

# Graduate Student Handbook

2022- 2023  
Academic Year



Central Washington University

School of Graduate Studies and Research

[www.cwu.edu/masters](http://www.cwu.edu/masters)

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## Welcome from Interim Dean Dr. Gail Mackin

We are so glad you have decided to attend Central Washington University, and we realize that our graduate students come from all walks of life with different cultures, backgrounds and life experiences. We are here to help you navigate through your graduate career, and if you have suggestions or questions for us – we hope that you will feel free to express them!

This handbook is meant as a reference for both new and continuing students. The information is compiled from our experience working with graduate students, their faculty advisors and committees. This guide is meant for general overview purposes; refer to your own department's handbook or policy guide for detailed information pertaining to your area of study.

The SGSR staff and I are always available to assist you as you work through your career and prepare for graduation or completion of your certificate—if we don't have the answer, we will find the person who does! I hope you are able to drop in and say hello in person or contact us virtually if you are not on the Ellensburg campus. If you have questions at any time during your graduate career, do not hesitate to email [graddean@cwu.edu](mailto:graddean@cwu.edu). I very much look forward to meeting you!

All best,



Dr. Gail Mackin, Ph.D.

Interim Dean of Graduate Studies and Research



## **Mission**

The mission of the School of Graduate Studies and Research is to promote a diverse community of scholars among students and faculty, and to encourage the advancement of knowledge through innovation, research, creative expression, and service within its array of programs leading to graduate degrees and certificates.

## **Vision**

To enhance CWU's teacher-scholar model through faculty teaching, scholarship, and mentoring of students, and to be regarded as the best masters-level institution in the State of Washington. To promote affordable, accessible, career-enhancing graduate education and to prepare students for study at the doctoral and professional level.



*Graduating students*

## **Definition of a Graduate Student**

- a. A graduate student is anyone duly admitted to graduate study at Central Washington University (CWU), and who is officially enrolled in a graduate degree or certificate program. Graduate programs offered include master's degree programs, educational specialist degree, fifth-year and certificate programs and non-degree study as a resident or visiting graduate student. Graduate students cannot be enrolled in two degree programs simultaneously.

## **Student Responsibilities**

### **a. Class Schedule Confirmation**

A student may register online utilizing their MyCWU account. By navigating to MyCWU> Student> Schedule, a student can obtain a listing of his/her classes for current or future quarters. Students should check their schedules carefully for discrepancies.

Students are responsible for ensuring that the courses they select will fulfill degree requirements. Be aware that all graded courses are used to calculate the cumulative GPA.

## b. Methods of Communication

- Email:

It is imperative that students check their CWU e-mail accounts throughout the quarter. The Graduate School, along with Registrar Services, Financial Aid, Student Accounts, and other student services use your student Outlook e-mail to you of important information. For information on your student e-mail account, go to [www.cwu.edu/its-helpdesk/email](http://www.cwu.edu/its-helpdesk/email)

- Mailing Address:

Keeping your mailing address current in your student account is very important! Addresses can be changed on MyCWU> Student> Personal> Addresses or in person at Registrar Services. Important materials are mailed periodically to all students throughout the quarter.

## c. Deadlines

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all Central Washington University, Departmental Program and Graduate School deadlines. Keep apprised of all deadlines on our website:

<http://www.cwu.edu/masters/graduation-procedures-and-deadlines>

## d. Financial Obligations

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that his/her account is kept current. **Non-attendance DOES NOT relieve students of their academic and financial obligations.**

Admission to, or registration with the university, conferring of degrees, and issuance of academic transcripts, diplomas and certificates may be withheld for failure to meet financial obligations to the university. Students may access their statement on MyCWU located at:

[www.cwu.edu](http://www.cwu.edu) MyCWU> Student> Financial> View My Student Account

## e. Student Rights

For in-depth information regarding Central Washington University student's rights and responsibilities please refer to the links below:

<https://www.cwu.edu/student-rights/office-student-rights-responsibilities>

<https://www.cwu.edu/student-rights/student-responsibilities-university-policies>

## Scholastic Standards

Any graduate student in a master's program whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 at the end of any quarter will be placed on academic probation for the next academic quarter. While on probation, a student may not hold a graduate assistantship or a nonresident tuition waiver fellowship. If, after one quarter of probation, the student fails to raise her or his cumulative grade point average to 3.0 or above, the student will be withdrawn from the university. Students may not receive a master's degree or earn a certificate from Central if their cumulative grade point average is below 3.0.

