



# GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Revised May 1, 2017

## **GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

### **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT PROGRESS**

#### **UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

General university-wide policies and procedures are outlined in the Policies and Procedures section of the University catalog. Students should review these policies thoroughly. Additional academic policies relevant to graduate students and specific requirements for the School of Architecture are outlined below.

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Tulane University expects students to conduct their academic endeavors with honesty and integrity. As part of the University community, graduate students have certain responsibilities regarding work that forms the basis for the evaluation of their academic achievement. Any student behavior that has the effect of interfering with the education, pursuit of knowledge, and/or a fair evaluation of the student's performance are considered a violation of the proscribed academic conduct, as set forth in the Unified Code of Graduate Student Academic Conduct. The Code also outlines procedures to be followed if there is a suspected violation. Students are expected to be familiar with the Code. Principles and activities not covered by the Code may fall under the purview of university or departmental research and/or ethics committees. Questions concerning jurisdiction should be addressed to the dean of the School of [SCHOOL NAME].

#### **STUDENT RECORD POLICY**

Tulane University complies with the provision of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Buckley Amendment), which was enacted to protect the privacy of education records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their education records, and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford students certain rights with respect to their education records. Read more about your rights under FERPA on the Student Affairs website.

#### **RESEARCH OVERSIGHT**

Intellectual Property Policy - Under the Tulane Intellectual Property Policy and Procedures document, all full or part-time faculty and staff, graduate students, residents, and fellows, and any other person who is aided by University facilities or staff or by funds administered through the University are required to disclose any patentable and/or copyrightable inventions to the University. As a condition of their employment or affiliation with Tulane, all such covered individuals must execute an Assignment of right, title and interest to any intellectual property to Tulane University. This policy is managed by the Office of Technology Transfer & Intellectual Property Development. Consult with your faculty advisor if you have questions about intellectual property issues.

#### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

It is the policy and practice of Tulane University to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (Pub. L. No. 101-336), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. No. 93-112, § 504, as amended), and state and local requirements regarding individuals with disabilities. Under these laws, no qualified individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in services, programs, and activities of Tulane. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is committed to providing equal access and a friendly environment for all who study and work at Tulane. Through collaboration and exploration, modifications to the academic or work environment – accommodations – can be offered to students and employees with registered disabilities.

#### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

The university requires of all of its students behavior compatible with its high standards of scholarship and conduct. By accepting admission to Tulane University, a student accepts its regulations, including the Code of Student Conduct, and acknowledges the right of the university to take conduct action, including suspension or expulsion, for conduct judged unsatisfactory or disruptive. The Vice President for Student Affairs is responsible for formulating appropriate procedures and, as set forth in the Code of Student Conduct, regulations concerning student behavior and for the resolution of conduct cases.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, HARASSMENT, AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION**

Tulane's Office of Institutional Equity is responsible for the implementation of the University's Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedure. All faculty, administrators, staff, students, and individuals affiliated with Tulane University by contract (including non-employees, such as vendors and independent contractors) are bound by this policy, which includes the University's statements of equal opportunity and anti-discrimination, the harassment policy, and complaint procedures.

## **COURSE LOADS**

For the School of Architecture, the normal course load for graduate students varies from 15 to 18 credits per semester. The student who completes these credits each semester in the required and elective courses as outlined in Programs of Study will meet the graduation requirements in the customary timeframe. A lighter load must have the approval of the Graduate Program Director. Typically, 12 credit hours is considered the minimum for full-time status, and anything below that number may create issues for and jeopardize scholarships and other financial aid arrangements.

In any given semester and with the permission of the Graduate Program Director, when registration opens for the next semester, students may register for as many as 19 credits. In special circumstances, graduate students who have earned a 3.0 or higher grade point average on 18 or more credits during a semester may register for as many as 22 credits with the Graduate Program Director's approval.

## **OPTING OUT OF REQUIRED COURSE**

Students with superior ability and with previous course work in given subject area may request a course substitution based on their past work, relevant syllabi and transcripts. The Graduate Program Director makes an evaluation to determine whether or not a course at a prior institution is equivalent to the course in question. If equivalency is determined, the course in question can be replaced with an advanced elective in the subject area.

