior course work be allowed to satisfy a program’s minor requirement?

If a graduate program has a minor requirement, prior coursework can be used toward the minor requirement in accordance with the policies listed in the above chart. If courses towards the minor are taken while the student was enrolled as a University Special student, the difference in tuition must be paid. As is true now, course work earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree would not be allowed to satisfy minor requirements.
c. Will there be limits for how many credits a student may use to fulfillment requirements with graduate course work taken from other institutions? For example, can we count course work from a master's degree earned at another institution?

Some departments/programs already limit how many credits a student may use to fulfill requirements from work done prior to attending graduate school at UW-Madison. There would continue to be no Graduate School policy concerning limits on how many graduate-level credits from other institutions a student may use to fulfill program requirements (with the exception of the minimum graduate residence requirement, how long ago the course work/degree was earned, or any program-level restrictions).

For many programs, the allowance of prior course work to fulfill program requirements may need to be reviewed on an individual basis. In other programs, it may be permissible to review prior course work in the aggregate assuming specific guidelines (and the rationale for them) are made clear and transparent in their program website and handbook. For example, a program might allow prior course work up to 30 credits from an accredited master's degree in identified fields.

Please note that course work earned five or more years prior to admission to a master's degree or course work earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements. In certain instances, a program may be able to justify the use of credits that exceed these restrictions. Again, the program would need to state clear guidelines (and the rationale for them) in their program website and handbook. For example, if an accredited master’s degree/course work is over 5 years old, the program might allow up to 30 credits of the prior course work to satisfy program requirements if the student can demonstrate how they have remained current in the field through continuous certification.

d. Will there be limits for how many credits a student may use to fulfill requirements with graduate-level courses taken as a UW-Madison undergraduate? How will the prior course work requirements impact UW-Madison 3+2 or 4+1 (5th year) master's programs?

Some departments/programs already limit how many credits a student may use to fulfill requirements from work done prior to attending graduate school at UW-Madison. For well-prepared advanced UW-Madison undergraduate students, the program may choose to count up to seven credits numbered 300 or above (as detailed above) to satisfy minimum degree credit requirements. If courses are numbered 700 level and above they can count toward the graduate course work minimum. In contrast to the senior-grad category (which will be eliminated as of Fall 2014), those credits may “double-count” towards both the undergraduate and graduate degrees for well-prepared advanced UW-Madison undergraduate students.

Thus, there is now explicit guidance on the number of UW-Madison undergraduate credits (7 credits) that can be allowed to count towards the graduate degree credit minimum for 3+2 or 4+1 (5th year) master’s programs. As with all prior course work, the fulfillment of requirements is allowed only if approved by the student’s graduate program. In addition, course work earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

e. How will “University Special” student credits earned at UW-Madison be handled?

Generally, students are encouraged to enter a graduate program as early as possible and not to "try it out" the program as University Special students. If students are interested in a graduate program, they should seek admission as quickly as possible. Officially entering the program allows the student to receive appropriate advising and be fully integrated into the program structure. If University Special student credits are accepted by a program to fulfill program requirements, it is done on occasion as an exception (on a case-by-case basis) and is subject to the approval of the program. The new policy limits the number of credits a student may transfer into a program from University Special student credits earned at UW-Madison to no more than fifteen credits numbered 300 or above (as detailed in the chart above). This must be initiated and approved by the program. A program may choose to be more restrictive or disallow University Special student credits toward their graduate degrees.
Students using courses taken as a UW-Madison University Special student to count toward the minimum graduate degree, residence, or minor credit requirements would have to pay the difference in tuition between graduate and University Special student tuition for the terms in question (already an established practice for the minimum graduate residence requirement). In addition, these courses would not be allowed to count toward the 50% graduate work minimum unless taken at the 700 level or above. Those credits earned in such a semester still appear in the transcript history as “University Special” student, but the Registrar's Office (as is the current practice) will add a statement in the beginning of the transcript "All credits taken in [term] as a University Special student have been accepted by the Graduate School toward a degree program" after the student has paid the difference in tuition.

f. Our program reviews prior course work for students in order to determine which (if any) program learning goals have been met. In turn, this informs the type of course work these students should take at UW-Madison for the program. In addition, sometimes the prior course work reviewed is outside of the new stated parameters listed in the new Prior Course Work requirements. How should this be handled/considered?

