

# Graduate Director's Guide to College Administrative Actions

SECOND UPDATED EDITION

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## **Chapter One -- Graduate Office Administration Overview**

The department graduate studies director is the essential link in support of graduate programs in the College of Arts and Sciences. While other colleges have diverse academic assistance offices that may include advising, recruiting, special events management as well as admissions and program planning, the College of Arts and Sciences at Georgia State University is decentralized in this regard, and the staff exists to help coordinate extensive administrative actions and responsibilities spread out over the many disciplines, departments and centers of the college.

The department graduate director, therefore, must serve as recruiter, adviser, admissions officer, information officer, assistantship manager, program and GPA compliance monitor, data verifier, and take on other roles as the needs of facilitating graduate studies administration demand. The specialists of the Graduate Office support department graduate directors with information resource management, document verification, and other forms of enterprise architecture that make the complex academic processes run smoothly and in a timely manner.

In fact, the department graduate director is an integral participant in the daily functioning of the Graduate Office, and we encourage contact and communication in all of the processes outlined below to better serve our programs and our students from the time applicants first begin thinking of advanced study at Georgia State to after graduation, when they begin their professional careers beyond the university.

### **Graduate Office**

The Graduate Office is the specific administrative branch of the Dean's Office of the College of Arts and Sciences responsible for administering and overseeing graduate program application processes, academic records, and graduation eligibility. Staffed by a team of professionals who care about and understand the wishes and potentials of graduate students and the requirements of department faculty, the Graduate Office provides essential human and administrative assistance to answer the needs of a diverse clientele. There are three principal divisions of the services the office provides.

#### **Applications for Admission**

The Graduate Office originates and facilitates applications for admission from potential graduate students to the 177 separate graduate academic curricula of the college. The office maintains written descriptions of the programs in the Graduate Catalog, sustains the application process online through CollegeNET and in self-managed paper copies,

enters appropriate documentation into Banner, the student records system, and transfers completed applications to the individual academic departments for review and admissions decisions.

It is important to recognize at the outset that this enterprise is not an admissions office in the strict sense — its actions cannot *admit* or deny anyone to Georgia State University graduate programs. According to the bylaws of the College of Arts and Sciences an area *associate dean* approves final decisions on all applications for admission, based on the review of the applicant's submitted materials and the recommendation of the department. The department cannot admit a student, either, without the dean's approval. The College of Arts and Sciences is the admitting entity, not the department, as required by the Board of Regents of the State of Georgia.

### **Records**

The Graduate Office serves as the principal agent for entering official student information into the student records system (Banner). Through Internet and email interaction, significant points in a student's career are conveyed to this office as part of a permanent college record, which must remain on file in hard copy and electronic form for ten years, or, if the student graduates, seven years after graduation.

Through the online Curriculum Advising and Program Planning (CAPP) Web pages on GoSOLAR, the office maintains records available to students 24 hours a day that reflect their academic progress toward their chosen degree. Benchmarks in this process, such as course completion, committee approval, and qualifying examinations, are displayed as they occur in the student's career at Georgia State. Working with the graduate director in each department and concentration, the Graduate Office maps a unique program summary for every student and maintains a current database of academic activity.

### **Graduation**

The Graduate Office works with the university Registrar to clear all candidates for graduation to receive their degrees by reviewing the CAPP evaluation and coordinating this record with departmental verification of program completion. Based on standards set by the Committee on Graduate Studies, the office monitors standards for, reviews, approves, archives and distributes all texts associated with master's and doctorate degrees in the form of theses and dissertations. The Office also verifies with the graduate director that all general college requirements for semester hours taken and research hours completed have been met satisfactorily. However, the ultimate clearance for graduation candidacy is the approval of the department graduate director that the student's program of study is completed.

As with admissions, the Graduate Office staff cannot graduate any candidate for a degree in the College of Arts and Sciences. The college Graduate Director (associate dean) is the responsible authority. Official graduation is completed by Registrar Graduation Services, about two weeks after the Commencement Ceremony for any given semester.

This guidebook is designed to explain in administrative context the importance of department graduate directors and their part in accomplishing the charges given the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies (see **Appendix A**). None of these goals can be reached without the active and interested participation of concerned faculty members, who are asked to be the representatives of the deans in the graduate disciplines of the college.

## **Department Graduate Director**

Appointment as a department graduate director is approved by the Dean of the College. The graduate director is usually (but not exclusively) an elected member of the Committee on Graduate Studies (a.k.a the Graduate Council), which holds at least one formal meeting each academic semester. A member of the graduate faculty from each department offering a graduate degree is elected by faculty of the department to be a representative. Chaired by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, the Committee must approve all substantive changes in requirements or procedures that affect the operation of graduate programs.

There are several primary functions that the graduate director performs in connection with the staff of the Graduate Office.

1. Coordinate the departmental admissions applications review and make formal recommendations from the department to the area associate dean. This requires interaction with the Graduate Office for any special cases, exceptions or problems. This activity is in direct support of the associate dean's decision about admissibility.
2. Document a definite program of study for each new student who enters the department. This task involves articulating any variation from the standard graduate catalog requirements and notifying the Graduate Office whether the student is following a "thesis" or "nonthesis" degree track at master's level.
3. Monitor and review the GA tuition waiver process to see that appropriate residency information and number of hours are applied to each student receiving an assistantship. Maintain vigilance in continuing awards to see that the correct number of hours and courses are properly registered each semester an award is given.
4. Vouch for all students scheduled to graduate each semester. Although CAPP (see below) and the college audit support portions of this process, there must be written confirmation from the department graduate director/ administrator that a student has passed all requirements in the department before the Registrar is given the clearance from the Graduate Office to grant the student a degree.

## **Information Resource Management**

There are three sources of information for the departmental graduate director to help accomplish the charges set forth in the graduate bylaws of the college. They all involve a definite learning curve to get started, but the benefits of taking the time to follow through on these resources will more than payback the minimal training time required.

### **CollegeNET**

CollegeNET will be more thoroughly outlined in the chapter on admissions. However, it can be used as a reference for preparing other important reports such as five-year review documents and comparison statistics. It is the initial capturing program for potential student information and remains cumulative. The College of Arts and Sciences has been actively maintaining the database in CollegeNET since January, 2004. Consequently, for the 2006-2007 cycle, comparative figures should be available. From this source, the graduate directors can draw demographics of applicants by geographic area, age, gender, etc. Using a feature accessible through the Graduate Office, it can also trigger emails to applicants, which can enhance follow-up on potential prospects.




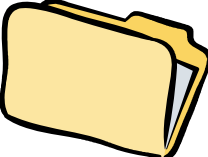
### **Banner**




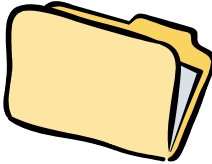
“Banner” is the commercial name for the student records program used throughout the University System of Georgia. It is gradually becoming the repository for all student information, as imaging and digital theses and dissertations begin to be introduced. Each graduate director needs basic training in Banner in order to answer student and applicant questions without having to divert calls or email to others who may be less familiar with specific departmental programs. Screens that are consulted often in Banner will be SAAADMS, the principal admissions screen, and SHANCRS, which will record non-course requirements attained. GA tuition waivers are monitored through TSAUTH. Other screens are discussed in detail below.

### **Permanent Record File**

The definitive file for the graduate student from the time of application is still the manila folder. It prevents the unregulated duplication of materials, confusion of information sources and resources, and collects all the documents pertinent to an individual in one portable format. All permanent record files are given a barcode and tracked carefully in a separate database system to enhance security throughout their frequent transportation.

The next two pages present a chart showing the information resources of the graduate director and the Graduate Office. CollegeNET and Banner are available directly to the departments; the permanent record must be reviewed in or through the Graduate Office.

 		 <b>Permanent Hard Copy Record</b>
Name	Name	Name
Date of Application	Date of Application	Date of Application
Mailing Address	Mailing Address	Mailing Address
Permanent Address	Permanent Address	Permanent Address
Time at Address	Time at Address	Time at Address
Home Telephone	Home Telephone	Home Telephone
Business Telephone	Business Telephone	Business Telephone
Private E-mail Address	Private E-mail Address	Private E-mail Address
Social Security Number	Social Security Number	Social Security Number
Country of Citizenship	Country of Citizenship	Country of Citizenship
Gender	Gender	Gender
Date of Birth	Date of Birth	Date of Birth
Race	Race	Race
US Citizenship Status	US Citizenship Status	US Citizenship Status
State of Residence	State of Residence	State of Residence
Country of Birth	Country of Birth	Country of Birth
Mother Tongue	Mother Tongue	Mother Tongue
Language of college Instruction	Language of college Instruction	Language of college Instruction
Semester for Application	Semester for Application	Semester for Application
Degree Sought	Degree Sought	Degree Sought
How heard of Program		How heard of Program
Applying for Assistantship		
Colleges and Universities Attended	Colleges and Universities Attended	College transcripts from all attended
Date took GRE or MAT	Date Took GRE or MAT	Date Took GRE or MAT
	GRE or MAT official Scores	GRE or MAT Official Scores/ Unofficial Scores
Previously Attended GSU	Previously Attended GSU	Previously Attended GSU

 		 <p><b>Permanent Hard Copy Record</b></p>
Dates scores requested to be sent		Dates scores requested to be sent
Date TOEFL intended		Date TOEFL intended
Date Scores of TOEFL sent to GSU		Date Scores of TOEFL sent to GSU
	TOEFL Scores	Unofficial/ Official TOEFL Scores
Type of Visa Requested		Type of Visa Requested
Visa Current	Visa Current	Visa Current
Permanent Resident Alien Number	Permanent Resident Alien Number	Permanent Resident Alien Number
Residency Information	Residency Information	Residency Information
Employment Past two Years		Employment Past Two Years
Personal Statement		Personal Statement
Application for Financial Assistance		
	Status of Application	Letters of Recommendation
		Writing Sample, Portfolio
		Correspondence through Grad Office
	Program Changes and Exceptions	Program Changes and Exceptions
		Admission Decision Document
		Acceptance Letter
		college Audit
	Academic Progress Benchmarks	Academic Progress Verification Documents
	Location of Permanent File	
	Location of Application for Admission	
	On Assistantship Verification	

## Chapter Two -- The Application Process

In the College of Arts and Sciences, admission to graduate programs is a joint effort between the applicant, the Graduate Office, the department, and the Office of the Dean. Each one depends on the other, and there is frequent exchange and interaction among all of the parties that require both attention and timeliness of action to make the process efficient.

### Introduction

**Every person** who completes an application to Georgia State University by the published deadline has a legal right to a definite decision on his or her application in a timely manner. This means that in a reasonable amount of time, they will be notified precisely whether they have been offered or denied admission to graduate study by the College of Arts and Sciences (see example letters below). Reporting of all decisions is made by the Graduate Office in the name of the appropriate associate dean. **Departments should not make such notifications in any format, electronic or paper.**

There are several types of decisions that can be made:

1. **Full Status:** The applicant is admissible without reserve and has been accepted into the program as outlined in the *Graduate Catalog*.
2. **Special Status:** The applicant is admitted with some reservations about his/her ability to do graduate work. For example, someone admitted special status might need to obtain a certain average the first term, or take a certain course to fill in a gap in the academic queue. [It is the department graduate director's advising process that serves as an annual review of these admissions; the director must send notifications of termination if required and notify the Graduate Office of any change of academic status, including removal of Special Status.] Students must have in their program a minimum of 20 semester hours to complete after the terms of special status are met.
3. **Non-degree Status:** The applicant is admitted but may not count the courses as being taken toward any graduate degree offered in the department at the time of admission. Should the student be accepted in a degree program later, however, courses taken in non-degree status *may* be applied toward a graduate degree at departmental discretion. This status has a maximum limit of 9 semester hours.
4. **Transient Status:** The applicant is allowed to take classes in the department for which academic credit will be given and payment made. However, the applicant

must already be a student in good standing at another institution and active in a related graduate program.

5. **Application Withdrawn:** Something came up that halted the admission process, either at the department level (such as reorganization) or on behalf of the applicant. Perhaps the applicant took another offer, became ill, decided to wait for financial reasons, or was asked by the department to roll the application over to another semester. The decision means “stop,” and therefore is also a *final decision*. When an application is withdrawn from the admission process, the application can be reconsidered for a future semester without the applicant having to resubmit the \$50 application fee.
6. **Deny:** The applicant is not admitted into the program. If the department wishes to recommend the applicant for transfer to the post baccalaureate program, this information should be included in the “comments” section of the admissions transmittal sheet. NOTE that this is a *final decision* and not a guarantee for later admission. The applicant must REAPPLY.

All are decisions that bring the admissions attempt of an individual *to a close*.

The decision of “accept” does not mean that applicants then become Georgia State graduate students. The individuals must register for classes first. They are still technically applicants until they register for an initial class.

Applicants are only accepted for the program and term to which they apply. Accepted applicants and “academically admissible” international students (see below) can, however, delay their admission to the college with the approval of their departments. Written (email) permission to register another specified semester must be provided the Graduate Office by the department graduate director prior to the semester of admission. Acceptants can postpone their registration *only once*. After one deferral, if they still have not registered, they must reapply to begin study, repay the requisite fees, and update any supplemental information. Moreover, if the student fails to register and has not notified the department of wanting to defer, the acceptance expires and necessitates a new application for reconsideration.

An applicant also has the right to reapply once a negative decision has been made by an associate dean. Although some of the materials may be used again at the applicant’s discretion, all application forms and fees must be re-submitted. There is no limit to the number of times individuals can apply to a graduate program.

