

The College of The Bahamas



Established
1974

POLICY ON GRADUATE PROGRAMMES AT THE COLLEGE OF THE BAHAMAS

POLICY NUMBER:	
TITLE OF THE POLICY:	POLICY ON GRADUATE PROGRAMMES AT THE COLLEGE OF THE BAHAMAS
DATE OF ADOPTION:	
COUNCIL RESOLUTION NUMBER:	
SUPERSEDES:	All previous practices and policies not consistent with this policy.
DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION:	July 1st 2010
PROJECTED DATE OF REVISION:	Annual revision required: next revision June 2011
PURPOSE OF THE POLICY:	To establish the principles for the establishment and oversight , as well as quality assurance, of any graduate programme offered by The College.
REVISION NUMBER:	
ACCOUNTABILITY:	This policy is under the primary responsibility of the Vice-President, Graduate Programmes or, in the absence of such a Vice-President, the President
ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES:	To be developed by the Director of Graduate Programmes in collaboration with the relevant Dean, the Registrar and the Vice-president, Academic Affairs.
RELATED POLICIES	Academic policies of The College
HISTORY:	This policy replaces the policy adopted at the September 28, 2009 meeting of The College Council.
APPENDICES:	

1. AUTHORITY

The College of The Bahamas Act assigns the power to the Council to “provide for the welfare of the students of the College; to control and superintend the property and policies of the College and to fix fees and charges for courses of study, facilities and other services provided by the College and to reduce, waive or refund fees and charges so fixed, generally or in any particular case or class of case”.¹

¹ (Article 8. of The College of The Bahamas Act, 1995)

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1** Graduate degree programmes to be conferred by The College of The Bahamas will be designed to prepare students for mastery of a complex field of study or professional area and will have a clearly stated rationale and purpose. The requirements of each programme will be stated in relevant official publications and will be accessible in written and electronic formats. The learning objectives of each programme will reflect experiences that will enable graduates to approach complex problems in the field utilising specialized skills that take into account global perspectives.
- 2.2** A graduate programme at The College of The Bahamas will only be offered when resources and expectations exceed those required for an undergraduate programme in a similar field. Specifically, information, technology and physical resources should exceed those required for an undergraduate programme in a similar field.
- 2.3** Disciplinary Master's and research-oriented doctoral programmes will be designed to prepare students for scholarly careers by emphasising the discovery, acquisition, organization, utilisation and dissemination of knowledge. Doctoral degree programmes will afford the student substantial mastery of the subject matter, theory, literature and methodology of a significant field of study and will include a sequential development of research skills leading to the attainment of an independent research capacity.
- 2.4** Graduate students at the doctoral level will undertake original research that contributes to new knowledge in a chosen field of study. Disciplinary master's degree programmes will have many of the afore-mentioned objectives, but will require less sophisticated levels of mastery in the chosen field of study than the research doctoral degree. While the disciplinary master's programmes may not require students to engage in original research at the same level as a doctoral programme, students in master's degree programmes will conduct a culminating research or creative project/work as part of their programme requirements.
- 2.5** Professional or practice-oriented programmes at the master's or doctoral levels will be designed to prepare students for professional practice involving the development of new applications of knowledge within a field of study. This will be accomplished by affording students a broad conceptual mastery of the field of professional practice through an understanding of its subject matter, literature, theory and relevant research methodology. These programmes will provide the sequential development of professional skills that will result in competent practitioners.

3. GOVERNANCE OF GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

- 3.1** Governance for The College of The Bahamas is vested in the College Council who has delegated responsibility of the governance of graduate programmes to the Graduate Programmes Review Board (GPRB).

- 3.2 The Graduate Programmes Review Board shall normally meet monthly during the academic year, which begins on August 1st and ends on July 31st. The GPRB will meet a minimum of six times per year.
- 3.3 Meetings of the GPRB shall operate under Robert's Rules of Order. Meetings shall be convened by the Chair.

4. MANDATE OF THE GRADUATE PROGRAMMES REVIEW BOARD

- 4.1 The Graduate Programmes Review Board shall sanction and approve the development of graduate programmes.
- 4.2 The Graduate Programmes Review Board shall (a) approve unconditionally, (b) approve conditionally, (c) request a resubmission, or (d) not approve a proposed programme.
- 4.3 The Graduate Programmes Review Board shall establish the conditions for delivery of graduate programmes
- 4.4 The Graduate Programmes Review Board shall recommend the conferral of graduate degrees
- 4.5 The Graduate Programmes Review Board shall develop and implement quality assurance mechanisms for graduate programmes.
- 4.6 The Graduate Programmes Review Board shall recommend to Council all faculty to teach in graduate programmes on a course-by-course and cohort-by-cohort basis.

