5.1.1 Changes and Additions of Degree Programs: Policy

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Summary

Stanford University permits currently matriculated graduate students to petition to change their degree program or to add a new degree program without going through an external application process. Policy and procedures are described here.

Rationale

Graduate students are admitted to Stanford for a specific degree program. By means of the Graduate Program Authorization Petition (Grad Auth petition), Stanford University makes it possible for admitted and enrolled graduate students to petition to change their degree program, or to add an additional degree program, without requiring the student to complete the external application process. Approval is by no means automatic; it is subject to admissions review in the new degree program. Students should consult with their degree program about the appropriate way to apply for a new program or degree. In some cases, degree programs may require the student to complete a new graduate application as well.

This process is not applicable to students with an active undergraduate program. Graduate students with two currently active degree programs must complete one before this process can be used to add a third degree program.

Policy

Students who have attended Stanford for at least one term and who are currently enrolled may submit a Graduate Program Authorization Petition to seek to make one of the following changes:

1. change to a new degree program in the same department
2. change to a new degree program in a different department
3. add a new degree program in the same or a different department to be pursued with the existing program; students pursuing a doctoral or Engineer degree who wish to obtain a master?s degree in the same department should use the Graduate Program Authorization Petition.

Coterminal students must have the bachelor?s degree conferred before adding a second advanced degree program. Summer term enrollment is optional for students beginning a new degree program in the Autumn term provided that they have been enrolled the prior Spring term.

It is important that the attempt to add or change degree programs be made while the student is enrolled. Otherwise, a new Application for Graduate Admission must be submitted and an application fee paid. Similarly, enrollment must be continuous if a new degree program is added after completion of an existing program. Summer quarter enrollment is optional for students who intend to begin a new degree program in the Autumn quarter, provided that they have been enrolled the prior Spring quarter.

The Graduate Program Authorization Petition is submitted electronically to the degree program in which admission is requested. If applying for a higher degree program, students may also be required to submit other application materials such as GRE Subject Test scores, a statement of purpose, or new letters of recommendation. Decisions on these petitions are made by the degree programs to which they are directed, and are at the discretion of those degree programs.

International students changing degree programs must also obtain the approval of the Foreign Student Advisor at the Bechtel International Center. If the requested change lengthens their stay, they also are required to submit verification of sufficient funding to complete the new degree program.

Graduate Program Authorization Petitions are filed electronically in Axess [1] and approved by the current and the new degree program. In addition, petitions from international students will be routed to the Bechtel International Center for review. Upon all approvals, the student's record will automatically update with the requested changes.

Authority:
- Committee on Graduate Studies (policy)
- Office of the Registrar [2]via Stanford Services & Support (implementation)

Applicability:
To all matriculated graduate students and the programs in which they are enrolled. This policy is not applicable to students with an active undergraduate program.

Jump To:

1. Deadlines and Fees

Petitions must be submitted electronically no later than the last day of classes for the quarter in which the change is requested. Petitions after the deadline must be submitted for the subsequent quarter if applicable. A service fee for the handling of the petition will be added automatically to the student's university bill, regardless of outcome.

Fee Waivers

The application fee for the submission of a Graduate Program Authorization Petition will be waived upon degree program request in the following circumstances:

a. for doctoral students in the Biosciences programs, Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine, or Bioengineering, and who are changing to another degree at the doctoral level within one of these programs;
b. for doctoral students who have been dismissed from their Ph.D. program for academic reasons and, with permission of the home degree program, add a master's or engineer degree in the same program. The Ph.D. program and any other active graduate degree programs must be discontinued in order for the student to be

eligible for the fee waiver.

See implementation guidelines for waiver process.

2. Tuition

If the student is enrolling in a second school where the student will incur a different tuition charge (e.g., School of Education M.A. and adding a Graduate School of Business M.B.A.), the student must also submit a completed Tuition Agreement for Students with Multiple Programs [3] to determine applicable tuition assessments.

When a student is adding a second degree at a different program level (e.g., when a doctoral student adds a masters' degree with a different rate of tuition), the student will be charged the tuition for the higher-level degree. In this situation, doctoral degrees are at a higher level than masters' degrees, and therefore the doctoral program tuition will be charged (see GAP 6.1 Graduate Tuition Categories [4]).

Related Content:
Related Policies
- GAP 2.1 Admitting Graduate Students to Matriculated Study [5]
- GAP 4.2 Coterminal Degrees [6]
- GAP 6.1 Graduate Tuition Categories [4]

Related Bulletin Sections
- Changes of Degree Programs [7]

Related Information and Forms
- Graduate Program Authorization Petition [8] (Grad Auth), available through Axess [1]
- Tuition Agreement for Students with Multiple Programs [3]
- Declaration or Change to a Field of Study [9]

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