For numerous reasons, individuals sometimes begin application files and never complete them. All files incomplete after the passing of the established application completion deadline are moved to “incomplete” status. The applicant is notified by email that the deadline was missed and advised on possible alternative actions. The admission material submitted can then be reused in a later application for up to three more years to reactivate the review process. Files are held in the Graduate Office during this time and then

destroyed. Applicants can, with personal notification to the Graduate Office, resubmit a previously incomplete application for *one additional time* without having to fill out a new application form or repay the application fee. However, they can only update their application once. After that, they must reapply as if from the beginning.

## CollegeNET and Applications

As an enhancement to the admissions process, Georgia State University has contracted with CollegeNET, an independent Internet provider that prepares, collects, and stores application materials and the various demographics that can be collected from applicant information.

CollegeNET is accessible to applicants 24 hours a day through the Graduate Office Web page at <http://www.gsu.edu/casgrad>. Using a specific id for each department, a graduate director can access this service at any time to keep track of applications, view them, and discuss with colleagues whether any special interest or action should be taken in regard to any applicant by going to <http://admin.applyweb.com>. Since the Graduate Office no longer prints application materials (except in custom cases), most applicants now at least begin their preliminary paperwork online. Currently, 75.3% of graduate school admissions offices consider the Web the most important gateway for applicants. This gives departments the ability to know immediately significant information about the prospects to their programs.

All paper copies of applications received in the Graduate Office (or in departments when transferred to the Graduate Office) are manually entered daily into CollegeNET in order to be consistent and to facilitate loading of application information to the Banner student records system.

The reports function of CollegeNET is extensive, and with some limited training, the graduate director can run frequent reports, bar graphs, charts and other instruments that express the trends and architecture of the application process. In addition, CollegeNET can be set to “trigger” email messages related to information or keywords provided in the applications.

During the 2006-2007 admissions cycle, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions will be testing electronic imaging processes with applications to the graduate division of the College of Arts and Sciences. In these instances, the applications from CollegeNET will be routinely downloaded as .pdf files and attached to student records. In addition, transcripts will be scanned and also attached to the initial Banner record created from CollegeNET. The Graduate Office will notify department graduate directors when this new service is available.

At different times throughout the semester, the Graduate Office offers both familiarity and training sessions about the uses of CollegeNET for newly appointed graduate directors. Please contact the office for an appointment

**INSTRUCTIONS—SEARCH, VIEW AND PRINT INITIAL APPLICATIONS**

- 1). Go to CollegeNET Web page: <http://admin.applyweb.com/>
- 2). Enter username and password:  
Username – (available from the Graduate Office)  
Password – (usually department name)
- 3). Click on “Forms Management” tab.
- 4). Click on “Search” tab (a separate browser window will pop up allowing you to enter search parameters).
- 5). Search forms that were “submitted” and choose desired parameters (i.e. date, last name, birth date, SSN, etc.).
- 6). Search results will come up in previous browser window.
- 7). Double click on a particular form to see html view .
- 8). To create Portable Document Files for selected application forms, check the boxes next to the forms you desire, and, under the “output” tab at the bottom, select the “PDF” radio button and hit submit. Printable PDFs of the selected application forms will be created.

A new feature going online with CollegeNET for the first time in 2006 is the acceptance of Web based letters of recommendation. Students will be able to request recommenders to write letters of support via a secure Web link, which will then convert the letters to PDF files that can be downloaded to the Graduate Office. This process should significantly accelerate completion time for most applications. Until the complete electronic transfer process is in place, the Web-generated letters will be made part of the material manila portable file for each applicant.

**Regular Degree Program Applicants (M.A., M.F.A., Ph.D., etc.)**

The College of Arts and Sciences uses self-managed applications for admission to its graduate programs. This means that it is the applicant’s responsibility to prepare or collect all requested credentials and submit them at one time in a single packet to the Graduate Office for processing.

A self-managed application requires appropriate planning on the applicant’s part to allow time to prepare the application properly and to collect all the necessary documents. This process also gives the applicant control over when the application is complete. It

eliminates the need for concern over lost or misdirected applications, letters of recommendation, transcripts, or standardized test scores.

The first step of the process is to initiate an application online at <http://www.gsu.edu/casgrad> the Graduate Office Web site, and fill in any supplemental information requested on the application. Every application, regardless of how it is initially collected, *must* have associated with it some form of payment: either a check, credit card information, money order, or associate dean's deferment approval (see below). Because of federal fairness statutes, equal opportunity laws, and State of Georgia Constitutional requirements, no application processing is fair or legal without one of the above.

Applicants can use a credit card to pay the application fee directly to CollegeNET and the application will come immediately to us. They can also pay by electronic check, in which case CollegeNET will hold the application information until the check clears the bank and then release the information for download (about 4 days). Some departments or programs have supplemental forms on the Worldwide Web. Applicants are required to complete all such forms before their application will be processed by CollegeNET.

It is possible for graduate directors to track email addresses of applicants with incomplete applications; but no information beyond the address is released to the university by CollegeNET until evidence of full payment has reached their office, then the complete application is accessible.

In unusual cases where applicants cannot begin the process online, they can download a paper application from the Graduate Office Web page and send it to the Graduate Office directly. In this case, the applicant must also include in the application packet a payment check or money order for the \$50 application fee. Another alternative is sending the forms by fax or email either as an attachment or a message and collecting credit card account information by phone. The Graduate Office will also produce custom applications and send them by commercial or government airmail to locations without any of these services.

Whenever the Graduate Office receives a paid originating application (online or paper), it is entered into the CollegeNET database. This means that the application can be viewed by the graduate director as soon as it is entered, and before the physical file is received by the department. As described above, each department has both a username and password that allow the graduate director and other authorized individuals to view all initiated applications to their programs. If a department requires supplemental information as part of the application materials, this can also be seen along with the application form and viewed by the department graduate director.

After applying and paying via the Internet the applicant must prepare and submit additional components of the admissions packet as outlined by the college. These materials are listed on the Graduate Office Web site and are established by individual departments. Online application information is *not* considered a complete application



before this date puts them into serious jeopardy, possibly necessitating the postponement of their application until a later semester.

## GRE

The general test of the Graduate Record Examination is offered year-round as a computer-based test at centers throughout the world. Individual arrangements to take the GRE can be made with the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N.J. Additional detailed information on the GRE can be found at:

Web: <http://www.gre.org>

Email: [gre@ets.org](mailto:gre@ets.org)

Phone: 1-609-771-7670

Toll Free: 1-800-GRE-CALL

Official GRE test scores must be reported by Educational Testing Service using the Georgia State University institutional code 5251. These scores are downloaded periodically into the Georgia State student records system (Banner). This acquisition is made at the university level and can take varying periods of time depending on the season and academic division assigned to data input. Every effort is made to apply the scores to applicant records in a timely manner, but no guaranteed time is possible. Students should be advised to take this examination early in the application process to allow for unexpected delays in records management and be certain to include copies of their reports in the self-managed package.

There is no college time limit on the acceptability of scores; each department establishes the length of validity of the test, ranging from five years to 10 to unlimited. However, ETS expunges scores from their computer after five (5) years, and we must be able to confirm the scores as official, thus setting up a practical limit of five years. The College generally establishes a minimum score of 800 cumulative verbal and quantitative scores. Analytical writing scores may be used by some departments to weigh decisions.

The GMAT or LSAT can be selected by an associate dean to substitute for the GRE, but generally the tests are aimed at different skills and difficult to compare with the GRE. Having another advanced degree could also be reason to waive the scores, but the graduate director must receive a direct clearance from the associate dean to make this decision (see "exceptions" below).

**EXCEPTION:** For an applicant to a *master's level program* who has already received a *master's degree* in another discipline or program, the graduate director can choose to exclude the GRE requirement without associate dean approval. However, this decision must be placed in the applicant's permanent file in writing at the Graduate Office.

If a graduate director wishes to exclude any other applicant's GRE score requirement, he/she must submit a request in writing to the appropriate associate dean, who will notify the Graduate Office of approval.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS -- TOEFL SCORES

All international applicants whose native language is not English are required to demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing and speaking the English language. Students must show evidence of their English language ability by successfully passing two evaluative tests: the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), an admissions test for which the score must be submitted as part of the application; and the Georgia State Test of English Proficiency (GSTEP), a skills test conducted for newly admitted students prior to the start of graduate coursework.

The TOEFL is administered by Educational Testing Services, PO Box 6151, Princeton, NJ, 08541-6151, USA. Additional information regarding the administration of the TOEFL is available on the Internet at [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org), by telephone at (609) 771-7100, or by email to [toefl@ets.org](mailto:toefl@ets.org). TOEFL test results are reported electronically by ETS to the Graduate Office of Arts and Sciences using the institution code 8259.

The TOEFL became a computer-based test in many parts of the world in July 1998; an essay-writing score is now a standard part of the test. For international applicants who apply from countries where the TOEFL is still a paper-and-pencil test, we recommend that it be taken if possible at one of the five administration locations where the Test of Written English (TWE) is also given. . The College of Arts and Sciences requires a minimum TOEFL score of 550 (paper-based) or 213 (computer-based).

A new Internet-based test includes integrated components – students listen to a lecture, read a selection on the topic, and then have to write about it. The earlier computer-based test had writing and speaking components, but they were not integrated, and the paper-based test had no writing component at all. The Internet-based test is currently available only in the US. Presently, the College target for the new Internet-based test is comparable to the other two versions and is *a minimum score of 80* (a minimum 18 in each of the four sections), though it will be up to individual departments to make final decisions. This target will be adjusted as we accumulate better information on the correlations with the GSTEP. Also, some programs may want to require higher scores for one or more of the sections (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) in the case of a Graduate Assistant. After gaining some experience in 2006, the College and individual departments will meet again to discuss a permanent standard.

A TOEFL score is valid when the test date is within two years of the application/ completion deadline for the semester to which an applicant is aiming. Applications will not be processed without a valid TOEFL score that meets these minimum requirements. If the test date does not meet this criterion, they must retake the TOEFL and submit current scores before the application will be considered.

The TOEFL report is required to be submitted as part of the application for graduate study for every international applicant whose native language is not English with the following exceptions:

- ✓ Applicants from native English speaking countries, including Australia, British Caribbean Islands, Canada (with the exception of the French areas), Ireland, Israel, the United Kingdom, Ghana, and Kenya.
- ✓ Applicants who have earned a Bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally-accredited university or institution in the United States.
- ✓ Applicants who are permanent residents ***AND do not intend to apply for a teaching assistantship*** (permanent residents applying for teaching assistantships WILL be required to submit a TOEFL score as part of their application).
- ✓ Applicants who have taken and successfully passed the admissions GSTEP (see below).

Candidates' copies of test results will not be accepted as official but may assist in admissions processing. Official scores must be reported through ETS using the Graduate Arts and Sciences institution code 8259.

**Exception:** The TOEFL is not required of international applicants who have received an accredited bachelor's degree or a higher education degree from a U.S. institution or from applicants whose mother tongue is English. For international applicants located in Atlanta, the GSTEP can replace the TOEFL requirement.

If a graduate director wishes to exclude an applicant's TOEFL score requirement, he/she must submit a request in writing to the appropriate associate dean, who will contact the Graduate Office with approval. This may also be accomplished through the waivers and exceptions page on the Graduate Office Web site.

#### ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS

Applicants who completed all or part of their education abroad are required to have their foreign credentials translated by a service independent from the applicant. If additional evaluation is needed, the applicant will be notified by the Graduate Office.

The academic records **MUST** include original documents and a proof of degree letter, if receipt of degree is not indicated on the mark sheet. Documents must be provided for every school attended. Notarized copies are acceptable, or the original documents may be brought to the Graduate Office for review and copying.

#### Supplemental Packet Elements

For consistency and fairness, the Graduate Office also tracks additional elements that the departments want to be available in the review file. In some instances, however, as in the School of Music, these supplemental items are sent by the applicant directly to the department office and not entered on Banner or verified as received by the Graduate Office. As with many other universities, if departments wish additional "untracked" materials sent directly to them, these can be indicated on their own Web sites.

Other departments wish the Graduate Office to assemble all of the elements before transferring a file to them. In either case, the destination of supporting evidence must be clearly stated, and all items listed as “required” must be demanded of all applicants equally. The Graduate Office is obliged to follow assiduously every piece of mail entrusted to it and all required materials publicized on college pages as necessary to be considered for admission.

#### LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

If the department requests that the Graduate Office verify letters of recommendation, such letters are to be collected from recommenders in sealed envelopes and sent directly to the applicant; recommenders must sign their names across the sealed portion of the envelope. The letters must then be submitted to the Graduate Office unopened with the rest of the application packet. Errant or misaddressed letters cause considerable delay and should be discouraged.

The Graduate Office will also accept Web based recommendation letters as established on CollegeNET. The current procedure involves downloading the letters in available PDF files. They will be printed by the Graduate Office and inserted into the applicant's permanent file.

#### OTHER SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Portfolios, writing samples, publications and other evidence of achievement must be clearly identified in the packet and in the format prescribed by the department concerned. Applicants may obtain information about these materials by contacting the graduate director for that department before submitting the application. The department Web site should also contain specific explanations of requirements. These materials are enumerated on the Graduate Office [Web site](#).