The cumulative grade point average is calculated using all courses taken after admission into a graduate program, whether part of the approved course of study or not. Grades for all courses included on the course of study must average at least 3.0 (B). Credit will not be accepted for courses on the course of study in which a grade lower than "C" is earned.



## Maximum Time Limit to Degree Completion

No credit earned more than six years before the date of the master's degree award may be counted as part of the degree credit requirement except if approved by formal action by the dean of the SGSR. This includes applicable work transferred from other institutions.

Master's degree students are expected to complete all requirements for the master's degree within six years from the date of first enrollment. Students earning a graduate certificate have three years to complete it. Students seeking to interrupt their studies may do so with the approval of the chair or graduate coordinator of the home department, but must pay a non-refundable fee for registration as an on-leave student.

## Grades

### In Progress Grade

For graduate students, an "IP", or, In Progress grade is used for 700 credits for thesis or project study courses that normally extend beyond a single term. The Graduate School will post the actual grades for all of the 700 IP's at the end of your final quarter. Other courses may also issue "IP" grades and it is the student's responsibility to keep track of any outstanding courses with "IP" grades and make sure that a grade is issued. All course work must be graded before the degree or certificate can be earned.

### Incomplete Grade

The "I" or Incomplete grade is used when the student was not able to complete the course by the end of the term, but has satisfactorily completed a sufficient portion of it and can be expected to finish without having to re-enroll in the course. The instructor will designate what a student must do to complete the course and set a specific date up to one calendar year for the completion of the coursework.

If the work is not completed within one (1) calendar year from the last day of the quarter in which the "I" was received, the registrar will automatically convert the "I" to an "F."

However, instructors may require the work to be completed prior to the end of the calendar year. In these cases the registrar will convert the grade according to the date indicated by the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to contact the professor and make arrangements to complete the course. To earn a grade, a student must complete the work for the course as prescribed by the instructor by the indicated date on the incomplete. Students may not re-register for a course in which they receive a grade of incomplete.

### Grade Point

The cumulative grade point average is calculated using all courses taken after admission into a graduate program, whether part of the approved course of study or not. Grades for all courses included on the course of study must average at least 3.0 (B). Credit will not be accepted for courses on the course of study in which a grade lower than "C" is earned.

## Continuous Registration – On Leave

All master's degree students, including students in attendance only during summer quarter, must satisfy the continuous registration requirement each fall quarter or summer to maintain active status. Students whose master's program runs throughout the academic year will be assessed this fee every fall quarter. Students whose program meets primarily in the summer months will be assessed the on-leave fee at the beginning of summer quarter. A master's degree student may register as a full-time, part-time, or as an on-leave student to satisfy the requirement.

Students desiring on-leave status are required to pay a \$40 fee each fall quarter. Failure to maintain continuous registration will be taken by the university to signify the student's resignation from the program. Students who resign and later wish to resume study toward a degree must reapply for admission and complete all steps outlined for master's admission. Readmission cannot be guaranteed.

## Degree Course of Study

The Official Electronic Catalog (OEC) is the university's compilation for all curriculum. For detailed information regarding Academic Policies and guidelines, please check the catalog. Graduate catalogs are valid for five years, and may be found at <http://catalog.acalog.cwu.edu/>

Graduate students admitted to the master's degree program may use the catalog they are admitted under or the current one depending on the specific program's and the SGSR's approval of the student's Option Approval Form.

Degree candidates must complete at least 45 credits (some programs require more credits) as outlined in the official Central Washington University catalog, endorsed by the department chair or graduate coordinator and the committee chair and filed with and approved by the SGSR. The course of study for degree earning students should be filed prior to completing 25 quarter credits leading to the master's degree.

### a. Transferring credits

Courses taken prior to formal admission to a CWU master's degree program may be considered for transfer to a CWU master's degree program provided that certain criteria are met. The courses must be listed on the Course of Study form, and an official transcript from the institution where the coursework was taken must be on file with the SGSR. Credits accepted in transfer are those that are part of an accredited institution's regular graduate degree programs.

Transfer credit must be graded an A or B, and courses must have been taken within the last six years.

