

Stanford

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Summary

Establishes a required number of academic units for each graduate degree, assuring that students receiving those degrees have completed specified course work and other degree requirements, and have immersed themselves in the intellectual life of Stanford University.

Rationale

In conferring its graduate degrees, Stanford University affirms that its students have completed specified course work and other degree requirements, and immersed themselves in the intellectual life of the university. To assure this, each type of graduate degree offered at Stanford has a residency requirement based on the number of academic units required for the degree. The fundamental reason for this requirement is educational: the minimum residency fixed for each program is the shortest period that students generally need to attain the level of expertise that a particular Stanford advanced degree signifies.

Policy

Each type of graduate degree offered at Stanford (for example, Master of Science, Doctor of Philosophy) has a residency requirement based on the number of academic units required for the degree. These residency requirements and the maximum allowable transfer units for each degree type are listed below. Unless permission is granted by the degree program (for example, for fieldwork) enrolled graduate students are required to maintain a significant physical presence on campus throughout each quarter a student is enrolled.

Authority:

- Committee on Graduate Studies (policy)
- [Office of the Registrar](#) [1] via Stanford Services & Support (implementation)

Applicability:

To all matriculated graduate students and the programs in which they are enrolled, unless otherwise noted.

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1. Unit-Based Residency Requirements

The unit requirements for degrees can represent solely course work required for the degree or a combination of course work, research, and a thesis or dissertation. Degree programs may establish unit requirements that are higher than the minimum university residency requirement, but they may not have a residency requirement that is lower than the university standard. In addition to the university residency requirement based on a minimum number of units for each degree, the School of Medicine and the Graduate School of Business may establish residency requirements based on the number of quarters of full-time registration in which students are enrolled to earn a degree. These school residency requirements may be no lower than the university requirements; they may however be higher.

All residency requirements, including residency requirements for graduate degree combinations, are published on the [Registrar's website](#) [2]. Students should consult the Bulletin or their degree program to determine if residency requirements exceed the university's minimum.

It is Stanford University's general policy that units are applicable toward only one degree. Units may not normally be duplicated or double-counted toward the residency requirement for more than one degree, with the exception that up to 45 units of a Stanford MA or MS degree may be applied to the residency requirement for the Ph.D., DMA or Engineer degrees. Other exceptions to this general policy for specified combinations of degree types may be approved by agreement of the Academic Senate and the deans of the schools affected, with review by the Committee on Graduate Studies (see [GAP 4.9 Joint Degree Programs](#) [3]). Students pursuing a Joint Degree that also includes a Ph.D. may not also count a Stanford master's degree or transfer units towards residency for the Ph.D.

Only completed course units are counted toward the residency requirement. Courses with missing, incomplete, in progress, or failing grades do not count toward the residency requirement. Courses from which the student has formally withdrawn are not counted towards residency.

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2. Minimum Residency Requirements for Graduate Degrees

Degree type¹	Minimum # of units at Stanford	Maximum allowable external transfer units
M.A., M.S., M.F.A., M.L.A.	45	04
Engineer ²	90	45
M.B.A., M.P.P. ³	90	04
Ph.D., D.M.A. ⁵	135	45
M.D.	235	90

J.D. ^{6, 7}	109	45
M.L.S., L.L.M., J.S.M. ⁶	35	04
J.S.D. ⁶	44	04

University minimum residency requirements for graduate degree combinations can be found on the [Registrar's website](#) [2].