#### DEADLINES AND COMPLETION DATES

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences uses the same date for both application and completion of materials. That is, a **completed application** must be on file at the graduate office by a deadline date or, without intervention by a department or dean, be denied for that semester for being “incomplete.” Each semester’s admission/completion date is listed on the Graduate Office Web site.

Applications are considered "complete" (an automatic action in Banner) when the elements designated for college review have been logged into the student records system. Once an item has been set as required, it cannot be omitted from the application without a waiver. Therefore, files still logged as "incomplete" cannot be reviewed for admissions *decisions*. However, departments can designate how few (i.e. basic SACS elements) or how many (such as portfolios, writing samples, etc.) elements they want the Graduate Office to verify. Clearly, the more parts required of the application, the longer such

clearance will take. Applicants are sent an email notice by the Graduate Office acknowledging receipt of the application packet.

Applicants should be advised NOT to send an incomplete packet to the office in an attempt to expedite review of their application. This will create a substantial delay in processing, because incomplete files are held until they are complete. Files completed too late for consideration for the desired semester will be considered for an upcoming semester *once*, if requested specifically by the applicant.

## Special Admission Applicants

### Requirements for Transient Applicants

Students enrolled in a graduate degree program at another accredited institution may apply for transient status to take graduate courses in college departments with permission from the graduate director. Credit for these courses can be transferred to their “home” institution. To enroll as a transient student, the applicant must submit the following information as a complete packet by the deadlines.

- Application form
- \$50 application fee
- Certification of Good Standing completed by the home institution
- List of courses desired

After an appropriate official at the applicant’s home institution has written a letter of good standing, it should be placed in an envelope, sealed with the official’s signature across the back flap of the envelope and sent to the Graduate Office. The applicant must submit the certification unopened.

### Requirements for Non-degree Applicants

The College of Arts and Sciences provides the opportunity for students who are not in direct pursuit of a graduate degree to take a limited number of courses in some departments, with departmental approval. Non-degree students are limited to taking nine semester hours of courses in any department in the college, and it is up to the graduate director to carefully monitor the number of courses completed. Applicants seeking the status of non-degree student are subject to the same fees and application restrictions of other applicants, although departmental standards for admission may vary. An applicant should submit to the graduate office:

- Application form
- \$50 application fee
- Transcripts from every institution attended
- List of courses desired

## Requirements for Exchange Applicants

The admission of official exchange students is different from the usual application flow, and the graduate director becomes much more involved in the initial stages. Students should submit this information directly to the Department concerned. Once the graduate director receives completed forms, forward them along with information listed below to Graduate Office.

Required of Exchange Student:

- 1). Georgia State University Exchange Student Application Form
- 2). Current year's Foreign Student Financial Statement
- 3). Proof of finances (bank statements, letters of commitment, etc)

**NOT required of Exchange Student:**

- \$50 Application Fee
- Letter of good standing
- Transcripts
- TOEFL
- GRE
- GSTEP

Department Submits To Graduate Office:

- 1). Forms listed above (1-3)
- 2). J-1 Exchange Visitor Request Form, filled out completely and signed by program advisor as well as department chair
- 3). Departmental letter of support

See the Graduate Office Web site for a complete guide to exchange student admission.

## Requirements for Readmission Applicants

A student who has taken courses at Georgia State for a semester or more and then fails to register for three consecutive semesters has to apply for readmission to complete his or her degree. There is no guarantee of readmission. There is a readmission fee of \$25. The permission to readmit lasts only for the current academic year (fall, spring, summer), so a student who applies for summer semester but does not register will have to pay another \$25 fee to be eligible to register fall semester.

Students who have attended other colleges and/or universities since last registering at Georgia State must have official transcripts of all coursework taken sent to the Graduate Office prior to the reentry deadline for the appropriate semester. This deadline is published on the Undergraduate Admissions Web pages. Degree programs must approve all reentry applications and may deny reentry due to students' previous academic performance or progress in their program, or the length of time they have not been enrolled.

*Reentering students are subject to the regulations of the Graduate Catalog and the degree program current at the time of reentry.*

The College of Arts and Sciences does not allow transient students to reenter.

The re-entry process involves:

1. The student first going to the Enrollment Services Web page and filling out the form at <http://www.applyweb.com/apply/gsure/> or visits Undergraduate Admissions to obtain an application.
2. Payment of the \$25 re-entry fee.
3. Once the form is on the system, it will be attached through Web X-tender the student's SAAADMS Banner screen and available for viewing.
4. The Graduate Office will be notified of the application, a hard copy of the form will be printed and attached to a current transcript from GSU, any subsequent transcripts sent to the office, and an admissions cover sheet.
5. The entire package is sent c/o the graduate director to the former department. A decision is made at the department level as to whether readmission should be allowed and under what circumstances.
6. The decision paperwork is returned to the Graduate Office, where it is placed in the student's permanent record file.
7. The Graduate Office will notify the student of the decision over the signature of the appropriate associate dean.

NOTE: Undergraduate Admissions has set very specific deadline dates for applying for re-entry. Special cases or late applications must be processed through the Graduate Office. Students should be sent here to fill out a special application.

## Application Processing Workflow

The Graduate Office must receive all materials required by the College (the three-page application form, fee, transcripts, and GRE or MAT or TOEFL scores if applicable) by the advertised deadline/completion date. All materials required by the department (letters of recommendation, portfolios, resumes, writing samples, goal statements, etc) must also be received by the application deadline. Not doing so will not only impede the review process of the departments and delay the application through the Graduate Office (engaged in a new cycle of applications) but will impact other time-sensitive activities such as the determination of residency, the awarding of GRAs, registration fees and a number of other “dominoes” that fall when an application is not complete by the deadline.

Documents and other materials submitted by or for applicants for admission to the College of Arts and Sciences become the property of this institution and cannot be returned. It is the responsibility of each applicant to follow the application procedures completely and correctly and to be certain that all materials have been submitted to the Graduate Office by the appropriate deadline for receipt of materials.

The Graduate Office begins the forwarding to the graduate director of files as soon as possible after they become complete, regardless of the desired semester of entry. Early application is encouraged so applicants can receive their decisions well before the time they wish to enroll. A high volume of files completed at the application deadline *may* mean it takes longer than the *normal processing period* for files to be complete and ready for decisions.

Please note that we cannot respond to any inquiries about the status of application for three weeks immediately following the application deadline for each semester. During this time, we are attempting to expedite examination and verification of documents as quickly as possible for the benefit of all our constituents. After that, applicants can check their application status at <http://www.gsu.edu/casgrad/>

### Logging in the File

In order to verify that each application is complete before engaging the graduate director and the departmental committees in the review process, each initiated application must be “tracked” or verified for SACS compliance and college specifications. This process is accomplished by an application specialist assigned to a specific department. Although all admissions personnel can work interchangeably, we currently have assigned departments by workload and deadline schedule as optimally as possible. These specialists and their contact information are listed on the Graduate Office Web site.

When paper and electronic applications and supportive materials first come to the Graduate Office to be opened, they are registered on CollegeNET, and combined with all online applications from the same time period. All applications (primary forms) should be available on CollegeNET within 24 hours of submission. Moreover, this office

maintains weekly an active Web site at <http://www.gsu.edu/casgrad/> that reflects by department which new application files are “incomplete” (I) or “complete” (C) (see facsimile below), or which have had a decision made.

Record folders (permanent records) are made of hard copy materials, labels affixed, and an inventory bar code assigned. All "tracking" (i.e., input of file/packet contents, acknowledgments of transcripts, official scores, etc. into Banner ) is the sole responsibility of the Graduate Office. As a direct extension of the Dean's Office, the Graduate Office must assure accuracy and integrity in the monitoring of *all* applications and application materials. We are obliged both legally and by university requirements to track and retain **all** initiated applications, even uncompleted ones. We must keep even partial files for three years.

Since the university and Board of Regents require that we allow students to check their application status online, this information must be strictly kept up to date in Banner. This stage influences the accuracy not only of CAPP and GoSOLAR but also any application reports BOR may want later. Any queries from students in applying to diverse departments come to the Graduate Office, and it must have accurate and up-to-date responses for prospective students. This tracking should be completed within a few days of creation of files, depending upon the extent of materials the Graduate Office is asked to verify. This goal cannot be guaranteed during particularly high volume periods when several departments have concurrent or relatively contiguous deadline dates.

If an application is sent directly to a department by an applicant, it must be routed through the Graduate Office as soon as possible for file creation (bar code) and student records entry. This action assures fair and equal treatment to all applicants and enables the college to monitor the location of an application at any time. It is crucial that ALL files be consistently prepared and promptly entered into the student records system (Banner). The department should not attempt to offer an applicant a status report on an application, since administrators may not have access to the full information that the Graduate Office possesses.

### **Departmental Review of the File**

Once the file is completed according to published departmental specifications, which means that the Graduate Office has entered into Banner verification of receipt of all essential documents, the communications coordinator logs the file out of the office on Banner to the department. The Graduate Office notifies the department graduate director, who then arranges pick up of the file, electronic check out, and transportation to the department.

A department/school may look at an incomplete file (i.e. one that is missing one item or more and indicated as “I” on Banner on the weekly report) *without making an official admission decision*. There are two ways this can be done. The graduate director or another faculty member may come to the Graduate Office and look at the file. Or, the department may send someone over to check out the file by having it logged out on

Banner using the barcode system and take it back to the department. Departments can hold incomplete files for SHORT periods (usually not more than three days). Note that since the file is incomplete, if the file is removed from the Graduate Office and the missing material arrives while the file is checked out, the risk of loss or misplacement is increased and the probability of delay in processing heightened. Therefore, we strongly advise that graduate directors review and/or copy anticipated successful applicant files IN THE GRADUATE OFFICE, without taking this unique and unfinished record with them.

After the application/completion deadline established by the department passes, no more applications are entered into the decision flow, although materials remain collected. Applicants are promptly notified by email that they missed the assigned deadline.

The Graduate Office does not discard or disregard an incomplete file. Any mail or material that comes into the office pertinent to the applicant after the deadline is still tracked and put into the person's record (Banner and paper file). Incomplete files that turn "complete" after the established and published "deadline" remain in the Graduate Office without a decision. The applicant is notified of this situation and is requested to let the Graduate Office know if materials will be used for a reapplication. If the department obtains written permission from the appropriate associate dean to continue reviewing the applicant's file in the current admission's cycle, the file may remain active. This action requires a deadline waiver (explained below).

Within a week after the completion deadline, applicants with incomplete files are sent an email indicating that we were unable to send them a decision because their files were not completed. Usually they are aware that this is the case given the information they can view on GoSOLAR. They are told that we will keep their materials if they would like to apply again at a later date and that they can update one semester without having to reapply. But they have to make the request in writing and then complete the application file by the departmental deadline for the semester to which they are updating.

### **The Report of the Departmental Recommendation**

The departmental faculty admission committees review the folder, and when they have made a decision they send the file back to the Graduate Office with the checked-off and signed "decision cover sheet" in place.

A representative of the department returns the files to the Graduate Office and *must* sign them back in. The file is electronically tracked back into the office and logged in on Banner. Files undergo an accounting and a general review for accuracy, inappropriate comments, incorrect reasons for special status decisions, conflicting indications, etc. in relation to federal, university, SACS, and Arts and Sciences admissions policies. *Files should never be transferred directly to the Dean's Office without this last check by the Graduate Office staff.*

## The Admissions Decision

Once a file goes to the dean's office for a signature from the appropriate associate dean, the admissions process is coming to a close. Once again the file is logged out on Banner using the electronic tracking system. The associate dean decides what admissions decision should be made.

When the file returns to the Graduate Office, DOMESTIC applicants are sent, within 48 hours, the official letter from the college that bears a dean's signature and lets the applicant know whether he or she has been accepted or denied. We then enter the admission decision on Banner, which triggers the system to create a Georgia State email address for accepted students. Once the decision is placed into Banner, it is accessible by the applicant through the status check in GoSOLAR. A department copy of the letter sent to the applicant is forwarded to the department graduate director.

INTERNATIONAL applicants are sent either notification that their application has been denied or an acknowledgement that they are academically admissible. This is usually done as a unofficial email indicating the status of the application. This status is also available to them on GoSOLAR. The email sent to academically admissible students is a notification that the documentation that was submitted as part of the application has been sent to the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (OISSS) for review.

A Georgia State University Financial Statement is required of every International academically admissible applicant. Financial statement and visa documents should be included as part of the admissions packet as well. Certification of finances for F and J visa students must be submitted in the form of bank statements and letters of support (affidavit form). Applicants who are permanent residents, asylees, or other non-immigrant visa classifications (H, B etc.) do not have to undergo a financial review. They do have to turn in copies of I-94, work authorization permit, permanent residency card, etc.

Admission cannot be granted to an international applicant who will need an immigration document (I-20 or DS-2019), regardless of academic credentials, until the Georgia State University Financial Statement and supporting documents have been *submitted and approved* showing that the minimum financial requirements have been met. All supporting documents must be originals, not faxes or photocopies. International applicants should be made aware that collecting the documents to support applications may take additional time. Time must be allowed to submit the Georgia State University Financial Affidavit and supporting documentation about financial resources.

The file for each applicant is then sent to the OISSS for review before an admission's decision can be made. When associated documents submitted are in a language other than English, they must be accompanied by official translations. These translations must be *originals* and should be made by the American Embassy, the home country Embassy

or an appropriate government official. If OISSS finds that there is an omission, such as missing financial information, it notifies the student to collect the missing documents.

