

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES CEBU

General Rules and Regulations for Master's Degree Programs

(as approved during the 6th UP Cebu University Council Meeting on 2018 September 12, with [addendums](#))

Section 1. Academic Calendar

Article 1. Graduate programs in the University of the Philippines Cebu operate on either of two modes of the academic calendar. For any program, the academic year is made up either of two (2) semesters or three (3) trimesters.

Section 2. Admission Requirements

Article 2. An applicant for admission to a master's degree program must be a holder of a bachelor's degree or its equivalent from any recognized academic institution.

Article 3. A duly accomplished application form addressed to the Dean of the college/school offering the degree program must be submitted together with the following documents:

- a) Original or certified true copy of the official transcript of academic records, in English language, with no remarks and with an explanation of the grading system used, from all tertiary and graduate institutions attended;
- b) For international students, certification from the Office of the University Registrar of previous university attended that the medium of instruction is English (if applicable), or results of Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or results of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or its equivalent;
- c) Application fee;
- d) Two (2) sealed letters of recommendation from former professors and/or experts in the field of study that the student is seeking admission into; and
- e) Other requirements as may be prescribed by the college/school for specific degree programs.

Article 4. An applicant seeking admission into a master's degree program shall take and pass the entrance examination, except in programs that do not require an entrance examination.

Article 5. The college/school concerned shall determine the acceptability of the applicant based on a set of criteria that may include the applicant's academic background, entrance examination results (if applicable), language proficiency, and research and work experience in the intended field of study.

The Dean of the college/school shall issue an official notice of admission to the applicant based on the recommendation of the designated Admissions Committee of the respective degree-granting units.

Section 3. Registration and Academic Load

Article 6. All students intending to work for a Master's degree will be allowed to register only upon presentation of the letter of admission from the Dean of their respective college/school.

Article 7. At the time of the student's admission, a Program Adviser shall be provided by the department/program concerned to advise and monitor the student in the course work and other requirements of the degree program.

Only full-time members of the graduate faculty shall serve as program advisers.

Article 8. A graduate student on full-time study should take 9-12 units a semester/trimester as prescribed in the study plan of his/her degree program. Unless specified in his/her particular program, a student who takes less than 9 units in an academic term is considered a part-time student.

Under meritorious circumstances, the student may be allowed more than the prescribed academic load by the Dean.

Section 4. Advance or Transfer Credits

Article 9. Advance credits, which are subject to validation, may be earned from courses taken at institutions outside of the UP System.

Transfer credits may be directly earned from courses taken at other UP units. Courses taken that may be considered equivalent to those required in the program pursued are subject to substitution by the department/ program concerned.

Units for undergraduate courses cannot be credited for graduate work.

Article 10. A graduate student may apply for a maximum of nine (9) units of advance or transfer credits for work done at another institution with the appropriate department/program within the first semester/trimester of the student's admission into the program.

Article 11. Advance or transfer credits should have been earned with grades of "2.0" (or its UP equivalent) or better within the last five (5) years prior to admission.

Article 12. No credit shall be given for work that has been credited to a previously earned degree.

Article 13. The validation examination(s) required shall be conducted within the first year of enrollment of the student.

Section 5. Grading System and Requirement

Article 14. The following numerical grades shall be used in graduate courses: 1.0, 1.25 (Excellent), 1.5, 1.75 (Very Good), 2.0, 2.25 (Good), 2.5, 2.75 (Satisfactory), 3.0 (Pass), 4.0 (Conditional), INC (Incomplete), and 5.0 (Fail).

Article 15. A grade of "3.0" or better is a passing grade. A graduate student earns credit for a course when s/he obtains a grade of "3.0" or better.

Article 16. The General Weighted Average (GWA) shall be based on all courses taken by the student in his/her approved Program of Study, including those taken in compliance with the Residence Rules, if applicable.

Article 17. To remain in good standing, a student must maintain a GWA of "2.000" or better in his/her course work at the end of each academic year until the completion of the Program of Study.

Article 18. A student who fails to satisfy the GWA of "2.000" at the end of the academic year shall be disqualified from the master's program.