## **AUDITING COURSES**

Any full-time graduate student may audit one course per semester without credit in any school of the University, after completing formal registration and obtaining approval of the instructor for the course. Although credit is not granted for audited courses, such courses are considered part of the student's semester course load and are recorded on the student's permanent record. An audit enrollment that results in an overload is not permitted unless the student is qualified for such an overload. An auditor who is absent excessively will be dropped without record. Students who decide to audit a course after initially attending the course as a grade-seeking student must submit the appropriate change form to the registrar following the approval of the Graduate Program Director.

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance at classes, studio and laboratory periods, and scheduled course conferences is required; it is essential to successful academic progress. All absences must be reported to the course instructor; the only excused absences are those for reasons of health or crisis, and must be reported to the instructor prior to the beginning of the class. Unexcused absences could reduce a student's course grade, as will late arrivals or early departures from class. Three consecutive absences or four nonconsecutive absences will, in normal circumstances, lead to a WF (Withdrawn Failing) grade for the course. Instructors are not authorized to excuse absences that extend holidays. Students should withdraw from a course prior to the drop without record deadline if they no longer intend to attend. A student who stops attending a course listed on his or her registration form without formally dropping the course may receive a WF grade if recommended by the instructor on or before the official deadline for authorized drops. After the official deadline, the student will be assigned an UW as a final grade.

## **EXAMINATIONS**

Attendance at final exams is required. A student who must be absent from a final examination will be given permission to take a special examination only if he or she presents to the course instructor and the Dean's office an acceptable excuse and appropriate documentation before or within three days after the examination. A student whose absence from an examination is excused will be given an I (Incomplete) and a makeup examination; a student whose absence is not excused will be given an F in the course. Incomplete grades must be resolved with final grades reported to the dean's office within thirty days from the end of the semester or the I grade becomes an F.

## STUDIO REVIEWS

Studio reviews are a critical part of the design studio curriculum and evaluation process. Attendance at these reviews is mandatory. Policies for Mid-term and final studio reviews are equivalent to those for examinations in other courses (see above).

## GRADES

The School attempts to keep its students informed of their progress at all times. Federal law prohibits the sending of grade information to third parties, including parents and guardians, unless the student provides the Associate Dean of Students of the School of Architecture with written authorization for release of such information. Such a request may be made by the student at any time.

A student who has a complaint regarding grading or academic evaluation has recourse to the grievance procedure developed by the University Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility of Students. Copies of the Student Grievance Procedures are available in the Director of Academic Affairs office. The student must first discuss the complaint with the professor; then, if dissatisfied, submit a written complaint to the Associate Dean of Academics of the School of Architecture.

At the end of each semester, a final course grade is given in each subject. This grade is based on all the student's work during the semester and is entered on the student's transcript. The School of Architecture uses the University-wide grading system for courses. A full description of Grades and Grading Policies are outlined in the Newcomb-Tulane section for the undergraduate college.

Exceptions and additions are as follows:

**WF** Withdrawn with failing grade

WF grades may be administratively assigned, for excessive absences, for disciplinary penalty or for failure to attend a course, which is shown on registration records. WF grades are treated as F grades in computing semester and cumulative averages. They remain on the record even if the course is later completed successfully.

**W** Withdrawn

W grades do not imply a penalty and are not counted in the grade point average.

**I** Incomplete

An incomplete grade, I, is given at the discretion of instructors when, in their view, special circumstances prevent a student from completing work assigned during the semester and with the understanding that the remaining work can be completed within 30 days. Extensions of the 30-day deadline must be requested in writing by the student and must be approved by the instructor and the Associate Dean. Extensions are approved only when a student has made an attempt to complete the missing work within the original 30-day period but, in the view of the instructor and the Associate Dean, has been prevented from completing the work by some special circumstance beyond the student's control. Extensions must be approved before the 30-day deadline expires; extensions are not approved retroactively. Incomplete grades are also given when a student's absence from a final examination has been excused by the Associate Dean prior to or within one day following the final examination.

