Graduate Admissions

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• Non-degree Applicants

Application Procedures

Applications and required fees are submitted to the Office of Graduate Admissions at grad.wvu.edu/admissions and, once complete, are forwarded to departments for review and decisions. Final admission cannot be approved until the complete academic record and certification of degree have been received and evaluated by the Office of Admissions. A student who wishes to take courses after completing a degree must submit a new application and pay the nonrefundable service fee. Any applicant who fails to enroll within a year after acceptance must reapply.

Students who wish to enroll in graduate courses (including online and off-campus courses) must be admitted to West Virginia University as a regular, provisional, or non-degree student. Each program has specific admission requirements that should be carefully reviewed prior to applying. Each program requires separate admission. Degree students who have not been enrolled for two or more years must reapply for admission.

Initial Inquiry

Prospective graduate students are urged to initially contact individual programs regarding opportunities to pursue graduate study in the program of interest. In addition to obtaining information online or through the mail, students should contact graduate program directors or individual faculty members to ascertain the potential for graduate study in particular academic and research areas. For a list of available degree and certificate programs, websites, and contacts, see the list of “Degree Programs” in this catalog and at majors.wvu.edu. Information relevant to the application process can be found at grad.wvu.edu/admissions with additional information regarding the program of interest to be found on the individual program’s website.

Minimum Admission Standards

The University Graduate Council establishes the minimum standards for admission to graduate study detailed in the “Classifications” section below. Beyond this point, however, faculty members in a given graduate program control who is to be admitted to graduate study under their supervision. While a student may be admitted to the University to enroll in advanced coursework as a non-degree student, only program faculty may grant permission for the pursuit of a graduate degree.

Non-degree Applicants

Students not wishing to pursue an advanced degree may apply for admission as non-degree graduate students through the Office of Admissions: http://admissions.wvu.edu/.

International Student Admission

West Virginia University is authorized under federal law to enroll non-immigrant foreign nationals as students. International students wishing to enroll for graduate work at WVU must comply with the stated academic requirements for admission and with certain additional academic and nonacademic requirements.

International applicants should forward a letter of inquiry one year before they wish to begin study in the United States. The University receives a large number of applications from international students. For this reason and because of the time required for the student to make visa and financial arrangements, April 1 has been established as a deadline after which applications cannot be guaranteed consideration for fall admission. International students applying for admission to West Virginia University must submit the following:

• A completed international student admission application.
• Application service fee.
• The official results of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The minimum TOEFL scores needed for admission to WVU are: Internet-based = 79; computer-based = 213; paper-based = 550.
• The official results of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), sent directly to WVU by the testing service, are also accepted for admission. A score of 6.5 on the IELTS is required.
• Original or certified copies of the applicant’s official academic record in the original language of issue. Applicants who have studied in the United States are required to have the institutions send an official transcript directly to WVU.
• Original or certified copy of all certificates or diplomas in the original language of issue.
• Official English translations of the academic record and certificates/diplomas.
• For visa documents, certification of financial support and a copy of current passport or visa.

Details regarding application requirements for international graduate students can be found at admissions.wvu.edu/admissions/toefl/graduate-students. Incomplete applications cannot be guaranteed consideration for the desired semester. Applicants are encouraged to contact the academic program of interest for information about requirements other than those listed above.

International students seeking financial support as graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) are required to pass the WVU SPEAK test (see English Language Proficiency and Graduate Teaching Assistants).

In this Section
• Transfer Students
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Transfer Students
A student wishing to transfer to WVU from another accredited institution should follow the same application procedures as those specified for new graduate students.

A student wishing to apply graduate credit earned at another accredited institution of higher education to a degree program at WVU must submit a transfer of graduate credit form. Non-degree graduate students are not permitted to transfer credit to WVU from another institution.

Graduate programs may accept up to twelve credits as transfer graduate credit. Individual graduate units may have lower limits.

Transfer to Another Program at WVU
A student may initiate a transfer to another program within WVU by contacting the dean’s office of the school or college where enrolled. Following the student’s request, the dean’s office will send the student’s record to the school or college that the student wishes to enter. The school or college receiving the record is required to acknowledge receipt of the record and notify the Office of University Registrar of the status of the student’s application within thirty days. If a student is accepted by the new school or college, the school or college retains the student’s record and notifies the student of acceptance. If a student is rejected, he or she is notified and the student’s record is returned to the original school or college. The Office of the University Registrar is responsible for updating students’ records to reflect new majors and new advisors.

When a student transfers from one unit or program to another unit or program within the University, the faculty of the new unit determines if any credit earned under the guidance of the prior unit may be applied to a degree, certificate, or other educational offering of the new unit.