A total of 15 graduate quarter credits may be applied to a CWU master's degree, of which no more than 9 quarter credits (or 6 semester credits) may be from an institution other than CWU. (A total of 20 quarter credits (13.33 semester credits) may be applied to a CWU educational specialist degree.) For graduate certificates, no more than 6 quarter credits (4 semester credits) can be applied from either CWU or other institutions.

Credits used to fulfill requirements for another degree, either at CWU or elsewhere, will not be transferred.

Refer to the catalog for complete stipulations.

## Certificate Course of Study

Graduate certificate program students are required to submit a proposed course of study form for a graduate certificate to the SGSR. This form lists the courses as outlined in the official Central Washington University catalog, endorsed by the department chair or graduate coordinator and filed with and approved by the SGSR. The Official Electronic Catalog (OEC) is the university's compilation for all curriculum. Graduate catalogs are valid for five years, and may be found at [www.cwu.edu](http://www.cwu.edu).

Graduate students admitted to the master's certificate program may use the catalog they are admitted under or the current one.

## Graduate Student Forms

Forms pertaining to your graduate career can be found on our website:

<http://www.cwu.edu/masters/forms-and-documents#current>

## Graduate Committee and Option Approval/Culminating Experience

The Graduate Committee/Option Approval form is to be completed as soon as the student has formed a committee and selected an option of culminating experience based on what is applicable for their degree program. Students earning a certificate are NOT required to complete this form.

Most master's degree candidates must have a graduate committee of at least three members. Interdisciplinary membership is strongly recommended. In some departments, a student may choose her/his committee in consultation with an advisor; in others, the chair or graduate coordinator assigns graduate committees. In either case, the graduate student is expected to work with the department chair or graduate coordinator in forming her/his committee.

The student must submit a Graduate Committee and Option Approval Form to the graduate office. If approved, the committee becomes the student's official advisory committee. The thesis or non-thesis option advisor is the student's graduate committee chair and generally is a faculty member in the department of specialization.

### a. Research with Human Subjects – Institutional Review Board Approval

All CWU-affiliated research, including student research projects which involve human subjects, must be reviewed by the university's Human Subjects Review Committee (HSRC), CWU's institutional review board for the protection of human subjects.

Students apply for HSRC review by filling out an application form, which can be obtained online at <https://www.cwu.edu/hsrc> or from the HSRC office. No research can be initiated prior to formal approval.

### b. Research with Animal Subjects - Animal Care and Use Approval

Graduate students whose research involves vertebrate animal subjects may not commence research without first obtaining clearance from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

Students may apply for IACUC review by filling out an application form, which can be obtained online at <https://www.cwu.edu/iacuc/> or from the HSRC office. No research can be initiated prior to formal approval.

## Graduation / Advancement to Candidacy / Earning a Certificate

### a. Applying to Graduate or Earn a Certificate

#### 1. Final Folder Check:

**All graduate students earning a degree or a certificate** will need to request a **Final Folder Check** (degree checkout) by the end of the first week of classes for that specific quarter via the Graduate School website. You should be requesting this step **ONLY** if you have communicated with your thesis/project/exam/capstone committee ahead of time.

Please be sure to keep track of deadlines by checking our website regularly:



<http://www.cwu.edu/masters/graduation-procedures-and-deadlines>

In order for the Graduate School staff to complete the folder check there must be an approved, signed **Course of Study** and, if earning a degree, a **Graduate Committee and Option Approval** form on file with the SGSR. You can find these forms here: <http://www.cwu.edu/masters/forms-and-documents>

You must be registered for a minimum of 2 credits.

Once your Final Folder Check is completed you will receive an email to your CWU email address that will include the results of your check and forms that you will be required to complete.

All graduate students will complete a **Degree or Certificate Application**, this form will be sent to you once your Final Folder check is completed.

If for any reason you do not graduate or earn the certificate the term you have requested you **MUST** request another Final Folder check for the new term you will graduate or earn the certificate.

\*Spring and Summer degree earning candidates must request a Final Folder check by the end of the change of schedule date for Spring Quarter (check the current academic calendar for dates) for your name to appear in the Commencement book. Certificate earners do not appear in the Commencement book.

If you will be earning your degree in Summer, and wish to participate in the Commencement/Hooding Ceremony, you will note that on your Final Folder Check request – the folder check will be processed Summer Quarter.