5. MEMBERSHIP ON THE GRADUATE PROGRAMMES REVIEW BOARD. The GPRB will consist of the following members:

- 5.1 Vice President of Research, Graduate Programmes and International Relations, who shall serve as Chair of the Board;
- 5.2 President;
- 5.3 Vice President of Academic Affairs;
- 5.4 Director of Graduate Programmes, who shall serve as Secretary to the Board;
- 5.5 Deans of Academic Units;
- 5.6 The Registrar;
- 5.7 Elected Eligible Faculty Members per School (Two Year Term Appointments).
- 5.8 Faculty members with a terminal degree in their discipline or who have been approved by the Board to teach in a graduate programme shall be elected in their School;
 - 5.8.1 Should no faculty in the School meet these qualifications, the matter will be referred to the Board for special consideration.
 - 5.8.2 In cases where a member is not eligible for a School as a faculty member with either a terminal degree or approval from the GPRB to teach in a programme, a faculty member will be elected from the faculty at large.
- 5.9 Two Graduate Student Representatives (One Year Appointment) elected by graduate students.

6. COMMITTEES OF THE GRADUATE PROGRAMMES REVIEW BOARD

6.1 The GPRB may establish committees as so desired to do its work, including but not limited to:

- 6.1.1** Graduate Curriculum Committee
- 6.1.2** Academic Appeals Committee
- 6.1.3** Academic Integrity Committee
- 6.1.4** Admissions Committee
- 6.1.5** Programme Review and Quality Assurance Committee

7. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GRADUATE PROGRAMMES REVIEW BOARD. These will include the:

- 7.1** Elaboration, Adoption and Oversight of academic policies, procedures and standards of graduate programmes;
- 7.2** Development, evaluation and review of academic policies;
- 7.3** Oversight and assessment of quality assurance mechanisms for graduate curricula;
- 7.4** Oversight of the academic appeals process;
- 7.5** Oversight of issues relating to academic integrity;
- 7.6** Establishment of guidelines for the proposal of new graduate programmes;
- 7.7** Recommendation for the approval of new graduate programme proposals;
- 7.8** Recommendation of approval of Faculty to teach in graduate programmes;
- 7.9** Oversight of quality assurance and programme evaluation.

8. OBJECTIVES OF GRADUATE PROGRAMMES AT THE COLLEGE OF THE BAHAMAS. Graduate Programmes at The College of The Bahamas will:

- 8.1** produce professionals and researchers to support and drive national development;
- 8.2** engage and drive public policy;
- 8.3** increase the body of knowledge on The Bahamas as an object of scholarly research;
- 8.4** utilise existing infrastructure and resources to promote the enactment of the strategic plan of The College of The Bahamas.

9. DEVELOPMENT OF GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

9.1 The College will determine whether to offer a graduate programme in accordance with the College's strategic plan and the following criteria:

- 9.1.1** consistency with the mission and vision of The College of The Bahamas;
- 9.1.2** quality of programme content;
- 9.1.3** sustainability of the objectives of graduate programmes outlined in previous section.

10. FINANCIAL VIABILITY

- 10.1** Graduate Programmes at The College of The Bahamas will be self-funded on a full cost recovery basis, including the indirect costs of the programme.

11. PHASES OF PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

- 11.1** Ideas for new graduate programmes should be discussed within the respective academic units and their conceptual development considered under the guidance of the respective Dean. A notice of intent should be advanced for further consideration by the Graduate Programmes Review Board.

- 11.2** Academic Units wishing to propose a graduate programme should:

- 11.2.1** Assemble task force to develop programme;
- 11.2.2** Identify the purpose, goals and objectives of the programme;
- 11.2.3** Analyze similar programmes, including quality assurance standards and licensure and identify components that would make the programme unique;
- 11.2.4** conduct market research and develop financial model;
- 11.2.5** identify course sequence and develop course descriptions;
- 11.2.6** develop final proposal and complete accompanying forms.

12. PROPOSAL FOR GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

- 12.1** A proposal and all required accompanying forms must be completed for all College of The Bahamas graduate programmes and submitted to the Graduate Programmes Review Board for ratification and submission to Academic Board for onward submission to Council for final approval before implementation of the programme. (See Appendix A and Tables 1-6.)

13. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS TO GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

- 13.1** Admissions to graduate programmes shall be made by the Graduate Programmes Review Board upon the recommendation of the relevant Dean.

14. APPLICATION FOR READMISSION

- 14.1** Graduate students in good academic standing who have withdrawn from a College of The Bahamas graduate programme and who seek reinstatement within five years of the date of their matriculation must complete a Request for Readmission Form. This Request for Readmission Form will be forwarded to the Graduate Programmes Review Board for consideration.
- 14.2** Students who seek to return to The College of The Bahamas more than five years after their initial matriculation should follow the admissions procedures as stated in The College of The Bahamas catalogue.