The Prior Course Work requirements indicate what is permissible to count towards a program's degree (not necessarily, the major). Programs may decide to allow prior course work to count towards the program's learning goals that are outside the parameters of the Prior Course Work requirements (e.g. courses taken as an undergraduate at another institution), but that course work would not be allowed to count towards the minimum graduate residence requirement, the minimum graduate degree requirement, or the minimum graduate course work requirement. For example, perhaps a student has taken a Statistics course as an undergraduate from a different institution that you would like to recognize in the program. The program may do so, but that course work would not be allowed to count towards the minimum graduate residence requirement, the minimum graduate degree requirement, or the minimum graduate course work requirement. Thus the student may need to take additional credits (from more advanced course work or research credits) to achieve the minimums.

5. Maximum Credits per Term FAQs

a. Will we change the maximum number of credits a student is allowed to enroll for fall/spring terms?

After considering past student performance and peer institution policies, a change in the maximum number of credits allowed for fall/spring terms has been approved. The current Graduate School policy allows a graduate student to enroll in a maximum of 12 graduate-level credits per term. The new policy will increase this maximum to 15 graduate-level credits for fall/spring terms. The maximum number of credits allowed for summer terms will continue to be 12 credits. Dissertators would still be required to enroll in exactly 3 credits related to their dissertation per term. The increase in maximum number of credits for fall/spring terms is expected to mitigate any concerns about increased time to degree given the new credit minimums.

The Graduate School considers graduate-level credits as those courses numbered 300 or above, taken for a grade (not pass/fail and audits). The enrollment system counts all credits in determining maximum credit loads. An overload request is required if a student wishes to exceed the maximum number of credits they are allowed as a graduate student. Even though pass/fail courses, audit courses, and 100- or 200-level courses are not considered graduate-level credits, they are counted in a total credit load.

If a student wishes to enroll in more than the maximum allowed credits per term, they must submit an overload request to the Graduate School, which is considered by the relevant divisional Associate Dean.

b. What will be the maximum number of credits a student is allowed to enroll for summer terms?

The maximum credits allowed for summer terms will continue to be 12 credits. Generally, the maximum 12 credits in the summer is achieved by students completing 3 credits during the 3-week intersession at
the end of May and into early June; and then an additional 9 credits during the 8-week DHH summer session. Completing 12 credits outside of these standard times will most likely require an overload request given the existing policy that states that the number of credits a student can enroll in cannot exceed the span of weeks in any short session during the summer (except for dissertators). Sometimes we refer to this as the “no more than 1 credit per week” rule (the one exception is the 8-week DHH session which allows 9 credits).

It should be noted that for students that enroll over the summer, the average number of credits taken is 3 credits. In addition, logistically, 12 credits is the maximum that is possible within the standard summer sessions and is aligned with what is academically wise and reasonable for students. If a student wishes to enroll in more than the maximum allowed credits per week/term for the summer, they must submit an overload request to the Graduate School, which is considered by the relevant divisional Associate Dean.

c. What implications will the new policy for “maximum credits per term” have with respect to tuition?

Graduate students enrolling for 8 or more credits during a semester are charged a flat tuition rate. There is no expectation that the tuition plateau level will change as a result of the new policies.

6. Effective Dates and Implementation Process FAQs

a. When will the new requirements take effect? Will the new policies apply to current students, or just incoming students after the requirements take effect?

The new policies approved by GFEC will become effective at the beginning of Fall 2014.

Implementation of the new requirements will occur for all incoming students beginning in Fall 2014. Current master’s students will have the option to complete under the old policy requirements if they can complete all degree requirements and graduate BEFORE Fall 2016. Students enrolled in a MFA, specialist certificate, or doctoral degree prior to Fall 2014 have the option to complete their degree under the prior policy requirements.

A student who chooses to discontinue their degree program for a semester or more must return under the new policy requirements.

Appeals would be considered in exceptional cases. For example, a program may wish to appeal on behalf of a part time student, and in that case, the specific plan of study developed early in the program for this student would need to accompany the request. All appeals should be made by the program on behalf of the student.

b. What will the governance process be for making changes to programs?