**WARNING:** This is a step that is most likely to be confusing to departments and disastrous for applicants. If the applicants have to set up appointments with the American Embassy in their home country in order to obtain a visa, be certain to advise them to allow five to six weeks between the time when we indicate academic admissibility and the embassy appointment. Applicants frequently send the wrong financial information, untranslated or unofficial paperwork, or simply cannot get the money together fast enough and back to Georgia State for processing if time is limited. Once we get the financial affidavit and it is approved, OISSS can prepare the visa materials in one to three days; but sorting out finances often takes longer. International students made admissible late, usually after the application deadline, are most prone to this type of disappointment. Graduate directors should advise such applicants to apply early or not expect to be in the program so soon.

#### SUMMARY OF POST-ADMISSIBLE ACTIVITY AT OISSS FOR INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS:

- ◆ Financial documentation is reviewed.
- ◆ Students are notified if more information is needed.
- ◆ Notification of financial approval is sent to Graduate Office.
- ◆ Graduate Office triggers BANNER to push student information through SEVIS system ( takes 24-48 hrs).
- ◆ I-20 is created and sent to Graduate A&S ( takes 24-48 hrs).

#### GSTEP

Georgia State also requires that all accepted international applicants demonstrate proficiency in English when they arrive on campus. These tests are conducted on the Georgia State University campus before classes begin. GSTEP is mandatory; exact dates will be included with the immigration document (I-20 or DS-2019) sent after acceptance. Permanent residents of the USA whose native language is not English or who do not hold an American degree must also have submitted TOEFL scores to be considered for a GRA or GTA.

The GSTEP is a diagnostic test administered by the Department of Applied Linguistics and English as a Second Language at Georgia State University. The purpose of the GSTEP is to specifically evaluate the comprehensive and oral English skills of newly admitted graduate students in order to determine whether or not they will need additional classes in the Intensive English Language (IEP) Program. The GSTEP is administered on the first or second day of International Student Orientation and is required for **ALL** non-native speakers of English.

The GSTEP is given at no cost to the student and consists of a reading/writing essay, a multiple choice listening section, a multiple choice reading section and an oral interview. To show complete proficiency, students must score at level six on the GSTEP. If they do not place into level six, they will register for graduate level reading/writing or listening/speaking courses in their first semester. If they place at level three or below, they are required to be a full-time IEP student.

### IEP

Georgia State University's Intensive English Program (IEP) is an academic English program for students whose native language is not English. The program specializes in preparing ESL students to enter GSU or another U.S. college or university. The IEP offers English courses from beginning to advanced proficiency levels and provides students with the opportunity to take Georgia State University courses upon completion of the program.

Admission to the IEP is separate from admission to the graduate programs in the College of Arts and Sciences and does not ensure acceptance into an academic program at Georgia State University. More information on the IEP can be found at:

Website: <http://www.gsu.edu/~wwwesl/esl/>

Email: [esl@gsu.edu](mailto:esl@gsu.edu)

Phone: (404) 651-3650

Fax: (404) 651-3652

P.O. Box 4099

Atlanta, GA 30302-4099 USA

### **Official Notification of Decision**

Letters of Acceptance/Rejection are sent out only from the Graduate Office after final approval by either an associate dean or OISSS. Acceptances go out first. The goal is to send out letters within 48 hours, but it may take longer when a program has many applicants. Departments do not send out acceptance letters or emails saying an applicant has been accepted to a program.

Students can discover their own decisions online in real time at the GoSOLAR status page. Once the status "decision made" is placed into Banner, they can see the results with the following explanations.

Full Status -- "Accepted" or "Admission Not Approved"

Special Status -- "Accepted With Conditions" or "Admission Not Approved"

Non Degree -- "Accepted" or "Admission Not Approved"

Transient -- "Accepted" or "Admission Not Approved"

Application Withdrawn -- "Application Withdrawn"

Academically Admissible -- "Academically Admissible"

The instructions direct the applicant to the department graduate director for further information if required. Currently, decision letters follow the posting on GoSOLAR

### Sample Decision Letters

Dear «Surname» «LastName»:

The Department of «Department» has carefully reviewed your application materials and I am pleased to inform you that you have been admitted as a Full-Status graduate student in the College of Arts and Sciences. This acceptance is to the «Program» degree program in the Department of «Department» beginning «Semester» semester «Year».

Before you register you need to obtain advisement from your departmental Director of Graduate Studies, «Director». Once you are ready to register, you may do so online at <https://www.GoSOLAR.gsu.edu/webforstudent.htm>. For instructions on how to use the online GoSOLAR registration, please visit the registration information webpage at <http://www.gsu.edu/%7Ewwwreg/regguidesum03/reginfo.htm#14>.

If you do not plan to enter this semester, please notify us in writing as soon as possible so that we can accommodate other students. Should you have any questions or need further information, feel free to contact the Department of «Department».

Welcome to the graduate division of Georgia State University. I wish you success in your program.

Sincerely,

Associate Dean

cc: «Director» Department of «Department»

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Dear «Surname» «LastName»:

I regret to inform you that, upon recommendation of the Graduate Admissions Committee of the Department of «Department», the College of Arts and Sciences is unable to approve your application for admission to graduate study. The college's graduate programs have become increasingly competitive, and only a limited number of spaces are available for new students. Please be assured, however, that your application received careful consideration. If you have questions about this decision, you may direct inquiries to «Director», Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of «Department».

Thank you for your interest in Georgia State University, and I wish you success in the pursuit of your academic goals.

Sincerely,

Associate Dean

cc: «Director» Department of «Department»

### Departmental Offer Letter

Departmental letters related to the applicant's acceptance may go out only after the associate dean's letter from the Graduate Office. Departments are *required* to send out written documentation of any financial support offered. Below is the template for this kind of letter, usually over the signature of the graduate director. Copies of these letters must be sent to the Graduate Office for permanent records. Recommended components of graduate assistantship letters (with example statements which can be modified to your needs) are as follows:

**1. Please explicitly specify the amount and time period of the assistantship. As you all know, assistantships are a year to year process, so we do not recommend a time period longer than the coming fiscal year in general.**

We are please to offer you a graduate \_\_\_\_ (*specify type: research; teaching; lab; instructional; combination of more than one type; or use no specification*) \_\_\_\_ assistantship that provides a stipend of \_\_\_\$\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_ (*time period*)\_ (*specify the \$ amount and the specific time period; \$xxx for fall semester, 2004, \$xxx for the 2004 academic year – August, 2004-May, 2005; \$xxx for the year, August, 24, 2004 – June 30, 2005, paid in monthly installments, etc*). In addition to this stipend, you will also receive a tuition waiver of \_\_\_\$\_\_\_ (*appx. \$7000 per semester for out of state students, appx. \$1700 per semester for in state students.*), plus at this time, a 10% discount from the University Book Store.

**2. Please explicitly specify the enrollment requirements and renewal expectations. You must state that all assistantships are contingent upon availability of funding and successful performance.**

This offer is dependent upon your registering for, and maintaining a full-time course load, as defined in the department as \_(#)\_(*min. 12 credit hours, but use department requirement if higher*) during the fall and spring semesters, and \_(#)\_(*min. 9 credit hours, but use the department requirement if higher*) during the summer semester, if you are enrolled. The continuation of your current assistantship, or its renewal, is contingent on your satisfactory academic performance and progress toward your degree, your satisfactory performance of specific duties related to your assistantship, the instructional and/or research needs of the department, and the availability of funding. (*Optional sentence: This assistantship is renewable upon satisfactory review of your performance each year by the faculty, and availability of resources for up to (time period?)*)\_\_.

**3. We highly recommend that you have a time deadline that you abide by regarding the award of the assistantship. We have had students show up semesters later expecting to keep their awards because no time limit was set on its acceptance. Get this in writing.**

If you wish to accept this assistantship offer, and admission into the program, please sign the enclosed statement of acceptance and return it to me no later than \_(deadline date)\_\_\_\_\_. After that date, the availability of this assistantship will lapse and cannot be guaranteed.

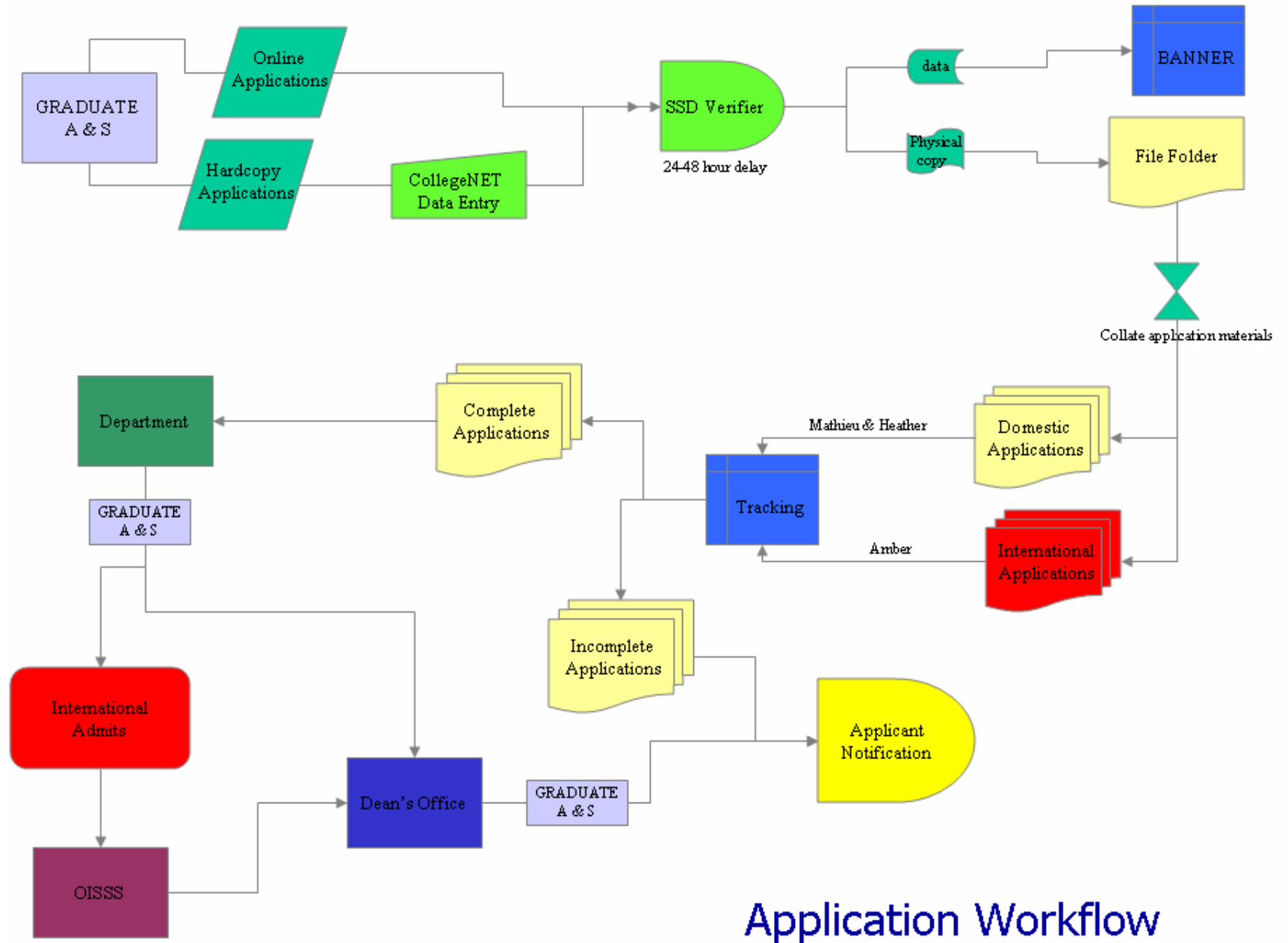
**4. Please be explicit regarding whom they should contact for information.**

If you would like to discuss in more detail the \_\_\_\_\_ program, or any other information related to this assistantship, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ by email at \_\_\_\_\_ or by phone at \_\_\_\_\_.

**5. All graduate assistants must go through the HR process, which starts in the College Office. Please let them know this.**

After you arrive at Georgia State and before the first day of classes, please see Mrs. Ellen Semple in the College of Arts and Sciences Human Resources Office (318 General Classroom Building, 404-651-1394) to complete your hiring paperwork for your graduate assistantship. Until this information is completed and processed, you will not be able to be paid, so please try to get this done early.

Once again, we are pleased to welcome you to the \_\_\_\_\_ program and look forward to your acceptance of our offer.



Financial review for visa docs

## Application Workflow

## Weekly Applicants Report

The Graduate Office posts to its Web site every week a cumulative report by semester of applications entered into the student records system (Banner). This report is accessible through the Faculty and Staff link. Although not as “up to the minute” as CollegeNET, the report indicates the specific degree program’s total applicants for that cycle, whether the file is “incomplete” or “complete” according to the criteria above, and the date the applicant’s first contact was entered into the college record system.

The report has a specific “site” column that indicates where the applicant’s file currently stands in the decision process, and explains those applications marked with an “I” for incomplete.

This report is extremely useful for several forms of departmental tracking. It allows graduate directors to see when an application is complete, indicating how quickly a decision can be considered. It is an accounting of the total applicant pool currently being tracked by the Graduate Office, and it provides a quick reference to what the workload may be in reaching all decisions.

Graduate directors and administrators can also go to Banner directly and retrieve the information needed. The following Information Resources Management chart indicates those alphabetic “screens” that hold pertinent data for admissions.