\*Note: This is not the same as signing up to walk/participate in Commencement/Hooding Ceremony. To register for commencement, please see the Commencement website: <https://www.cwu.edu/commencement/>

## **2. Pay Degree/Certificate and Thesis processing fees**

All graduate students earning a degree or certificate are required to pay a \$50 degree fee. Thesis students have a \$25 Thesis processing fee in addition to the degree fee.

Fees will be posted to your MyCWU account once the Final Folder check is complete.

Payment can be made via your MyCWU account.

## **3. Permit for Final Examination**

Depending on your program completion requirements, a Permit for Final Examination form will be emailed to you once your Final Folder Check is completed if applicable.

The final examination must be scheduled between the hours of 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, when the university is in session (not between quarters).

Final examinations are conducted by the candidate's committee and are open to the faculty. The committee alone shall decide upon the merit of the candidate's performance. Final assessment of the examination will be reported on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

The candidate shall pass the examination if two-thirds of the official graduate faculty committee members so indicate. In the event of an unsatisfactory final examination, a second examination may be scheduled upon the endorsement of the major department chair and with the approval of the dean of Graduate School for the subsequent quarter with at least two months intervening.

All degree requirements must be completed within the same or next quarter from the exam date. Failure to complete remaining requirements by the end of the next quarter will result in requiring the final examination to be retaken.

Permits should be completed and returned to the Graduate School at least 2 weeks prior to exam date.

#### **4. Project, Portfolio Review, Exam and Capstone option**

Written exams are arranged by the exam or capstone committee.

Projects and Portfolio reviews are submitted directly to program department and/or project committee.

#### **5. Thesis option**

For all students completing a thesis, failure to review and follow the style guidelines in the SGSR Thesis General Regulations will result in the Graduate School being unable to accept your thesis and could delay the awarding of your degree.

The SGSR checks all manuscripts for correct and consistent usage of the chosen style. Students should use the most current edition available of the style that has been selected by their department or program. Students should contact their committee chair for advice on the appropriate style manual.

Thesis Regulations can be found on Canvas in SGSR Hub or website:  
<https://www.cwu.edu/masters/forms-and-documents>

Theses are submitted through [Canvas](#), you will be given access when you request your Final Folder check; for earlier access please contact SGSR.

Forms to be submitted when your thesis is finished:

- [Electronic Thesis Submission Agreement](#) This is found in Canvas. It will need to be completed with required faculty - departmental signatures required and returned to SGSR
- A signed copy of the signature page (Page ii of thesis) submitted to SGSR

Refer to the Electronic Thesis Submission process in the Thesis Regulations, Canvas or website for the step by step process.

For a quick reference see the thesis submission flow chart [link here](#)

#### **6. Graduate or Earn Certificate**

All requirements must be met by the last day of the quarter in order to earn your degree or certificate.

All Courses for 700 credits will be changed from IP (In Progress) to Satisfactory when your degree is posted.

Degrees and certificates will be posted within 4 weeks of the end of the quarter if all requirements have been met.

Diplomas and certificates will be mailed to the mailing address listed in your MyCWU account approximately 6-8 weeks after the end of the quarter.

Diplomas, certificates and official transcripts will not be issued while there is any outstanding student account balance.

## Commencement

### Graduate Hooding and Commencement Ceremony

Each year, the School of Graduate Studies and Research will host the **Graduate Hooding and Commencement Ceremony** for students earning a degree. Those earning certificates are not included. Specific information will be posted on the commencement and graduate school websites.

To register for commencement, please see the Commencement website:  
<https://www.cwu.edu/commencement/>

Please pay close attention to all commencement registration deadlines which will include ordering regalia.

This ceremony integrates the conferring of degrees along with the hooding ceremony to create one Commencement event for **graduate students**. This ceremony is intended to celebrate the successful completion of all **Master's and Education Specialist (EdS)** degrees. Those earning certificates are not eligible to attend.

More information regarding the details of these ceremonies will be released annually on the Graduate School website.

This ceremony requires faculty and students to be dressed in full regalia. During ceremony, the name of each graduate is called. The graduate will then go on stage with his or her faculty mentor. The faculty mentor will place a hood over the head of the graduate signifying his or her success in completing the graduate program.

Master's degree recipients wear hoods as part of their regalia, you can find what color hood you need **here**.