Any officially authorized I grade, if not resolved (changed to another grade) within 30 days after the end of the semester, is recorded as an F.

## GRADE POINT AVERAGES

A student's progress toward graduation is measured not only by credit earned but also by the grade-point average. Cumulative grade point averages are determined by dividing the student's total number of quality points by the total number of quality hours (credits attempted). Semester grade point averages are calculated for architectural design courses (the design average) and for all courses together (cumulative average) by dividing the number of quality points by the number of credits attempted.

## GRADE APPEAL PROCESS

Students who are dissatisfied with their grades should, within one month of receiving the grade, make an informal attempt to resolve the grievance by approaching the faculty member. If the student and faculty member cannot arrive at a mutually satisfactory solution, the student should, within seven days, begin the formal grade appeal process outlined below.

Students who wish to appeal a grade should submit a formal letter of appeal to the Director of Undergraduate Advising and Student Affairs. The student will be responsible for providing their final work, along with syllabi and project descriptions for the final project. The grading faculty member will provide comparative work at each level ("A", "B", "C", and "D" work) to the Director of Undergraduate Advising

and Student Affairs. All documents will be made available for review by the faculty members of the Student Affairs Committee. The faculty members will review the work and make grade recommendations. It is possible for the grade to go down as well as up. Once a recommendation has been made, the student is notified and offered a chance to receive feedback on their work from the Student Affairs Committee.

If either the student or the grading faculty member is dissatisfied with the committee's decision, they may appeal to the Dean of the School of Architecture within seven days of being notified of the decision.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Students in good academic standing normally attend the School of Architecture each semester consecutively; however, occasionally it is in the best interest of the student to take a leave of absence from the School for a semester or a year. Students considering a leave of absence should consult the Graduate Program Director. To obtain a leave of absence, the student must make written application to the Graduate Program Director stating the reason for the request and the proposed period of absence. Upon written approval by the Graduate Program Director, the student is guaranteed readmission if all conditions of the request and approval are met.

## **VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL FROM A COURSE**

To drop a course, a student must obtain the approval of the instructor and the Graduate Program Director. Withdrawals from courses are not recorded for the first four weeks of class. After the fourth week of classes and before the last date for drops as reported in the official calendar, a grade of W will be recorded only if withdrawal is officially approved and the instructor reports satisfactory standing in the class at the time of withdrawal. Students considering withdrawal from required courses must consult with the Graduate Program Director. Required courses in the School of Architecture must be taken sequentially and withdrawal may result in the extension of the program of study. Students must always carry the fulltime minimum course load of 12 credits.

## **VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL FROM THE SCHOOL**

A student who decides to withdraw or resign from the School of Architecture and Tulane University after the semester begins must discuss withdrawal plans with the Graduate Program Director and file a written request for permission to withdraw from all classes. This statement should include the student's reason for requesting to withdraw. Withdrawal forms may be obtained from the Graduate Program Director.

The authorized date for withdrawal generally is the date that the formal withdrawal request is received. This date is important in determining eligibility for refund or account adjustment and grading status.

Requests for retroactive medical withdrawals cannot be approved after a student has completed his or her final examinations and the semester has ended.

## **PARTIAL MEDICAL WITHDRAWAL**

To withdraw from a course for medical reasons after the last day to drop a class, or if the reduction in course load will result in part-time status; the student must petition the Graduate Program Director via the **School of Architecture – Graduate Programs Medical Withdrawal** form. The form will be reviewed by the program Director and the Medical Withdrawal Committee. Submission of this petition may result in referral to the student Health Center (for physical health issues) or Dr. Randall Graf (for mental health issues). If referral is recommended, approval of withdrawal will be pending of medical recommendation.

## **QUALITY OF WORK REQUIREMENTS**

The School of Architecture is not obligated to give individual warnings to graduate students in danger of probation or exclusion. Each student is responsible for his or her academic performance and its consequences.

## **PROMOTION**

School of Architecture students are expected to follow the appropriate curriculum outlined in Programs of Study. Students are classified within a given year according to the number of credits earned. A student may be excluded from the School of Architecture for lack of sufficient academic progress toward fulfilling degree requirements. Failure to meet stated degree requirements within a reasonable period of time may result in exclusion. Sufficient academic progress is also measured by minimum credit and grade point requirements.