Banner is part of the GoSOLAR system. It is the student system database that staff and faculty access to obtain student records. Students access the database via Web for Student and faculty access the database via Web for Faculty. There are three methods for logging onto Banner:

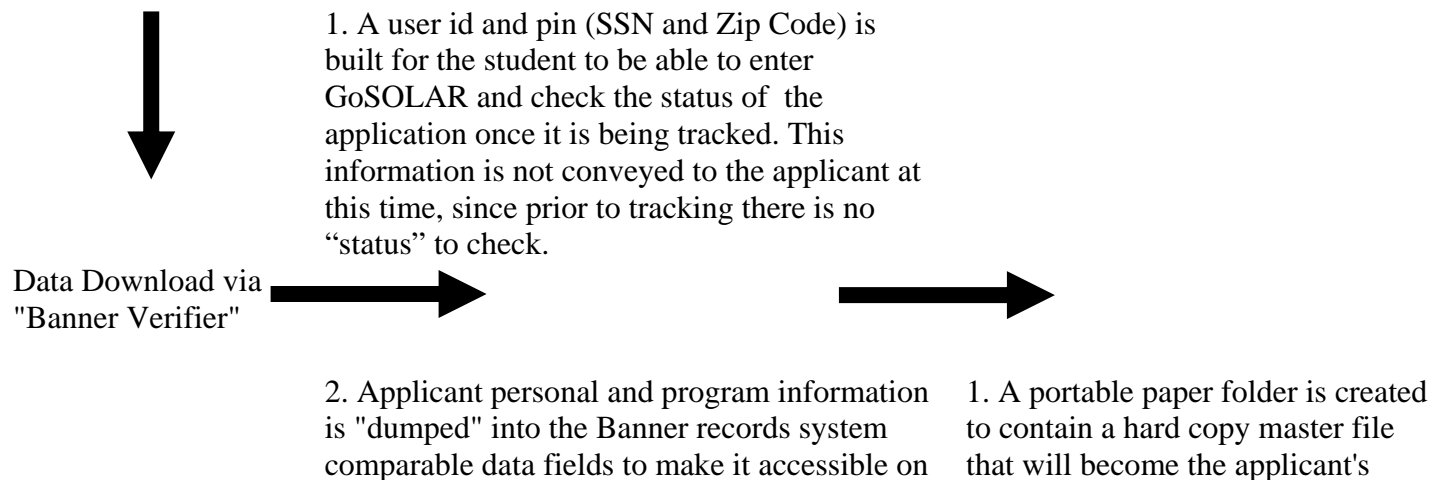
- Internet Native Banner (INB) <http://inb.GoSOLAR.gsu.edu>
- Web For Student <http://student.GoSOLAR.gsu.edu>
- Web For Faculty <http://faculty.GoSOLAR.gsu.edu>

INB is a Java Applet Banner client that runs in a web browser. Users can logon directly to Banner using Netscape or Internet Explorer. The user must download and install the JInitiator (for Windows) or the Macintosh Runtime for Java (for Mac) before being able to use INB.

After about two weeks from the arrival of the self-managed packages in the Graduate Office, students may begin calling the graduate director for information on the status of their application. This information is available on SAAADMS, but you can also direct the student to GoSOLAR where a reformatted version of the Banner information can be found. Applicants can use their social security number and birthdate as id and password to enter the GoSOLAR system. For online instruction in Banner go to <http://www.gsu.edu/bantrain> .



1. Initial application made on the Internet; basic applicant information is entered and remains available for review. Electronic submissions immediately; hard copy submissions within 24-hour target period. Permanent and analyzable for the admissions cycle.



various “screens” (layouts of data) for reporting (Crystal Reports) and to applicants (GoSOLAR)

sustained record for a *minimum* of three years up to *seven years after graduation*.

2. Information forms from CollegeNET are copied and placed into this file for reference and identification.

3. The portable file is given a unique barcode and tracking number as well as an application checklist label (inside file cover and alphabet coding for sustained file storage and retrieval.

2. Data can be analyzed by the graduate director in a variety of ways to include demographics, distribution of applicants, comparison numbers, etc.

3. Weekly cumulative reports are posted by the Graduate Office based on the status of applications in Banner. Indications are if the application is "I" (incomplete, or in process of being verified) or "C" (completely verified).

SAAADMS will indicate "ANT" (application not tracked) as long as the self-managed package has not arrived or been reviewed for tracking.

**SELF-MANAGED PACKET  
ARRIVES IN GRAD OFFICE**

4. Official GRE scores are added to the records periodically by university rotation by college. Paper copies are being phased out.

SOATEST will show GRE and TOEFL scores, or a specialist can call ETS and verify paper scores in the applicant packet.

5. As the specialist verifies an item of the application as present and acceptable, this information goes into the Banner records system. However, they will not be permanently placed into the database for retrieval until MIDNIGHT. Thus a one-day delay is built into the system

For the graduate director, application information is visible on SAAADMS. Transcript verification is visible on SOAPCOL.

6. The status page on GoSOLAR reflects the same information in SAAADMS in a different format. On that page is a checklist of what is required to complete an application together with the dates these items were received at the Graduate Office.

4. The packet of required items is opened and placed into the prepared portable file; if other items, such as test scores or letters arrive, they are added as soon as possible. If this is the first indication of the application, steps 1-3 are done to create a portable file.

5. The file is transferred to an admissions specialist assigned to review and verify (track) all elements of an application to certify that it is complete.

6. If the packet is incomplete, the portable file is taken out of the workflow until it is complete. The applicant is sent an email directing attention to the status screen on GoSOLAR, and to use the attached id and pin to find out what is missing. They are encouraged to trace that item and forward it to the grad office as soon as possible.

NOTE: A common discrepancy between the date on Banner and the physical arrival of a loose item into a tracked file often occurs here. The item is logged into Banner *when it arrives in the mail*. Because it is loose and not part of the initial packet, several days may be consumed for a loose item to be filed into a halted application that then needs to be reinserted into the workflow for verification of completeness.

5. A "C" code is placed on SAAADMS and the applicant can see on GoSOLAR that the application is complete.

6. Once an application is complete, the admissions specialist transfers the file to the communications specialist for preparation for transfer to the department.

7. The communications specialist runs a summary cover sheet for each completed file, notifies the department of its completion, and holds the file for pickup by the department representative.

6. Communications specialist marks the file to the departmental location on Banner, which will always (with a day delay) indicate the location of a portable file.

**DEPARTMENT TAKES  
PORTABLE FILE  
OUT OF GRAD OFFICE**

8. The file is "scanned out" into a monitoring file that indicates the date, time of pickup.

7. Communications specialist updates Banner to indicate that the file is back in Grad office.

8. The department reviews the file and makes a recommendation by marking the cover "decision" sheet in the portable folder.

**DEPARTMENT RETURNS FILE TO GRAD OFFICE**

9. File is scanned back into system and verification that the file has been returned is noted.

10. The admissions specialist responsible for the application reviews the recommendation sheet for correct comments and appropriate decisions and reasons for a particular decision

8. The portable file is recorded on Banner as sent to the dean's office.

11. Grad Office courier takes the paper files from the departments daily to the deans' office.

9. Portable paper file is logged back to permanent file location in Banner.

12. The DEAN makes the admission by signing off on the coversheet of the portable file. Grad Office courier returns file to Haas-Howell office.

10. The Admissions decision is displayed on GoSOLAR.

13. The graduate director writes the follow-up and financial offer letter according to the above template.

## Application Exceptions: The Process for Requesting Policy Adjustments for Individual Applicants

The system provides for policy exceptions and allowances for errors or unexpected delays by an instrument of applying *exceptions* to the various application requirements listed above. All transactions in writing related to these exceptions are retained in the permanent record of the applicant.

**NOTE:** graduate directors are advised to be *very* conservative in applying this administrative route to applications. The need for a limited number of exceptions being made is extremely important, not only because frequent recourse jeopardizes accreditation status, but such requests all have the potential of legal and fairness challenges by other applicants, advocacy organizations, etc. Please be certain that the circumstances clearly warrant sound justification as exceptional before considering an application exception.

There are three types of exceptions in this process: the departmental exception to requirements, the college exception to requirements, and the deadline extension to allow late responders to be reviewed.

### Department Level Exceptions

The first type of exception is the *departmental exception*. It is used for those elements of the application packet that do not pertain to SACS requirements or impinge on the accreditation of either the College of Arts and Sciences or Georgia State University. This category includes such requirements as letters of recommendation, portfolios, writing samples, and auditions that are used by departments and programs to evaluate applicants. A statement *in writing* from the graduate director to the Graduate Office is sufficient to initiate such an exception, *if other sufficient materials arrived before the announced departmental application deadline*. This statement is then placed into the applicant's permanent record and entered into Banner as "waived," with the date and the Director's name.

**SPECIAL CASE:** As explained above, the *department* can waive the GRE requirement for a master's applicant who already holds a master's level degree -- but this still must be documented.

### College Level Exceptions

The second type of exception is the *college exception*. It is used for elements of the application that are pertinent to the accreditation process and legal fairness. A *decision* ordinarily cannot be made on any application without these required documents. These elements include GRE scores (not subject to the case above), TOEFL scores, and any official transcript as defined in the application instructions. These elements *cannot* be excepted by graduate directors or departments; they must be waived at the college level by the *dean* or an *associate dean*.

The department graduate director must request an exception from the dean in writing (with cc to the Graduate Office), and express *clearly and fully why the exception is being requested*. Once having reviewed the conditions carefully, the dean must in turn notify the Graduate Office of the status of the requirement. Up to two weeks before the beginning of the semester to which the applicant wishes to apply, the academic area associate dean can provide this exception in writing to the admissions specialist tracking the applicant's file.

The third type of waiver is the *deadline extension*, which also must occur at the college level. This is an exception that allows the review of an application for admission, *with intent to make a decision*, an application for admission that was completed *after* the announced public application deadline has passed. This exception is often deemed necessary if a required document or letter is received after the announced deadline, whether it is a college or departmental requirement. An approved *deadline extension* from an associate dean is *required before* any further action toward a *decision* can be taken on a file by the department.

### Application Payment Deferment

**NOTE: The application fee cannot be “waived”** in the sense of totally eliminating any funds associated with each application. Such action is a violation of the Constitution of the State of Georgia and would be considered by law a “gratuity.” Such action is also a violation of federal fairness laws. It continues to be the policy of Georgia State University to implement affirmative action and equal opportunity for all employees, students and **applicants for employment or admission without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or disability.**

The university's affirmative action program and related policies are developed in compliance with Executive Orders 11246 and 11375, as amended; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Sections 503 & 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title 11) and their implementing regulations; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; and the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as it amends 38 U.S.C. 4212. In conformance with the federal regulations listed above, Georgia State University does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment or **against any student or applicant for admission with regard to any opportunity for which the employee or student is qualified.** Persons wishing to file complaints under the provisions of this policy should contact the Director of Affirmative Action at One Park Place South-Suite 549, Atlanta, GA 30303-3083, 404-651-2567. More information regarding Georgia State University's equal opportunity and affirmative action policy can be found at the following GSU website: <http://www.gsu.edu/~wwwafa/>.

However, the College of Arts and Sciences allows for a *deferment* of application fees to be paid ultimately by non-State designated funds or applicant pool development purposes. This deferment is requested from the area dean in the same manner as a document or deadline exception. There is a temporary "hold" put on an accepted applicant's registration capabilities until this fee is paid to the university.

This can come by a draw on a departmental account or payment by the applicant.

## Immunization Requirement

The graduate director may face questions about the requirement of the university that each matriculating student show a certificate of immunization. Although not handled directly through the Graduate Office, it is a definite admission requirement. Below are the current forms for this procedure, should you be asked.

### EXPLANATION OF NEW IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SPRING SEMESTER 2005

For all new students attending Georgia State University for the first time in Spring Semester 2005, the immunization requirements have been revised by the Board of Regents, effective January 1, 2005, to include MMR, Tetanus/Diphtheria, Varicella and Hepatitis B (in addition to the Meningitis Law affecting students who reside in university housing).

In all cases, “Documented records” means they are authenticated by the medical office or clinic by a signature AND stamp. Forms that are hand-written without an office stamp are NOT documented because anyone might have written the information—we need proof that the records were made by a medical professional, so we must have proof by office stamp. For a copy of the new Certificate of Immunization, go to <http://www.gsu.edu/%7Ewwwuhs/>. If you are submitting records that are not recorded on our Certificate, please make sure the signature and stamp are included on those records.

New Student 18 years or younger at the beginning of the term All the new requirements apply to this age group, summarized as follows:

- 1) MMR or Measles, Mumps, Rubella immunity can be proven the following ways:
  - a) Documented shot records for 2 MMR’s given after the first birthday and 30 days apart [each shot costs \$41 at GSU Clinic] OR
  - b) Documented shot records for 2 Measles (Rubeola) shots given after the first birthday, 30 days apart, AND after January 1, 1968; and 1 Mumps shot after Jan. 1, 1968; and 1 Rubella shot after June 9, 1969. OR
  - c) Copies of Laboratory Titers (blood tests) showing full immunity (equivocal results are not accepted) to Rubeola Measles, Mumps and Rubella. [\$43 at GSU Clinic]
  - d) Documented disease records for Rubeola Measles and Mumps, and a Rubella proof by shot or by titer. Rubella disease records are not acceptable proof of immunity because the clinical presentation is too similar to other viral diseases.
- 2) Tetanus/Diphtheria shot (Td shot) documented within the last 10 years, or get a booster Td shot (\$10 at GSU Clinic);
- 3) Varicella (chickenpox) immunity documented by one of 3 records:
  - a) a completed shot record (2 doses), [these shots cost \$50 each at GSU Clinic] OR
  - b) by a Varicella Titer (blood test), [this test costs \$22 at GSU Clinic] OR
  - c) by a doctor’s signature and stamp showing the date the patient had the Varicella disease.

