



NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY

SEC. II- GRADUATE: PROGRAMS 3.0

GRADUATE COURSES, CREDITS AND CURRICULUM

UNIT POLICY—ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

I. Semester Credit Hour: The unit of academic work is the semester credit hour defined as one 50-minute lecture period (or at least two periods of laboratory or field work) per week throughout one fifteen week semester. Summer sessions are shorter in duration; however, the contact hours each week are increased proportionately. Online or blended courses will have the same learning outcomes as those delivered in traditional classroom instruction. Because learning in online and blended courses may not be quantified in terms class meeting time, emphasis is placed upon evidence of student learning.

II. Degree program: A comprehensive course of study in a given disciplinary area identified by a unique CIP (Classification of Instructional Programs) code that leads to a master's or doctoral degree. The Registrar will maintain a unique major code for each degree program. Curriculum proposals for all graduate degree program should be submitted to the Graduate Council, the Teacher Education Council (if teaching licensure option is included), and then to the Faculty Senate for approval. Students are formally admitted to a degree program. The name of the degree and the discipline appears on the student's plan of study, diploma and transcript.

III. Concentration: A graduate degree program may offer concentrations within the major field of study that reflect areas of specialization. A concentration within a degree program is defined by a coordinated set of courses representing a minimum of 18 credit hours. All concentrations within a degree program share a common core consisting of at least 9 credit hours. Furthermore, all concentrations require the same total credit hours for graduation. The Registrar will maintain a unique major code for each concentration within a degree program. Curriculum requests for all

graduate degree concentrations should be submitted to the Graduate Council, the Teacher Education Council (if teaching licensure option is included), and then to the Faculty Senate for approval. Students are formally admitted to a concentration within a degree program. The name of the concentration appears on the student's plan of study and transcript, but not on the diploma.

IV. Option: Options represent various pathways for a student to complete a degree program. All options will require the same total credit hours for graduation. Curriculum requests for all options within a graduate degree program should be submitted to the Graduate Council, the Teacher Education Council (if teaching licensure option is included), and then to the Faculty Senate for approval. A student is not admitted into an option. The option appears on the student's plan of study, but neither on the transcript nor the diploma.

V. Minimum credit hours for degree programs: The following minimum graduate credit hours are required for each type of graduate program. Individual programs may require a higher number of credit hours to fulfill disciplinary accreditation requirements.

- a. Masters programs: 30 credit hours beyond bachelor's degree including at least 6 credit hours of thesis research for thesis-option
- b. Doctoral programs: 60 credit hours beyond bachelor's degree including at least 12 credit hours of dissertation research.

VI. Comprehensive Assessments: Graduate programs may require students to successfully complete a comprehensive assessment. The assessment may include a comprehensive examination (written and/or oral), a research project, thesis, dissertation, capstone course, portfolio, internship, field experience and/or equivalent. For details, students are referred to program/department handbooks.

Approved by the Chancellor

Date 2015 revised policy is effective: For Sec. 5.b., upon approval; Sec. 5.a. is effective December 21, 2015 for students enrolled thereafter.

First approved:	August 6, 2012
Date Original is Effective:	August 15, 2013
Revised:	March 10, 2014
	October 12, 2015