14.3 Students who have been required to withdraw from a College of The Bahamas graduate programme by the Graduate Programmes Review Board for academic reasons may request to be readmitted after a year's absence from The College of The Bahamas. The student must complete the Request for Readmission Form and must provide supporting documents such as college transcripts, letters of recommendation from employers, or letters of support for readmission. The Graduate Programmes Review Board will review the supporting documents and make the final decision regarding reinstatement.

15. MODE(S) OF DELIVERY OF GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

15.1 Initially, the cohort model of delivery will be used to provide students with the most affordable graduate programmes, promote the formation of professional development, build a solid educational foundation with emphasis on programme quality within a particular field of study and offer a pre-determined schedule that can be adapted to meet the cohort's need and enhance operational efficiency.

16. SUMMARY OF DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

16.1 MASTER'S DEGREE: To earn a master's degree from The College of The Bahamas, students must complete a minimum of thirty (30) credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree. The total number of credit hours will vary, depending on the field of study.

16.2 DOCTORAL DEGREE: To earn a doctoral degree from The College of The Bahamas, students must complete a minimum of sixty (60) credit hours beyond the Master's degree. The total number of credit hours will vary, depending on the field of study.

17. ACADEMIC REGULATIONS AT THE MASTER'S DEGREE LEVEL

17.1 Applicants may transfer up to six (6) graduate credit hours for courses successfully completed at accredited institutions of higher education.

17.2 Language requirements will be specific to the programme of study.

18. ACADEMIC REGULATIONS AT THE DOCTORAL DEGREE LEVEL

18.1 All students must complete a minimum of sixty (60) credit hours beyond the master's degree and at least three years of graduate work at The College of The Bahamas in order to earn a doctoral degree.

18.2 Language requirements will be specific to the programme of study.

19. ACADEMIC COURSE NUMBERING

19.1 College of The Bahamas graduate courses will be numbered according to the recommendation of the Office of the Registrar, but will normally fall within the following designated ranges:

19.1.1 Master's Courses - Master's courses will normally fall within the 500 - 699 sequence.

19.1.2 Doctoral Courses - Doctoral courses will normally fall within the 700 - 899 sequence.

20. ATTENDANCE

20.1 Regular class attendance is expected of all graduate students. Each instructor must clearly explain his or her attendance policy in the course syllabus. The course syllabus must clearly indicate whether class attendance is a factor in the final grade and what constitutes excessive absences.

21. AUDITING GRADUATE COURSES

21.1 Graduate courses offered for credit may be taken for audit on a space available basis and with prior permission from the instructor.

21.2 After the drop/add period, audited courses may not be changed to gain credits or a grade.

22. WAIVER OF COURSES

22.1 Graduate students with excellent records of previous graduate coursework and/or extensive work experience may request a waiver from certain graduate programme requirements completed within the past five years.

22.2 Such waivers cannot exceed six (6) credit hours.

22.3 The Graduate Programmes Review Board will review requests on a monthly basis during the fall and spring semesters.

22.4 Course Exemption Request Forms must be submitted to the Board, along with supporting documentation, at least ten (10) days in advance of the next meeting of the Board.

23. NON-DEGREE STUDENT POLICY

23.1 Normally students will be admitted to programmes for a degree, but in exceptional circumstances students may want to enter a programme with a non-degree status. The admissions requirements for these persons are the same as other applicants. The final admissions decision will be made by the Graduate Programmes Review Board Admissions Committee.

23.2 Non-degree students who have completed six (6) credit hours or more of graduate courses will be automatically placed on academic hold and will not be allowed to register for additional graduate courses unless they have obtained prior approval from the Director of Graduate Programmes.

23.3 Non-degree students who are considering applying to a graduate degree programme are strongly encouraged to seek advice from the Director of Graduate Programmes and the appropriate Academic Dean prior to registering for any graduate courses.

23.4 Non-degree students may request permission to register for one additional three-credit graduate programme course during the semester that their application for admission is being reviewed. Such permission will be granted or denied at the sole discretion of the appropriate Academic Dean after consultation with programme faculty members.

24. PRACTICA AND FIELD EXPERIENCES

24.1 Students with incomplete grades will not be allowed to register for practica or field experiences.

24.2 A graduate student who has failed a practicum or field experience may request reinstatement once during the programme of study.

24.3 A graduate student may petition to withdraw from a practicum or field experience where there are exceptional circumstances. In such cases, the withdrawal must be authorized by the faculty responsible for the course or a failing grade will be given.

24.4 The withdrawal of a student may be initiated by the faculty responsible for the course with due cause. Where the faculty member has withdrawn a student from the practicum or field experience, the student may appeal this decision to the Appeals Committee of the Graduate Programmes Review Board.