Changes in a program’s minimum degree credit requirement and any other curriculum changes must be approved by the relevant school/college Academic Planning Council or Curriculum Committee. A template has been provided to the schools/colleges to facilitate the change process and assure that new policy requirements have been met. Each school/college will need to submit compliance summary and the completed templates of their graduate degree programs to the Graduate School no later than April 2, 2014. These compliance summaries will be presented to the GFEC as an information item during the 2013-14 academic year. If there are concerns, feedback will be provided back to the school/college.

After a program has completed its planning progress, it should pursue any necessary course additions/changes in parallel with the curriculum approval process. The curriculum approval would be contingent on the course changes/additions that are integral to the proposed curriculum, and may have to be revisited if the course approval process dictates. In order for schools/college to meet the April 2, 2014 deadline, it is anticipated that schools/colleges will ask its graduate programs to submit their
completed templates to their school/college curricular governance body sometime between January – March 2014.

The Graduate Catalog must also be updated by the program during the 2013-14 academic year to satisfy auditing requirements. The Graduate Catalog will be considered the authoritative source on basic requirements of all graduate programs and will include information about these and other program requirements. Graduate programs should retain copies of completed templates to facilitate required updates for the Graduate Catalog due May 1, 2014.

c. Will the other Graduate School requirements for graduate degrees remain the same?

The following items in the current Graduate School policy will not change:

* Courses must be taken as a graduate student
* Courses must be 300 and above
* Course grades must be A, AB, B, or S
* Course grades of BC or C only count if there are equal credits of AB and A respectively in non-research courses
* Course grades of P only count for research courses
* Students must maintain a 3.00 GPA
* Students absent for 5 or more years lose all degree credits earned before absence (for master’s students only)

For a student to be awarded a graduate degree, the Graduate School’s degree coordinator manually audits each student’s transcript to ensure that at least minimum residence credit requirements (16 credits for a master’s degree, 24 credits for the MFA, and 32 credits for a doctoral degree) are being satisfied as a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The program must assure to the Graduate School that both the minimum graduate degree credit requirement and the minimum graduate course work requirement (50%) have been met within the prior course work restrictions.

d. How do we handle minors with respect to these new policy requirements?

For doctoral programs satisfying the breadth requirement with a minor, students need to complete both a major and a minor and there should not be any overlap in credits between the two (as is the expected practice now). In addition, as is stated in current policy, students must complete minor credit requirements before achieving dissertator status.

However, assuming the observance of all other Graduate School requirements, credits for the minor may be allowed to count towards the minimum graduate residence requirement, the minimum graduate degree requirement, or the minimum graduate course work requirement. Put another way, doctoral programs have distinct major and minor requirements and combined they constitute the degree; and many of the new policy requirements are reflective of minimums for the degree as a whole (inclusive of both the major and minor).

Programs that are interested achieving breadth in ways other than through a minor requirement can seek approval to opt-out of the minor requirement through the process described here: https://kb.wisc.edu/gsadminkb/page.php?id=31615

7. Higher Learning Commission FAQs

a. A. Why must our campus comply with the Higher Learning Commission’s “Criteria for Accreditation”?

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is the federally recognized accrediting agency for degree-granting higher education organizations for the North Central region of the U.S. Compliance with federal
requirements by both institutions and the HLC is necessary to ensure that institutions accredited by the HLC are eligible for federal financial aid. The “Assumed Practices” within the “Criteria for Accreditation” are considered to be minimum standards to which all institutions are expected to comply (failure to comply with Assumed Practices is an automatic institutional sanction).

Although prompted by the Higher Learning Commission’s criteria, these efforts are seen as one of the many ways in which our campus ensures the integrity of its degrees and the quality of the student experience. When data on our current practices are considered, we find that the vast majority of students are completing their degrees well over the new degree credit requirements while enrolled in their graduate programs. In many instances, programs find that the new requirements are in alignment with their current practices and expectations of students.

b. **Some of these proposed policies do not seem to go far enough to ensure the quality and rigor for our graduate program. Can graduate programs have more rigorous requirements than those proposed in these new Graduate School policies?**

In many cases, graduate programs can set more rigorous requirements than the Graduate School’s baseline requirements. See the program update template for more guidance.

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