1. Stanford University has authorized the granting of the M.A.T., the Ed.S. and the Ed.D. degrees, but they are not being offered.
2. Up to 45 units completed at Stanford toward an M.A. or M.S. degree or accepted as transfer credit, but not both, in an Engineering discipline may be used toward the 90 unit residency requirement for the Engineer degree. At least 45 units of work at Stanford are necessary to complete the 90 residency units for the Engineer degree.
3. Enrollment in the M.P.P. degree program is limited to candidates who have earlier been accepted to another Stanford graduate degree program and to recent (within 3 years) Stanford graduates.
4. Students eligible for Veterans Affairs educational benefits should refer to the [Veterans Education Benefits section](#) [4] of the *Stanford Bulletin*.
5. Up to 45 units completed at Stanford toward an M.A. or M.S. degree or accepted as transfer credit, but not both, may be used toward the 135 unit residency requirement for the Ph.D. or D.M.A. degree. At least 90 units of work at Stanford are necessary to complete the 135 residency units for the Ph.D. or D.M.A. degree.
6. J.D. students entering prior to the Autumn Quarter 2009-10 are required to take the equivalent of 86 semester units.
7. The Academic Senate approved these residency requirements on February 4, 2010, effective for the 2009-10 academic year.

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3. Graduate Units Requirements

Stanford's expectation is that the units counted toward all graduate degrees are primarily in graduate courses. The university has set specific requirements for units applied to the minimum unit requirement for the M.A., M.S., and M.F.A degrees: all units must be in courses at or above the 100 level and at least 50 percent of those must be courses designated primarily for graduate students (typically at least the 200 level). Units earned in courses below the 100 level may not be counted towards the minimum unit requirement for the master's degree. Degree program specifications for the level of course work accepted for a particular degree program may be higher than the university's specifications.

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4. Residency Requirement in Coterminal Programs

The university minimum requirements for the coterminal bachelor's/master's program are 180 units for the bachelor's degree plus 45 (or higher degree program requirement, as determined by each graduate degree program) unduplicated units for the master's degree. The requirements for the coterminal program with dual undergraduate degrees are 225 units for the two bachelor's degrees, and 45 units for the master's degree (see also [GAP 4.2 Coterminal Degrees](#) [5]).

For the 45-unit university minimum for the master's degree, all courses must be at or above the 100 level and 50 percent must be courses designated primarily for graduate students (typically at least at the 200 level). Degree program requirements may be higher. Units for a given course may not be counted to meet the requirements of more than one degree, that is, no units may be double-counted. No courses taken more than two quarters prior to admission to the coterminal master's program may be used to meet the 45-unit university minimum requirement for the master's degree.

Tuition Rate for Coterminal Students

The tuition schedule for graduate programs differs from that for undergraduates, and the tuition rate for graduate engineering is higher than for other graduate programs. Students enrolled in a coterminal program begin to pay the graduate tuition rate after 12 full-tuition undergraduate quarters.

Coterminal students with two undergraduate degrees are assessed the graduate tuition rate in the quarter after they have been enrolled for 15 full-tuition quarters.

Coterminal students would also start paying the graduate tuition rate if any undergraduate degree is conferred or if they are granted any graduate aid before the completion of the 12th undergraduate quarter. Once charged under the graduate tuition schedule, the tuition will not revert thereafter to the undergraduate rate. (See extended discussion in [GAP 4.2 Coterminal Degrees](#) [5]).

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5. Transfer Credit for Graduate Work Done Elsewhere

After at least one quarter of enrollment, students pursuing an Engineer, D.M.A., or Ph.D. may apply for transfer credit for graduate work done at another institution (Graduate Residency Transfer Credit).

Engineer candidates who also earned their master's at Stanford may not transfer residency credit, nor may any master's degree students. Ph.D. or D.M.A. students may only apply a total of 45 units of transfer credit and credit earned for a Stanford master's degree toward the Ph.D. residency total. The M.D. program permits 90 transfer units (3.0 terms) and the J.D. program permits 30 transfer units (2.0 terms). The M.B.A. program does not allow the transfer of units.

A maximum of 45 units for graduate work completed at another institution or completed at Stanford towards a master's degree may be applied to the Stanford requirements for the degrees of Ph.D., D.M.A., or Engineer.

Applications for transfer credit should only be made after successful completion of at least one quarter of graduate work at Stanford. Students enrolled at Stanford who are going to study elsewhere during their degree program should obtain prior approval of any transfer credit sought before their departure.