- 4) Hepatitis B immunity documented by several types of records:
- a) 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine, with documented dates, [\$40 each shot at GSU Clinic] OR
  - b) 3 doses of combined Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccines with documented dates, [not available at GSU] OR
  - c) 2 doses of Hepatitis B Recombivax with documented dates, [not available at GSU] OR
  - d) Copy of Laboratory Titer (blood test) for Hepatitis B, either by vaccination or prior infection. [\$16.00 at GSU Clinic]

New Students Born January 1, 1957 or later, but 19 years or older at the beginning of the term This age group does not have to complete the Hepatitis B requirement, but GSU Clinic strongly recommends this series of vaccinations. For more information on Hepatitis B vaccinations, see the information for New Students 18 years or younger.

The requirements for this age group are as follows:

- 1) MMR or Measles, Mumps, Rubella immunity can be proven the following ways:
  - a) Documented shot records for 2 MMR's given after the first birthday and 30 days apart [each shot costs \$41 at GSU Clinic] OR
  - b) Documented shot records for 2 Measles (Rubeola) shots given after the first birthday, 30 days apart, AND after January 1, 1968; and 1 Mumps shot after Jan. 1, 1968; and 1 Rubella shot after June 9, 1969. OR
  - c) Copies of Laboratory Titers (blood tests) showing full immunity (equivocal results are not accepted) to Rubeola Measles, Mumps and Rubella. [\$43 at GSU Clinic]
  - d) Documented disease records for Rubeola Measles and Mumps, and a Rubella proof by shot or by titer. Rubella disease records are not acceptable proof of immunity because the clinical presentation is too similar to other viral diseases.
- 2) Tetanus/Diphtheria shot (Td shot) documented within the last 10 years, or get a booster Td shot (\$10 at GSU Clinic);
- 3) Varicella (chickenpox) immunity documented by one of 3 records:
  - a) a completed shot record (2 doses), [these shots cost \$50 each at GSU Clinic] OR
  - b) by a Varicella Titer (blood test), [this test costs \$22 at GSU Clinic] OR
 by a doctor's signature and stamp showing the date the patient had the Varicella disease.
  - c) By a doctor's signature and stamp showing the date the patient had the Varicella disease.

New Students Born December 31, 1956 or earlier The MMR records are no longer required for new students born before 1957, but this age group has two requirements: 1) Tetanus/Diphtheria shot (Td shot) documented within the last 10 years, or get a booster Td shot (\$10 at GSU Clinic); [no blood tests are available to prove immunity]

- 2) Varicella (chickenpox) immunity documented by one of 3 records:
  - a) a completed shot record (2 doses), [these shots cost \$50 each at GSU Clinic] OR
  - b) by a Varicella Titer (blood test), [this test costs \$22 at GSU Clinic] OR
  - c) by a doctor's signature and stamp showing the date the patient had the Varicella disease.

New Students of any age who will be living in University Housing This requirement is regarding Meningitis and is actually a law in the State of Georgia, as well as a

requirement of the Board of Regents and Georgia State University. On our campus, if you will be living in the GSU Village or the GSU Lofts, or any future on-campus housing, you must show proof that you are vaccinated for Meningitis OR you must sign a form stating that you have been informed of the risks and benefits of the Menomune vaccine. This requirement is part of the housing contract and is maintained by the Housing Office on our campus.

#### EXEMPTIONS

- 1) **MEDICAL:** If you have a permanent medical exemption from vaccinations, please have your health care provider complete Part II, Section E., first paragraph, and sign and stamp the form.  
If you have a Temporary Medical Exemption (pregnancy, for example) have your health care provider complete Part II, Section E. second paragraph and give the date that your exemption will be lifted, and include provider's signature and office stamp.
- 2) **RELIGIOUS:** Complete the Certificate of Immunizations Part III, first paragraph.
- 3) **OFF-CAMPUS:** Complete the Certificate of Immunizations Part III, second paragraph, and repeat this process *each semester* that you register for classes that are not held on the GSU campus. **DO NOT** register for any classes held on the GSU campus under this exemption.

Exemptions 1) and 2) will be subject to *disenrollment* in the event of an outbreak of a disease for which immunization is required. This is to protect un-immunized individuals from harm until the danger of infection has passed.

Georgia State University  
**CERTIFICATE OF IMMUNIZATION (effective Spring Semester 2005)**

**This Form MUST be returned to: IMMUNIZATIONS OFFICE, Georgia State University,  
By U.S. Mail: P. O. Box 3996, Atlanta, GA 30303-3081;  
In person: 147 Sparks Hall, 33 Gilmer St. SE;  
or FAX TO: 404-651-1238; phone 404-651-1171.**

**Part I – To be completed by the Student**

**Student ID: (Social Security Number Or number beginning with S or A)**

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Last Name

First Name

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Street

City

State

Zip

**Age at time you enter college:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

MM

DD

YR

**First Term of Enrollment (circle year and term):** 2005/2006  
Fall/Spring/Summer

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

**Part II – Required Immunizations**

**Must Be Completed And Signed AND STAMPED By Your Health Care Provider.**

**A. Measles, Mumps Rubella. Required for students born in 1957 or later**

**1. M.M.R. (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)**

2 Doses with the first dose at 12 months or later and the second at least 28 days after the first dose, Date of MMR#1: \_\_\_\_\_; MMR#2: \_\_\_\_\_. **OR**

Laboratory/serologic evidence of immunity (attach copy with titer and date)

**OR**

**2. Measles**

2 Doses with the first dose at 12 months or later and the second at least 28 days after the first dose, Date of Measles#1: \_\_\_\_\_; #2: \_\_\_\_\_. **OR**

Laboratory/serologic evidence of immunity (attach copy with titer & date)

**Mumps**

1 Dose at 12 months or later, Date of Mumps shot \_\_\_\_\_ **OR**

- Laboratory/serologic evidence of immunity (attach copy with titer & date)

**Rubella**

- 1 Dose at 12 months or later, Date of Rubella shot \_\_\_\_\_.
- OR**
- Laboratory/serologic evidence of immunity (attach copy with titer & date)

**OR****3. Exemption**

- I was born before 1957, and therefore am exempt from this requirement

**B. Tetanus-Diphtheria (Td booster dose or Primary Series with DTaP, DTP or Td in the last ten years)**

- One Td booster dose within the last ten years prior to matriculation, Date of booster: \_\_\_\_\_.
- OR**
- Primary Series of three doses with DTaP, DTP or TD within the last ten years prior to matriculation. Dates of 3 doses: \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_.

**C. Varicella (Either a history of chicken pox, a positive Varicella antibody, or two doses of vaccine given at least one month apart if immunized after age 13 years.)**

- History of Disease verified by undersigned clinician: Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_, **OR**
- Laboratory/serologic evidence of immunity (attach copy with titer & date) **OR**
- 1 dose given at 12 months of age or later but before the student's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday, Date of shot: \_\_\_\_\_.
- OR**
- 2 doses. Dose 1 given after the student's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday. 2<sup>nd</sup> dose at least one month after first dose, Date of 1<sup>st</sup> shot: \_\_\_\_\_; Date of 2<sup>nd</sup> shot: \_\_\_\_\_.

**D. Hepatitis B – Required of all students who are 18 years of age or younger and Recommended for all students. (Three doses of vaccine or a positive Hepatitis surface antibody)**

- 3 dose hepatitis B series, Dates of 3 shots: \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_.
- OR**
- 3 dose combined hepatitis A and hepatitis B series, Dates of 3 shots: \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_.
- OR**
- 2 doses hepatitis B series of Recombivax, Dates of 2 shots: \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_.
- OR**
- Laboratory/serologic evidence of immunity or prior infection (attach copy with titer & date).

**E. Exemption**

- This student is exempt from the above immunization on grounds of permanent medical contraindication.
- This student is temporarily exempt from the above immunizations until \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Health Care Provider**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Original Medical Office Stamp MUST be stamped in box below or form will not be accepted:**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Part III – Exemptions**

- I, \_\_\_\_\_ affirm by my signature below that immunization as required by the University System of Georgia is in conflict with my religious beliefs. I understand that I am subject to exclusion in the event of an outbreak of a disease for which immunization is required.

**Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

- I, \_\_\_\_\_ declare by my signature below that I will ONLY be enrolling in courses offered by distance learning, and therefore I will not be attending ANY classes on the GSU campuses. I understand that registering for a course offered on-campus or at a university owned or controlled facility void this exemption and I will be excluded from class until I provide proof of immunizations. *This Exemption must be requested for each new term of registration for off-campus courses.*

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

**Parts I, II and III (PAGES 1 AND 2) are to be signed, stamped and submitted to the Immunizations Office.**

*Meningitis Requirement forms are to be submitted to the Housing Office.*

## **Chapter Three -- The Records Process**

The Graduate Office serves as the single location for collection and input of student records for graduate degrees in the College of Arts and Sciences. Although departments have limited responsibility for some student records and information, it is the charge of the Graduate Office to collect and articulate the definitive academic program requirements of the college and act as the agent of the departments to keep an official permanent record of each student's accomplishments and progress towards a degree.

The Board of Regents continues to be increasingly strict and demanding in regard to accuracy of student records, and in this regard, a special position in the Graduate Office has been developed. Within the department, the graduate director is the point of intake for this information, and he or she will be in regular communication with this records coordinator. In this way, the department and the Graduate Office work together to assure program and student data accuracy. Many changes can be made online through Web pages, but others are more practical by email. In all email correspondence, graduate directors should indicate he or she is the author either by name or by using a unique electronic signature by sending all correspondence from his/her personal computer or email account. Please avoid "third party" emailing by mentioning the Graduate Office in an email you are sending to some other person. This assures at least a modicum of security to the transmission.

### **The College Catalog**

In order to be certain that students are progressing as advised toward the completion of their academic programs, the Graduate Office is assigned the maintenance and the careful review of each edition of the online college Graduate Catalog. Collecting changes from the departments and from the Curriculum Review Committee, the Graduate Office Curriculum and Program Planning (CAPP) Coordinator monitors the publication to see that all annual corrections are made completely and in a timely manner. Copy is prepared and formatted according to conventional paragraphs to help readers better compare and comprehend program requirements. Moreover, the editing functions in relation to the schedule and needs of the registrar to establish clear benchmarks for a student's progress. The CAPP coordinator must also assure that other instructional materials distributed under the aegis of the college (such as department handbooks, guidebooks, Web pages and advising sheets) are all consistent with the catalog. The graduate director, who is aware of departmental academic practices and curriculum committee activities, is the key person in assuring accuracy.

### **Student Records Entry**

The Curriculum and Program Planning records coordinator is responsible for seeing that as students meet the benchmarks and requirements of graduate programs, these successes are entered in a timely manner into the student records system (Banner). Working with

the Graduate Office Application Tracking Team and the Communications Coordinator, the CAPP specialist enters course, non-course, and academic history data into the system, creating a cumulative permanent electronic profile. By assuring that computer codes and categories in Banner match exactly the program phases delineated in the Graduate Catalog, the GoSOLAR online academic evaluation feature will be able to work to the best advantage for all. It is the graduate director who will verify and transfer documentation of student progress.

## Removal of “Special Status”

An often neglected activity that is critical to the final reception of degrees that only the graduate director can perform is the promotion of a student to full status. A student **MUST** take *a minimum of 20 semester hours in full status* in order to be eligible for graduation. The graduate director needs to review the academic record of those students admitted under special status each term in order to afford them the opportunity to graduate on time. This change in status can be done by email or on the exceptions page noted in the following section.

## Online Evaluation

The online GoSOLAR academic evaluation (CAPP) takes the place of the PACE evaluation for students matriculating beginning fall, 2004. It is the CAPP coordinator, in frequent contact with the graduate director, who maintains an accurate online assessment of a student’s program progress and makes individual changes to student academic course sequences to respond to personal advising. At the beginning of the student’s academic career, the graduate director submits via the Web “exceptions” the student has to the program that is specified in the course catalog under which the student matriculated. Specification of electives, verification of equivalencies, or substitutions or waivers in the course curriculum must all be indicated.

The graduate student’s career should begin with a mandatory advising session with the graduate adviser. In this session, a brief statement of intention summary is prepared and then submitted to the Graduate Office. This information is then entered into the Banner system as part of the permanent record. When any change takes place or is required in a student’s program, the graduate director needs to communicate this change to the CAPP coordinator to assure that the online database and evaluation remain accurate. A special page has been created at the Graduate Office Web site to address adjustments and to make changes simple and direct.

Once the initial program is established, a student will be able to access, through the GoSOLAR “Academic Assessment” feature, an online document that indicates which course requirements have been met and which have not. This continuous evaluation will assist both in semester course advisement and in certification for graduation. Also, the graduate director/advisor will be able to bring up an evaluation whenever needed to track students in the program.