The Dean of Graduate Studies will then congratulate the graduates individually by presenting each with a diploma cover. A professional photographer will take individual graduation photos at this ceremony.

Registered students are encouraged to invite friends and family members to the Graduate Hooding and Commencement Ceremony; however, seating will be offered on a first come, first served basis. Tickets will not be required for entry.

## Contacts / Campus Resources

### School of Graduate School and Research

<http://www.cwu.edu/masters/>

Gail Mackin, Ph.D., Associate Provost and Interim Dean                      509-963-3101   [graddean@cwu.edu](mailto:graddean@cwu.edu)

Dawn Anderson    509-963-3108   [dawn.anderson@cwu.edu](mailto:dawn.anderson@cwu.edu)  
Assists with policies and procedures, required forms, graduation, posting degrees and thesis processing.

Victoria Clapper    509-963-3104   [victoria.clapper@cwu.edu](mailto:victoria.clapper@cwu.edu)  
Assists with student support including admission and post admission and on-leave processing.

Justine Eason 509-963-3103 [justine.eason@cwu.edu](mailto:justine.eason@cwu.edu)

Serves as the Communications Consultant in the Graduate School and is involved with marketing and recruitment of the graduate programs.

Diane Houser 509-963-3102 [diane.houser@cwu.edu](mailto:diane.houser@cwu.edu)

Coordinates graduate student financial support for internal awards and the graduate assistantship program.

Lynn Niemi 509-963-2243 [lynn.niemi@cwu.edu](mailto:lynn.niemi@cwu.edu)

Assists with student support including admission and post admission, non-resident tuition waivers and low-gpa procedures.

Kelley Quirk 509-963-2118 [kelley.quirk@cwu.edu](mailto:kelley.quirk@cwu.edu)

Works to identify funding opportunities and oversees internal awards for graduate students. Coordinates the IACUC.

### **Human Protections Administrator – Human Subjects Review**

<https://www.cwu.edu/hsrc/>

Sandy Martinez 509-963-3115 [sandra.martinez@cwu.edu](mailto:sandra.martinez@cwu.edu)

Contact prior to research projects involving human subjects.

### **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) – Animal Subjects Review**

<https://www.cwu.edu/iacuc/>

April Binder 509-963-2803 [april.binder@cwu.edu](mailto:april.binder@cwu.edu)

Contact prior to research projects involving animal subjects.

### **Graduate Student Thesis Editor**

Lila Harper [lila.harper@cwu.edu](mailto:lila.harper@cwu.edu)

Formatting editor for all graduate theses.

**For more services available to students the Student Success website is a great place to look.**

<https://www.cwu.edu/student-success/>

**Here are a few examples of services available to students:**

#### **Student Health and Wellness**

Includes CWU Student Medical Clinic, Counseling Services and Wellness Center

<https://www.cwu.edu/health-services/> 509-963-1881

<https://www.cwu.edu/wellness/> 509-963-3213

#### **Disability Support Services**

Disability Services serves students with permanent and temporary disabilities attending Central on the Ellensburg campus, online or at any of our eight University Centers.

<https://www.cwu.edu/disability-services/> 509-963-2214

### **Career Services**

Career counseling, resume and cover letter review, interviewing skills and preparation, job search and career transition. Appointments available at main campus, west side campuses and online.

<http://www.cwu.edu/career/>

509-963-1921

### **University Recreation**

Recreation cultivates inclusive opportunities promoting a lifelong commitment to health and wellness. If you can't make it into the facility on the main campus you can check out the [Fitness on Demand](#) program to stay fit where ever you!

<https://www.cwu.edu/rec/about-university-recreation>

### **Veterans**

The CWU Veterans Center can provide information and guidance to veterans, active duty, national guard or reserve members, dependents, and others regarding questions on Veteran Education Benefits

<http://www.cwu.edu/veterans/>

### **International Student & Scholarship Services**

The Office of International Studies and Programs (OISP) exists to provide a variety of services to all segments of Central Washington University in order to meet the diverse needs of CWU's students, faculty, international students, research scholars and professors.

<https://www.cwu.edu/international-programs/>

### **Financial Aid**

All students accepted into a master's program are required to be enrolled in at least five credits at the 501 level or above to receive graduate-level loans.

<https://www.cwu.edu/financial-aid/>

509-963-1611