Admissions

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General Information

Applications and required fees are submitted to the Office of Graduate Admissions (graduate.wvu.edu/future-students). Some professional programs may also require application through another central service. Once applications are complete, they are forwarded to departments for review and decisions. Final admission cannot be granted until all final transcripts have been received and successful completion of the student’s bachelor’s degree (or master’s degree, if required) has been determined by the Office of Graduate Admissions.

A student who wishes to take courses after completing a degree at WVU must submit a new application and pay the nonrefundable application fee. Applicants who wish to pursue more than one degree must apply separately to each degree program. Any applicant who fails to enroll within a year after acceptance must reapply. Students admitted to and enrolled in a degree program who have not been enrolled for two or more years must reapply for admission.

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 graduate student. Each degree program has specific admission requirements that should be carefully reviewed prior to applying. Although applicants may meet the minimum requirements for admission into the university, admissions acceptance is determined by each specific academic program.

Initial Inquiry

Prospective graduate students are encouraged to complete an online inquiry form and are urged to contact the relevant academic department regarding specific admissions requirements and opportunities for pursuing graduate study. 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 and links relevant to the application process can be found at graduate.wvu.edu/future-students/application-process with additional information regarding the program of interest to be found on the individual programs’ websites.

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.

Adding or Changing Programs

A current WVU graduate student who wishes to be admitted to an additional or to a different graduate program must contact the program to determine the procedure for applying for admission. In most cases, the student must apply to the program through the regular admissions process.

When a student changes from one program to another within the University, the faculty of the new program determines if any credit (up to 12 credits) earned under the guidance of the prior program may be applied to the new program.

Minimum Admission Standards

The WVU Graduate Council establishes the minimum standards for admission to graduate study detailed in the “Classifications” section. 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.

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 admissions section of each program description within the Graduate Catalog (catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/) and at majors.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, applicants are encouraged to upload a machine-reproduced copy of their GRE or GMAT scores, if available, as part of their online application 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.

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: admissions.wvu.edu/.

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Regular Graduate Students

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, must have met all the criteria established by the degree program, and must be under no requirements to make up deficiencies.
Provisional Graduate Students

A student may be admitted as a provisional graduate student by a program 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 admission from the graduate program must specify the requirements that must be met for the graduate student to be re-classified as a regular graduate student.

Non-Degree Graduate Students

A non-degree graduate 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 program may allow a non-degree student to enroll in its courses. To be admitted as a non-degree student, a student must 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 he or she is 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

A provisional graduate student may be reclassified as a regular graduate student when the student meets the requirements specified in the letter of admission from the student’s program. The requirements must at minimum include earning a grade point average of 2.75 or higher on all coursework and, if appropriate, satisfactory performance in ESL (English as a Second Language) 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. 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, and transfer credit.

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 graduate 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 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 to admit or suspend the student.

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, a provisional graduate student in a different program, or a non-degree graduate student. An exception may be granted by an academic dean. A student may be admitted as a provisional graduate student more than once, but not by the same graduate program.

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. A regular or provisional graduate student who is dismissed from a program for academic or other reasons will be reclassified as a non-degree graduate student.

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 academic requirements for admission and with certain additional academic and nonacademic requirements.

International applicants should forward a letter of inquiry to the department they want to enter, 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, international applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to posted University and program deadlines for guaranteed consideration for the desired semester.

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 program-specific information about requirements other than the general admissions criteria listed above.

International students seeking or offered financial support as graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and whose native language is not English are required to pass the WVU SPEAK test prior to engaging in any classroom instruction (iep.wvu.edu/testing_resources/speak).