## Transfer Credits

All transfer credits a student wishes to apply to his/her program in order to graduate from Georgia State must be processed by the Graduate Office as early as possible in the student's time at the university. The transfer of credit evaluation should not be delayed until the semester of graduation unless the credits were earned in the just previous term (such as summer semester). Each application for transfer credits must contain all of the following items to be eligible for inclusion:

- An official transcript from the institution initially granting the academic credit;
- The EXACT names and course numbers *as listed on the transcript*;
- The graduate director's determination of course equivalencies (prefix and numbers only);
- The graduate director's verification that the credit falls within the required time limit prescribed by Georgia State University as acceptable;
- The graduate director's signature under the student's signature;
- The signature of the appropriate associate dean.

The omission of any one of these items can delay or prevent posting and acceptance of transfer credit to the student's record. A form for initiating this process follows. Note that M.A. students can only transfer six credit hours and Ph.D. candidates can transfer no more than 30 credit hours. Requests for the transfer of credit hours over these caps require the granting of a petition for deviation from catalog requirements approved by the Graduate Petitions Board.

## Deviations from Catalog Requirements

Students who wish to deviate from the Graduate Catalog requirements, either for time or for curriculum reasons, must petition the Graduate Office for these exceptions. A formal letter signed by the secretary of the Graduate Studies Committee Petitions Board is required for each exception and will become part of the student's permanent record.

The Graduate Petitions Board is composed of three members of the Graduate Studies Committee who are elected each academic year. This Board meets every semester in the Graduate Office. Since the results of the Board are generally not available until the end of the semester, students are advised to apply for permission to deviate from requirements at least one complete semester before they intend to graduate; otherwise, they run the risk of missing established graduation deadlines.

## **Subject of Petitions**

The Graduate Petitions Board considers petitions for deviation from regulations that are written explicitly in the graduate catalog. They do not rule on departmental policies or procedures, or on requirements established in handbooks or other department publications. Moreover, curriculum changes that involve substitutions within a specific program of study can be affected by the graduate director as long as he/she notifies the CAPP coordinator of the exception.

## **Deadline for Submission Of Petition By Student**

The deadline for submitting a petition is the midpoint of the semester. This deadline is fixed each semester. It is strongly advised that the student petition for graduation-related exceptions at least one semester before intending to graduate. However, the timing is such that a student may submit a petition during the same term he or she plans to graduate and have the decision in time to be cleared for graduation.

## **Petition Form**

Students can pick up a copy of the petition form in the Graduate Office, we can email it to them as an attachment, we can fax it to them, or we can send it by post. It is also available from the Graduate Office Web site.

## **Procedure**

The student should fill out the petition form and return it to the Graduate Office. After the midpoint of the semester, the form, along with a cover sheet and any supporting materials the student attaches, is sent to the student's adviser, the departmental chair, and the departmental graduate director along with an academic evaluation and a cover sheet to the petition. The adviser, chair, and director are asked to give their recommendations of approval or disapproval of the petition and to provide any information in the comments section of the form that might guide the board's decision making process.

When the cover sheets with the departmental responses are returned to the Graduate Office, they are added to materials collected in the student's permanent record.. A packet of all petition materials is then prepared for the members of the board. The name of the petitioning student is deleted from the materials in this packet so that the anonymity of the student is preserved. The board members discuss each petition and vote to approve or disapprove. Unanimity is not required.

The Director of the Graduate Office sends out the official letter notifying the student of the committee's decision; a copy of the letter is sent to the department.

## **Graduate Student Scholarships**

The Graduate Office is required to place into the Banner system all GRA's GTA's and other tuition waivers associated with student scholarships and assistantships. It is the responsibility of the department to direct this information to the graduate director and

Graduate Office as early as possible by Internet (Web or email), preferably before classes begin, since registration is directly affected. The information must include the student's name and social security number.

**WARNING:** However, the Graduate Office does not track the ongoing status of GRA and GTA recipients. Any information that may affect the appointment of the students to assistantships is monitored by the graduate director, including the number of hours taken, GPA, and other regulations. It is extremely important, given the Human Resources involvement and connection with this process, that the graduate director check regularly for compliance.

### **FAQ's on Student Scholarships**

1. WHO CAN BE APPOINTED AS A GRADUATE ASSISTANT?

Any student admitted to a Graduate Program and who maintains the required enrollment minimum 12 credits for all A&S majors OR 9 for students of other colleges.

2. WHAT ARE THE TYPES AND LEVELS OF ASSISTANTSHIPS AVAILABLE?

A graduate student can be appointed either as an academic appointment and/or as an annual appointment. The academic appointments are made every semester while the annual appointments are made every year. Students are eligible for appointment to any of the following levels providing all pre-requisites have been met:

- Graduate Laboratory Assistants (Levels I, II and III)
- Graduate Research Assistants (Levels I, II and III)
- Graduate Teaching Assistants (Levels II and III only)

3. WHAT ARE THE PAY RANGES FOR EACH LEVEL OF ASSISTANTSHIP?

	<b>Fall/Spring semesters</b>	<b>Summer and Maymester</b>	<b>Annual</b>
<b>LEVEL I</b>	\$600 - \$1500	\$450 - \$1100	\$1650 - \$4100
<b>LEVEL II</b>	\$1200 - \$3000	\$900 - \$2250	\$3300 - \$8250
<b>LEVEL III</b>	\$2000 - \$5000	\$1500 - \$3750	\$5500 - 13750

4. HOW ARE APPOINTMENTS CALCULATED?

One appointment at the graduate assistantship level is equivalent to 8 hours work per week. If a student is working in excess of 8 hours then the number of appointments will be calculated using the 8-hour base.

5. HOW MANY APPOINTMENTS CAN A GRADUATE ASSISTANT HOLD?

A graduate student can be awarded up to 2.5 appointments, i.e. 20 hours per week but **WITH PRIOR APPROVAL FROM THE AREA ASSOCIATE DEAN**, may be permitted to work in excess of 20 hours. The latter statement is not applicable to International Students as they are bound by INS regulations limiting them to ONLY 20 hours per week.

6. CAN A STUDENT ASSISTANT SIMULTANEOUSLY HOLD A GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP?

No, because while the Student Assistantship is classified as non-exempt and requires the submission of timesheets, the Graduate Assistantship is classified as exempt.

7. WHAT ARE THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS NECESSARY FOR REDUCED TUITION?

The following conditions must be satisfied:

- At least one (1) full assistantship, i.e. 12 hours work per week in A & S.
- Minimum pay of \$900 for Fall or Spring, OR \$700 for May and Summer combined.
- Adherence to minimum course enrollment

8. WHAT MUST BE DONE TO ENSURE TIMELY TUITION WAIVERS?

Departments must submit names and social security numbers to the Graduate Office prior to the registration deadline. If submitted later, students may be asked to pay full tuition but will be reimbursed when the waiver is in place.

9. WHAT FORMS ARE REQUIRED TO ENSURE BEING ADDED TO THE PAYROLL SYSTEM AND HOW SOON MUST THEY BE SUBMITTED?

Graduate Assistants should pick up a hire packet no later than the first week of class and return the completed packet no later than the end of August. Foreign

students must attend the International Orientation prior to completing the hire forms. Graduate Assistant pay form, PF2A if a semester appointment or PAF if annual appointment must be submitted at least 15 business days prior to the pay date.

□ ALL GRADUATE ASSISTANTS WITH FIRST-TIME EMPLOYMENT AT GSU MUST COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING

New Hires – Graduate Teaching Assistants

1. Employment Request
2. Recommendation for GTA Appointment
3. Curriculum Vitae
4. Personal Data Form
5. Security Questionnaire/Loyalty Oath
6. Faculty Personnel Record (Blue Sheet)
7. Tax Forms: W-4 (Federal) and G-4 (State)
8. \*\*Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9) & substantiating documents.
9. Policy Awareness & Agreement
10. Degree verification and transcript of evidence of their request.
11. Right to Know Statement
12. Direct Deposit
13. Academic justification (for GTAs who do not yet have a Masters degree but are holding Teacher of Record status OR are teaching outside their area of specialty).

New Hires – Graduate Laboratory OR Graduate Research Assistants

1. Employment Request
2. Personal Data Form
3. Security Questionnaire/Loyalty Oath
4. Tax Forms: W-4 (Federal) and G-4 (State) OR if applicable, Tax Treaty documents and G-4
5. \*\*Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9) & substantiating documents.
6. Policy Awareness & Agreement
7. Right to Know Statement
8. Direct Deposit

□ GRADUATE ASSISTANTS WHO HAVE HAD LAB OR RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS BUT WHO WILL NOW BE THE TEACHER OF RECORD

♣♣ Upgrades (From GLA/GRA to GTA)

1. Employment Request
2. Recommendation for GTA Appointment
3. Faculty Personnel Record
4. Degree verification/transcript or evidence of their request
5. Curriculum Vitae
6. Academic justification (for GTAs who do not yet have a Masters degree but have Teacher of Record status OR are teaching outside their area of specialty).

♣♣ *Merely listing a student who was previously a Lab or Research Assistant as a GTA on the PF2A or PAF does not constitute appointment to the GTA level.*

**\*\*I-9 VERIFICATION FOR INTERNATIONALS (Drivers License & SS Card are not acceptable)**

The supporting documents that must accompany the hire packet are:

1. Passport – the page that has the holder’s photo, biographical information, issue and expiration dates.
2. Visa (found in the passport)
3. I-94 Departure Record (both sides)
4. I-20 (both sides) for students on F-1 Visa
5. DS 2016 (both sides) for students on J-1 Visa plus work permit from GSU International Office
6. Employment Authorization Card (for students who have applied for a change in visa status, e.g. residency)

## **Completion Letters and ABD Status**

The graduate director can notify the Graduate Office that a student has met or completed all departmental requirements, and this will be placed by the graduation auditor into the student’s permanent record. Should the student need this verification either for employment or some academic purpose, the Graduate Office can then initiate a “Letter of Completion” to be sent from the Registrar either to the student or to the inquiring institution or business.

It simply states that the referenced student is scheduled to have the degree conferred on a certain future date. The Registrar is extremely cautious about issuing such letters for various reasons:

1. A mistake could have been made on an early audit that we don't catch until very late in the graduation process.
2. Students could withdraw from a class or classes after the letter is completed.
3. The student may not pass a class in their final semester.
4. Such letter lessens the value and purpose of a transcript. (Some students try to avoid having employers see their transcript by having a neat letter sent simply stating their graduation status.)

The Graduation Office will agree to issue such a letter if the applicants are

- a. ROTC or NROTC candidates and need the documentation for their commissioning.

b. International students who need proof of degree status for the INS or other governmental office.

c. Students who have completed course work but failed to apply for graduation by the deadline date.

The Registrar indicates the in cases a and b: They try to send letters as soon as possible due to the urgent nature.

In cases of c. Such letters will be generated two weeks after we have rolled grades to history. (They spend the entire week after rolling to history preparing the next graduating list in Banner - something that absolutely must be done that week.)

For obvious reasons, the Registrar does not advertise the availability of this letter and we would ask that you not suggest to the student that such document exists. The preparation of the letters take an extreme amount of time out of the Graduation Office's day.

Notification of "All-But-Dissertation" status is handled in the A & S Graduate Office.. If the doctoral candidate has finished all requirements except for the dissertation completion and defense and these have been verified by the graduate director in writing, this can be noted in the permanent record in case the student subsequently needs this status verified.

## **6999 Authorization**

The graduate director must also monitor students' use of the special course number 6999 in most departments. The student picks up the form from the Graduate Office or on the Web site. The student obtains the signature of the graduate director, who will see that a CRN number is assigned this unique course that term. The form must then be signed for approval by the associate dean. Authorizations are implemented through Banner's SFASRPO screen. By going to that screen, graduate directors and administrators can verify that the course has been cleared for registration. The graduate director should then indicate the exception and in what area it should be recorded in CAPP. It needs to be remembered that this course is NOT intended for a directed reading course; it should be used only as a specific substitution for a course the student must have for graduation but acceptable curriculum problems have somehow prevented its being take.

## **Academic Warnings**

In conjunction with the Dean's Office, the Graduate Office sends out letters of academic warning over the area associate dean's signature. Any graduate student in the College of Arts and Sciences whose cumulative GPA drops below 3.0 receives such a letter. If the student's GPA remains below the 3.0 standard for two semesters, the Graduate Office notifies the graduate director and the dean of this deficiency.

In the second warning letter, the student is advised to seek a response from the graduate director, who will need to make the decision whether or not to drop the student from the program, as indicated in the Catalog.

Some departments have additional requirements for academic performance, which should be kept on file and current in the Graduate Office.

### Sample Warning Letters

Dear :

At the end of your last semester of course work, your cumulative grade point average fell below the 3.0 required of graduate students in the College of Arts and Sciences. The policies that govern GPA requirements are explained in the Arts and Sciences section of the Georgia State University *Graduate Catalog* under the headings “Scholastic Warning” and “Scholastic Termination.” It is important that you carefully read these guidelines since failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA can lead to termination. It is also important that you consult with , Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of , for advisement.

Sincerely,  
Area  
Associate Dean

CC: Director Department of [ ]

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Dear :

I sent you a notice on[ ], concerning the cumulative grade point average that students must maintain in order to earn a graduate degree in the College of Arts and Sciences at Georgia State University. Your GPA remains below the required 3.0. I again refer you to the sections entitled "Scholastic Warning" and "Scholastic Termination" in the Arts and Sciences section of the Georgia State University *Graduate Catalog*. It is important that you consult [ ], Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of [ ], as soon as possible for advisement.