24.5 Egregious behaviour will result in immediate termination from a practicum or field experience placement.

25. GRADING SYSTEM FOR MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES.

25.1 For graduate programmes, The College of The Bahamas will use a system of letter grades that are equivalent to the following numerical quality points:

LETTER	GRADE	QUALITY POINT EQUIVALENT
A	4.00	SUPERIOR; CLEARLY OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE ON ALL EVALUATIVE CRITERIA
A-	3.75	EXCELLENT; EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE, BUT NOT OUTSTANDING ON ALL EVALUATIVE CRITERIA
B	3.50	GOOD; EXPECTED PERFORMANCE
B-	3.25	BELOW EXPECTED PERFORMANCE
F	0.00	FAILING
S	0.00	SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF PRACTICUM OR INTERNSHIP.
U	0.00	UNSATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF PRACTICUM OR

IN ADDITION, THE FOLLOWING STATUS INDICATORS MAY APPEAR ON A TRANSCRIPT:

FX	FAILURE DUE TO ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS
AU	AUDIT
I	INCOMPLETE
W	WITHDRAWAL

26. ACADEMIC STANDARDS

26.1 The minimum acceptable standard for all graduate students is a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.50 or semester average of B.

27. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

27.1 Graduate students must agree to be bound by the policies regarding academic honesty when they enter their respective programmes.

27.2 Academic dishonesty is broadly defined as any act that undermines or compromises academic integrity.

27.3 It is the responsibility of each student to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty and it is the responsibility of each student to seek advice if he or she does not fully understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

28. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS

28.1 The Graduate Programmes Review Board will oversee compliance with Academic Integrity.

28.2 An instructor shall have wide discretion to determine what course of action to take where there is evidence of academic integrity violations.

28.3 Where the violation is severe enough to warrant possible dismissal from the programme and/or The College, the instructor shall make this recommendation to the relevant Dean who shall make the decision.

28.4 Violations of academic integrity shall be reported to the GPRB.

29. MAINTENANCE OF GOOD STANDING

29.1 A student is in good standing if enrolled in a programme and has a GPA of 3.50 or has been given an official leave of absence.

- 29.2** Failure to maintain a GPA of 3.50 or failure of a course will result in academic dismissal in the following semester. In exceptional circumstances the GPRB may decide to grant academic probation to a student for one semester.
- 29.3** A student who has exceptional cause can apply for re-admittance to the Graduate Programmes Review Board.

30. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- 30.1** Students may be granted a leave of absence for one semester with due cause. Students wishing to make such a request must submit their request to the Dean before the beginning of the first semester of leave of absence and no retroactive leave of absence shall be granted.
- 30.2** Graduate students must complete their degree programmes within five (5) years of the semester of matriculation unless granted specific extension of this period for due cause by the GPRB.

31. FACULTY TEACHING IN GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

- 31.1** The Graduate Programmes Review Board will recommend to The College Council each instructor being considered to teach in a programme on a course by course, cohort by cohort basis.
- 31.2** Faculty teaching in a graduate programme will hold terminal degrees in their field of study or hold the highest professional qualification required in their profession.

32. APPEALS

- 32.1** A student may appeal a decision of an instructor or the Dean to the GPRB who shall submit the appeal to its Appeals Committee for recommendation.
- 32.2** The GPRB will normally approve the recommendation of its Appeals Committee unless there is clear evidence that the procedure has not respected principles of natural justice and will not re-hear the case.
- 32.3** In cases where the student wishes to appeal the decision of the GPRB, the appeal will be submitted to the College Council in accordance with the terms of *The College of The Bahamas Act, 1995*. The decision of The Council shall be final.

33. MAINTENANCE OF ACADEMIC RECORDS

- 33.1** The Registrar will maintain all official academic records for all students in graduate programmes.
- 33.2** The Office of Graduate Programmes may request a copy of such records as needed and these shall be provided.
- 33.3** Students will have access to their academic record and may request a copy of such records to The Registrar who shall provide it either immediately or within a reasonable delay.

34. TUITION & FEES

- 34.1** Tuition and fees will be set The College Council on a programme and cohort basis.
- 34.2** Tuition and fees are due in full each semester upon registration for courses.

35. OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION

- 35.1** Official communication between The College and students will be through their college e-mail account.

36. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND PARTICIPATION IN COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

- 36.1** The College of The Bahamas will approve for graduation candidates who have met all requirements of their programme which has been approved by the Graduate Programmes Review Board and the College Council.

References

Wheelock College Graduate Course Catalog 2008-2009

Kent State University Graduate Course Catalog 2008-2009

New York University Graduate Course Catalog 2008-2009

*The New England Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
Standards for Accreditation*

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) User's Guide, 2009