The following criteria are used by the degree program in determining whether, in its discretion, Stanford will award

transfer residency credit for graduate-level work done at another institution:

1. Transfer of units earned for graduate work completed at another institution including coursework completed partially or fully online must be approved by the student's degree program.
2. The graduate work must have been completed after conferral of the bachelor's degree; the only exception is for graduate work taken through program structured like the Stanford coterminal bachelor's/master's program.
3. Up to 12 units of graduate work completed when a student is not enrolled in a graduate degree granting program (e.g., extension courses or non-matriculated enrollment) are eligible for transfer; with degree program approval.
4. Graduate work must have been completed with a grade of B or better in each course. Degree programs may accept a course with a lower grade provided the graduate work accepted for transfer received an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) or better. Pass grades may be accepted at the discretion of the degree program.
5. Graduate work must have been completed at a regionally accredited institution in the U.S. or at an officially recognized institution in a foreign country. Graduate work completed at foreign universities must be at the level of study comparable to a U.S. graduate program.
6. Units of graduate work accepted for transfer do not automatically exempt a student from completing Stanford course requirements for their degree.

The [Application for Graduate Residency Credit](#) [6] is reviewed by the degree program and the Office of the University Registrar. For transfer credit done under a system other than the quarter system, the permissible maximum units are calculated at an appropriate ratio of equivalence.

Evaluation of Credit for Students Receiving VA Educational Benefits

Liaison among the university, its students, and the various federal, state, and local agencies concerned with veterans' educational benefits is provided by the Office of the University Registrar. All students eligible to receive veterans' educational benefits while attending the university are urged to complete arrangements with the appropriate agency well in advance of enrollment. In addition, students are required to have their degree program approve their study lists as meeting graduation requirements before the Office of the University Registrar can certify the courses for Veterans Affairs.

Subject to current federal and university guidelines, students eligible for receipt of VA educational benefits have their prior education and training evaluated up to the credit limits outlined in this Residency policy. As an exception to this policy, students in master's programs in the Schools of Earth Sciences, Education, Engineering, Humanities and Sciences, Law, Medicine, and Graduate School of Business are allowed a maximum of 6 transfer (quarter) units.

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Related Content:

Related Policies

- [GAP 3.1 Registration, Enrollment, and Academic Progress](#) [7]
- [GAP 4.1 Master's Degrees](#) [8]
- [GAP 4.2 Coterminal Degrees](#) [5]
- [GAP 4.3 Engineer Degree](#) [9]
- [GAP 4.6 Doctoral Degrees, Candidacy](#) [10]
- [GAP 4.9 Joint Degree Programs](#) [3]

Related Bulletin Sections

- [Residency Policy for Graduate Students](#) [11]
- [University Minimum Residency Requirements for Graduate Degrees](#) [11]

Related Information and Forms

- [Application for Graduate Residency Credit](#) ^[6]

Source URL: <https://gap.stanford.edu/handbooks/gap-handbook/chapter-3/subchapter-2/page-3-2-1>

Links

[1] https://stanford.service-now.com/services?id=services_portal_home

[2] <https://registrar.stanford.edu/students/graduate-degree-progress/minimum-residency-requirements-graduate-degrees>

[3] <https://gap.stanford.edu/handbooks/gap-handbook/chapter-4/subchapter-9/page-4-9-1>

[4] <https://bulletin.stanford.edu/academic-policies/veterans-and-military-benefits>

[5] <https://gap.stanford.edu/handbooks/gap-handbook/chapter-4/subchapter-2/page-4-2-1>

[6] <https://registrar.stanford.edu/graduate-residency-transfer-credit-application>

[7] <https://gap.stanford.edu/handbooks/gap-handbook/chapter-3/subchapter-1/page-3-1-1>

[8] <https://gap.stanford.edu/handbooks/gap-handbook/chapter-4/subchapter-1/page-4-1-1>

[9] <https://gap.stanford.edu/handbooks/gap-handbook/chapter-4/subchapter-3/page-4-3-1>

[10] <https://gap.stanford.edu/handbooks/gap-handbook/chapter-4/subchapter-6/page-4-6-1>

[11] <https://bulletin.stanford.edu/academic-policies/graduate-degrees#residency>