Sincerely,  
Area  
Associate Dean

CC: Director Department of [ ]

### Scholastic Termination

A graduate student is subject to scholastic termination from the Division of Graduate Studies for the following reasons:

1. Failure to achieve a 3.0 cumulative grade-point average by the end of the next 18 semester hours of enrollment in letter-graded courses after the GPA has fallen below a 3.0;
2. Failure to maintain the level of academic performance and progress required by the major department;

3. A second failure on the General Examination in the M.A., M.S., or Ph.D. degree programs.

The student who may be subject to scholastic termination will be notified of termination by an associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Usually the student first receives a dismissal letter from the graduate director, program director, or chair of the department indicating the reasons for the dismissal, recapping any history of warnings or opportunities for correction, and indicating that the subject can appeal the ruling to the associate dean of the academic area concerned.

Once this action has been taken, a copy of the letter needs to come to the Graduate Office., where it will be forwarded to the Registrar. Only the Registrar's office can include such information into the student record and prevent registration in the same program of study in subsequent semesters, so formal notification to the Graduate Office is essential to the dismissal process, for what ever reason.

## Continuous Enrollment

**BEGINNING FALL SEMESTER, 2006** , in order to continue actively in an academic program, students must register for at least a total of six semester hours of course work during any period of three consecutive semesters until completion of degree. Also, they must be actively enrolled in the program of study during the semester of graduation.

Students who do not register for an entire year (12 months) and are not on official leave or covered by other exceptions will automatically be made inactive in the program, and if they wish to continue, are required to follow reentry procedure. Re-acceptance into the program is not guaranteed. Reentering students are subject to the regulations of the Graduate Catalog and the degree program current at the time of reentry. Time limits for all academic requirements will remain unchanged.

Students do not register for two consecutive semesters will receive a warning from the Graduate Office indicating that failure to register the following semester will result in deactivation of their degree track. The warning will be issued only once.

Exceptions or adjustments to these requirements necessitate appeal to the Graduate Petitions Board

NOTE: if being away from the university for an academic year or more is part of an internship or project integral to a graduate program, exception to the continuous enrollment requirement is allowed. However, upon completion of the hiatus, the student must re-enter through the Graduate Office rather than online or through Undergraduate Admissions. Students must formally apply for this exception *before* the period of absence begins.

Further information is presented on the Graduate Office Web site.

## Chapter Four -- The Graduation Process

All communication related to the graduation process is conducted through official email accounts of Georgia State University. After an initial notification of this procedure, students are expected to rely solely on their official accounts for communication from the graduate director and the Graduate Office.

### Enrollment Requirements

**BEGINNING FALL SEMESTER, 2006** candidates for graduation in a degree program offered by the College of Arts and Sciences must be officially registered for classes the semester of completing all academic requirements, including thesis/dissertation defense, performance, or gallery show. Departments may determine the extent and type of hours that must be taken by the candidate during the concluding semester. Every candidate for completion must register in advance of expected graduation with the Graduation Services Office of the Enrollment Management/ Registrar's Office. These regulations are explained in the graduation pages at the Graduate Office Web site at <http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwgas/Grad%20Process.html> The semester of completion is defined as extending until the last day of the semester on the academic calendar as published by Enrollment Services. There is also a page of frequently asked questions related to graduation and continuous registration linked from this page.

**The semester of completion is defined as extending until the last day of the semester on the academic calendar as published by Enrollment Services.**

The following courses would be acceptable for the purpose of continuous registration without having to create new courses. Established caps on the number of research hours may need to be lifted in some cases.

#### ART AND DESIGN

AE 8999 (3-6 SH)  
 AH 8999 (1- 9 SH)  
 CER 8999 (3-12 SH)  
 DP 8999 (3-12 SH)  
 GRD 8999 (6-12 SH)  
 ID 8999 (3-12 SH)  
 PHOT 8999 (3-12 SH)  
 SCUL 8999 (3-12 SH)

#### AN

ANTH 8999 (1-9 SH)

#### COMPUTER SCIENCE

CSC 8999 (1-9 SH)  
 CSC 9999 (1-20 SH)

#### ENGLISH

ENGL 8999 (1-9 SH)

#### FRENCH

FREN 8999 (1-9 SH)

#### GEOSCIENCES

GEOL 8999 (1-15 SH)  
 GEOL 9999 (1-15 SH)  
 GEOG 8999 (1-9 SH)

**ALSL**

AL 9900 (3-6 SH)

**ASTRONOMY**

ASTR 9999 (1-15 SH)

**BIOLOGY**

BIOL 8999 (1-9 SH)

BIOL 9999 (1-25)

**CHEMISTRY**

CHEM 8999 (1-15 SH)

CHEM 9999 (1-15 SH)

**COMMUNICATION**

COMM 9999 (1-20 SH)

**GERMAN**

GRMN 8895 (1-9 SH)

**HISTORY**

HIST 8999 (1-15 SH)

HIST 9999(1-15 SH)

**SPANISH**

SPAN 8999 (1-9 SH)

**MATHEMATICS**

MATH 8999 (1-9 SH)

**MUSIC**

MUS 8999 (1-9 SH)

**PHILOSOPHY**

PHIL 8999 (1-6 SH)

**PHYSICS**

PHYS 8999 (1-15 SH)

PHYS 9999 (1-15 SH)

**POLS**

POLS 8999 (1-15 SH)

**SOCIOLOGY**

SOCI 8999 (1-9 SH)

SOCI 9999 (1-9 SH)

**STATISTICS**

STAT 8999 (1-9 SH)

**WOMEN'S STUDIES**

WST 8999 (1-9 SH)

**Application for Graduation**

A student must first apply for a definite semester of graduation formally through the Registrar's Graduation Office <http://www.gsu.edu/%7Ewwwreg/graduation.htm>, ideally two semesters before the intended graduation date. This date is marked on the student's permanent record in Banner. During this period, the Graduate Office assembles copies of the graduation applications and associated student files for review and identification of problems. At this point, the graduation officer sends timetables, instructions and obligations related to graduation directly to the student.

At the beginning of the semester of intended graduation, the graduation clearance officer will send to the graduate director names of students who have applied to graduate at the end of the semester. The graduate director should indicate at that time candidates known not to be qualified. Students who wish to apply for graduation after the semester deadline established by the Graduation Office must petition the Graduation Committee of the Registrar's Office for inclusion in the current listing. About two weeks into the semester, the registrar will produce a "checkout book" summarizing the academic record of the candidates, and this document becomes the official register for graduation. The graduation auditor will then send an updated list to the graduate director.

Careful distinction needs to be made between Commencement (the date listed on the university calendar) and actual graduation from a degree program. The Registrar's Office

of Graduation Services is actually the *commencement* office in relation to candidate's tickets, announcements, cap and gown, etc. regarding the official public ceremony. Graduation occurs approximately two weeks after the ceremony, after all grades are in, incompletes resolved, and manuscript corrections made. Graduation (final certification of completion) actually occurs about two weeks after commencement, once all grades have been processed and GPA's reviewed.

## College Review

**It is imperative that the graduate director remember that the Graduate Office does not audit for departmental curriculum requirements. It is the responsibility of the graduate director, using the evaluations in CAPP and any departmental program summaries, to clear each individual student as a candidate for graduation.**

Through regular communication between the Director of the Graduate Office and the department graduate director, preparedness for graduation is continually assessed.

Before midterm of the semester of an intended graduation, the graduation auditor sends an e-mail evaluation of the student's progress toward graduation to the graduate director, the student, and the graduate administrator. This e-mail lists any college requirements that need to be fulfilled. These principally involve requirements that pertain to *all* graduate students. **The Graduate Office does not audit for departmental curricular requirements, including catalog course numbers of variable research classes, foreign language competency or equivalents, and composition of individual committees.**

The Graduate Office *does* check for the following compliance for graduation:

- **Total Number of Hours Taken** in the current program to see that they match the published requirements in the catalog in force during the student's admission or most recent re-admission to the program;
- **Residency Requirements for Doctoral Candidates** to see that the proper number of consecutive terms of residency have been met;
- **Time Limit Requirements** to assure that all graduate work has been done from admission in the program to no more than seven years for masters and ten years for doctoral candidates;
- **Number of Research Hours Taken** to verify that each student has completed the number of research hours established by the Graduate Council for all master's and doctoral candidates;
- **Special Status Clearance** establishing written confirmation that the student has met any Special Status requirements articulated in the acceptance letter and that the graduate director of the department has verified this;

- **Number of Hours Taken in Full Status** to ensure that 20 semester hours of coursework have been completed in Full Graduate Status for those students who were initially admitted under the Special Status category.
- **Authenticity of Previous Degrees** based on original transcripts submitted at the time of application or more recently if necessary;
- **Cumulative Grade Point Average** to determine that a 3.00 or better GPA is held by the date of graduation;
- **Manuscript Requirements** for doctoral candidates and masters candidates required to write an archived thesis or dissertation that must be *completed* and *correct* before graduation is approved.

Deficiency in any one of these categories potentially disqualifies the candidate for graduation and may require either petitioning (see below) or waiver from the dean. In the email report of the reviewer, the student is asked to speak with the graduate director to address program compliance problems. The graduate director may suggest ways to resolve these problems to the CAPP coordinator.

The graduate director needs to be certain also that the language requirements for the student in that department have been fulfilled. The change should ideally be placed under exceptions early in the student's career. The Graduate Office does not monitor language tests and relies on the department for validation.

E-mail requests to clear all In-Progress courses with actual grades will go out close to graduation. These forms must be signed by the instructor, and the chair of the department. Alternatively, the grades can be changed through the normal "Reg\_Approve" process as for any grade change by email to Grade Adjustment in the Registrar's Office. "GRADUATING STUDENT" must appear in the subject line along with the student's name.

**NOTE:** The department WILL NOT receive "IP" grade-change reminders for students currently enrolled in research courses (listed above). The grade provided by the instructor of record during the semester of completion will be automatically inserted into all previous "IP" slots of the same repeated course.

Moreover, confirmation of the graduate director verifying the candidate's compliance to all *departmental* requirements needs to be sent to the Graduate Office Director by the deadline listed in the semester calendar to assure confirmation and coordination with the Registrar's Auditor.

Each semester, as part of the initial packet of information, students are sent a calendar of deadlines and significant dates. These deadlines will be held in order to keep the progress toward graduation on course. This same calendar is distributed to graduate directors and their administrative assistants.

If the candidate does not graduate as expected, a new semester for graduation must be designated that falls within the required time limits. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Graduation Office and resume the graduation process. Any manuscripts left at the Graduate Office of Arts and Sciences need to be promptly reclaimed or taken from the library server.

## Manuscript Considerations

### Standards

Students are responsible, as a required part of the graduation process, to see that the formatting of their theses and dissertations are properly submitted and paid for before final clearance. These documents are due in Word Processing mode and in correct format for review to the Graduate Office by an established deadline published on the Web site: <http://www.gsu.edu/casgrad>. Students must strictly adhere to the current *Guide for Thesis and Dissertation Digital Preparation and Submission* or the guide for submission of Studio Art Projects, both available on the Web. The style and requirements of the *Guide's* have been put together to meet both technical requirements of digitizing and binding. All necessary corrections must be made before the graduation closing date.

Because the preparation of the thesis or dissertation is a permanent record of professional expertise, it is important that special care be afforded the composition and the standard preparation of manuscripts. Much time and frustration for the student can be avoided through continual dialogue on document preparation in the department, before approval is granted formally. Candidates are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the reading service provided by the Graduate Office for early clearance of the preliminary pages and general format. The Graduate Office also provides an optional template in Microsoft Word to assist potential graduates in the presentation of their manuscripts.

Signatures from the department on the document "cover sheet" attest that the work is academically proficient and conventionally correct. These sheets **MUST** be turned into the Director of the Graduate Office before permission to upload the digital thesis is granted. Should any text be found to deviate significantly outside the guidelines set by the Graduate Council and checked by the Graduate Office, that manuscript will be returned to the department for evaluation by the chair and graduate director whether the author has or can fulfilled requirements for graduation at the appointed time.

Once degrees are granted, the Graduate Office will send the theses and dissertations for binding library catalog distribution. If printed, bound copies are ordered, it is the responsibility of the students to pick up personal or multiple copies from the Graduate Office. The bound volumes will be held in the office for one complete semester and then transferred to the department for disposition. No more than three bound copies can be ordered by a graduate at one time.

For information about the new ETD process, visit the Library clearance site at <http://www.library.gsu.edu/services/> and click on Electronic Theses and Dissertations.

### **Exceptions (Postponements)**

There are times when candidates for graduation cannot be approved by department committees or make required corrections in time to meet the calendar deadlines set for turning into the Graduate Office all copies to be bound. In such cases, allowance can be made though seeking a postponement of deadline from the Graduate Director of the college. A written request for additional time to complete the manuscript must be made by the department chair under the guidance of the department graduate director directly to the associate dean given responsibility for graduate studies. This waiver will include a definite date when the work must be completed and cannot exceed the registrar's date for all final information relating to graduation the semester the candidate is proposing to graduate.

### **Failure to Graduate**

If for some reason a candidate for graduation fails to graduate, either through voluntary changing of the graduation date or through not completing all the graduation requirements by the established semester, the student can move graduation to a later date by contacting the Graduation Office of Registrar Services.

The student will NOT have to pay the graduation registration fee if the application comes to the Registrar no later than the first day of classes of the completion semester. However, after fall semester, 2006, the student must register at least for the minimum number of hours to complete continuous enrollment standards. If graduation is scheduled for fall, 2006 and the student has had to reenter in order to complete requirements for graduation, registration for one semester hour or the minimum established by the department will be expected.