Graduate students in Architecture must maintain the academic standards of the School to meet their degree requirements.

Graduate students who meet the minimum semester requirement of 12 passed credits, maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA as well as a 3.0 GPA in design studios, and also earn the required number of credits to advance from one semester to the next are considered to be making progress toward their architectural degree. To qualify for admission into the next year of the program, a fulltime graduate student must therefore pass a minimum of 30 credits of B average work in the previous calendar year (August to August, including a summer session, if necessary).

## **PROBATION AND EXCLUSION**

At the end of the academic year a graduate student must have a minimum of 12 hours of B average work as well as a design studio cumulative grade point average of B or better. Students who do not meet these minimum requirements will be placed on probation. B average work is defined as courses whose quality point average is at least 3.0.

Graduate students in the School of Architecture are also placed on probation in the following instances:

- A graduate student, whose cumulative academic grade point average falls below 3.0 in any given academic semester, as calculated at the end of that semester, is placed on academic probation for the subsequent semester. If the student's cumulative average has not risen to 3.0 by the end of the probationary period, the student is not permitted to remain in the School.
- A graduate student whose grade point average in architecture design courses falls below 3.0 for a given semester, as calculated at the end of that semester, is placed on design probation for the subsequent semester. If the student's year average in architectural design courses has not risen to 3.0 by the end of the probationary semester, the student is not permitted to remain in the School.

## **STUDENT WORK**

Any work performed for credit by students may be retained by the School for record or other uses. Students may, as an alternative, provide suitable reproductions.

Thesis students are required to provide complete documentation of the thesis to the School for the Architecture Library. Although some student work may be retained for a period of time in order to document it, the School is not responsible for any student work (or equipment) left in Richardson Memorial Hall after the end of the term in which it is executed.

The instructor may retain all examinations and assigned written work for academic and record keeping purposes..

## **STUDIO WORK PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS**

Each student in the School of Architecture maintains a portfolio, in 8.5" x 11" and digital formats, recording comprehensively the design studio work undertaken in the School each term. For students in the 3 ½ Year M.Arch I Graduate Program, this portfolio is collected and evaluated by design faculty during the spring semester of the first year. At this time a student may be asked to meet with a group of faculty for discussion of the work and his or her status, progress, strengths, and weaknesses. Although the portfolio review is advisory, the portfolio is a part of design studio evaluation. Maintaining a portfolio is an important and integral part of the student's curricular program, providing a valuable opportunity for a student to see the work from a broader perspective than a single semester's evaluation affords.

Submission of the portfolio is required for application to many of the School's special programs and academic opportunities as well as consideration for awards offered by the School. This portfolio also forms the basis of the professional portfolio each student assembles to seek summer and long-term employment.

## **REPEATED COURSES**

For graduate students, a course completed with a grade of D-, D, or D+ must be repeated. When a course is repeated both grades, the original grade and the grade resulting from repeating the class, are included in the GPA. The first completed credit with a passing grade is counted toward graduation. The repeated effort is recorded on the permanent record, but does not count as credit earned. If an F or WF graded course is repeated, both the original F or WF and the grade for the repeated effort are recorded. F and WF are counted in the cumulative average. In order to repeat a course, students must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 new credits in addition to the repeated class. No more than one course may be repeated in any semester.

## **COMMENCEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

A candidate for graduation must complete the total number of credits and all courses required for his or her program of study, must have a cumulative grade point average in all academic courses of at least 3.0 and must receive certification for graduation by the faculty of the School of Architecture.

A graduate student expecting to receive a degree in May must register as a candidate for graduation with the Graduate Program Director by October 1 of the previous year. The commencement ceremony is held only in May. A student who is one course shy to meet the degree requirement at the end of spring semester may "walk" at the commencement ceremony. Unless excused by the Associate Dean, candidates are required to attend commencement. Requests for an excused absence must be submitted in writing at least two weeks prior to the ceremony.