Programs may establish admission requirements in addition to those set by the University Graduate Council, such as a higher grade point average, the submission of scores on standardized tests, and the receipt of letters of recommendation.

In this Section
• Classifications
• Reclassification of Provisional Graduate Students
• Other reclassifications

Classifications
• Regular Graduate Student — Regular graduate students are degree-seeking students who meet all the criteria for regular admission to a program of their choice. The student must have earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university, must have had a grade point average of 2.75 or higher on a 4.0 scale, have met all the criteria established by the degree program, and be under no requirements to make up deficiencies.
• Provisional Graduate Student — A student may be admitted as provisional by any unit when the student has earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university, but does not meet the criteria for regular admission. The student may have incomplete credentials, deficiencies to make up, or an undergraduate scholastic record that shows promise but is below the 2.75 grade point average required for regular admission. The letter of acceptance from the graduate program should outline the steps necessary for the graduate student to be re-classified as a regular graduate student.
• Non-Degree Graduate Student — A non-degree student is a student not admitted to a program. Admission as a non-degree student does not guarantee admission to any course or program. The reasons for non-degree admission may be late application, incomplete credentials, scholarship deficiencies, or lack of a degree objective. Although a non-degree student has not been admitted to a graduate program, a unit may allow a non-degree student to enroll in its courses. To be admitted as a non-degree student, a student must only present evidence of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university and a 2.5 grade point average. The student must also earn a 2.5 grade point average on the first twelve credit
hours of coursework taken at WVU and then maintain this average as long as they are enrolled as a non-degree student. To be eligible to enter a degree program as a regular graduate student, the student must have earned a 2.75 or higher grade point average on all coursework taken since admission as a non-degree graduate student.

• These standards are the minimum standards established by the University. Individual academic units or graduate programs may establish higher standards.

Reclassification of Provisional Graduate Students

The requirement(s) to change from provisional to regular graduate classification are specified by the graduate department or program but must include earning a grade point average of 2.75 or higher on all coursework and, if appropriate, satisfactory performance in ESL courses. Individual degree programs may set higher grade point average requirements.

A unit must review the student’s record and make a final decision on the student’s admission no later than at completion of eighteen credit hours. A student who has met the provisions of admission and achieved the required grade point average and other requirements may be reclassified as a regular student. A student who fails to meet the provisions of admission or who fails to achieve the required grade point average will be suspended, but s/he may be reinstated in order to transfer to another program or to non-degree status. The academic unit must notify the student and the Office of Admissions of its decision.

Upon notification by the appropriate academic unit, the Office of Admissions will prohibit the registration of all provisional graduate students who have reached the maximum of eighteen credit hours. Registration will not be permitted until the student is reclassified as a regular graduate student; an exception may be granted by an academic Dean, or if the student is transferred to another program. A student may be admitted as a provisional graduate student more than once, but not by the same graduate program.

All credit hours taken since admission as a provisional graduate student or those to be applied to a degree count in the eighteen credit-hour limit, i.e., undergraduate or graduate credit, P/F, S/U, graded courses, credit by senior petition, and transfer credit.

Other Reclassifications

Regular and provisional students may become non-degree graduate students by choice. This includes students who fail to meet admission or academic standards or who withdraw voluntarily.

In this Section

• Standardized Tests
• Admission Denial

Standardized Tests

Many programs at WVU require graduate record examination (such as the GRE or GMAT) scores from all applicants, but in no program is an examination score the sole criterion for admission. Some programs require both the general and the appropriate advanced tests before considering an applicant for admission. Other programs require different tests. Specific admission requirements are found in the program sections of the Graduate Catalog (catalog.wvu.edu). If GRE or GMAT tests are required, the applicant should request the Educational Testing Service to forward scores to the WVU Office of Graduate Admissions. (The code identifying WVU to the GRE is 5904.) In addition, students are encouraged to send a machine-reproduced copy of GRE or GMAT scores, if available, along with the initial application to the Office of Graduate Admissions in order to facilitate the WVU evaluation process.

Admission Denial

If an application for admission into a graduate program is denied, the applicant may request the reasons for refusal of admission by writing to the graduate program coordinator. It should be noted that meeting the minimum requirements for admission into a graduate program does not ensure admission. Many programs, due to resource limitations, restrict the number of admissions by selecting the top candidates among the qualified applicants. An applicant may appeal to the program for reconsideration if he or she can document factual errors in processing the application or if the decision was deemed arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory in nature.

If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily within thirty calendar days of the receipt of the appeal by the program, the applicant may appeal to the dean of the college or school. The decision of the dean, as the provost’s designee, shall be rendered within twenty calendar days of the receipt of the appeal and is final.