Section 6. General Requirements (Non-Thesis Option)

Article 19. To qualify for the master's degree under the Non-Thesis Option, a student must satisfy the following requirements:

- a) complete a minimum of thirty (30) units of formal graduate courses;
- b) obtain a General Weighted Average (GWA) of "2.000" or better in all graduate courses taken in his/her Program of Study; and
- c) pass the master's comprehensive examination, or complete a special problem, research project, capstone project, or its equivalent.

Article 20. Additional requirements over and above these minimum University requirements and standards for the master's degree may be adopted by the colleges/units for their respective master's degree programs with the approval of the appropriate bodies.

Section 7. Comprehensive Examination

Article 21. A student may apply for the comprehensive examination after completing all the academic course requirements and obtaining a GWA of "2.000" or better in all his/her courses, including those courses taken to comply with the Maximum Residence Rules.

Instead of a comprehensive examination, a program may require the completion of a special problem, research project, capstone project, or its equivalent.

Article 22. The Comprehensive Examination Committee shall consist of a minimum of three (3) regular full-time faculty members with doctoral degrees, except in meritorious cases, when those with other credentials may be made part of the Committee, such as Professorial Lecturers and Professors Emeriti may also serve as examiners provided they are at least master's degree holders and/or known experts in their fields and have taught in the unit during the last two (2) years. The exception shall be made only with the approval of the Dean, upon the recommendation of the appropriate bodies.

Article 23. The grades for the comprehensive examination are as follows: "Pass" or "Fail."

Article 24. If a student fails the comprehensive examination, a second examination shall be allowed within one (1) year after the first examination. Failure to pass this second examination shall bar the student permanently from the current master's program.

Article 25. If a student passes the comprehensive examination, s/he shall qualify for the master's degree under the Non-Thesis Option.

Section 8. General Requirements (Thesis Option)

Article 26. To qualify for the master's degree under the Thesis Option, a student must satisfy the following requirements:

- a) complete a minimum of twenty-four (24) units of formal graduate courses;

- b) obtain a General Weighted Average (GWA) of “2.000” or better in all graduate courses taken in his/her Program of Study;
- c) successfully defend a master’s thesis; and
- d) submit at least four (4) bound and certified copies of the approved master’s thesis.

Article 27. The four (4) bound copies shall be distributed as follows: one (1) copy each for the student, the Thesis Adviser, the College, and the University Library.

Section 9. Thesis

Article 28. The master’s thesis must:

- a) embody an original and significant research or creative work in the primary discipline or field of the degree program pursued;
- b) show the student’s capacity to make a critical evaluation of previous work done in his/her chosen research topic; and
- c) demonstrate his/her ability to present research findings in a clear, systematic, and scholarly manner.

Article 29. The thesis shall have an equivalent of six (6) units of graduate credit and shall have a numerical grade upon completion of all the thesis requirements. At the end of each semester/trimester, the student shall be marked “IP” (In Progress) until such time that s/he has completed all requirements.

[As presented during the 9th Regular UP Cebu University Council Meeting on 2019 September 11 and discussed in the Chancellor’s Advisory Council Meeting on 2019 October 15:](#)

[Memo PDLC 19-13 dated 2019 July 25 indicated that qualitative grades such as S – Satisfactory, U – Unsatisfactory, and P – Pass will be used for thesis/dissertation courses.](#)

Article 30. The six units of thesis shall be registered in one term for six units (6) or two terms for three units each term (3-3).

Article 31. A student who has already registered a total of six (6) units for thesis but still unable to finish the work should enroll for residency per term until s/he is able to submit the bound copies of the approved manuscript, but only up to a maximum of two years (4 semesters/6 trimesters).

If at the end of this time limit, the student is still unable to submit bound copies of the approved manuscript, s/he shall be given a grade of “U” (Unsatisfactory) and should re-enroll all the six units of thesis. The same policies as in Article 30 shall apply.

[Interpretation as clarified and approved during the 13th Regular UP Cebu University Council Meeting on 2021 June 2:](#)

[The counting of the maximum of two years starts during the residency period, after enrollment of the six units of Thesis \(300\) course.](#)

Article 32. After the student completes the prescribed academic requirements, with a GWA of “2.000” or better, s/he shall request the head of the unit for a thesis adviser. The Dean shall then appoint the adviser who shall be chosen on the basis of the student’s research topic, upon recommendation of appropriate bodies. The adviser shall come from the unit where the student is enrolled.

Article 33. The adviser shall be responsible for:

- a) advising the student in the preparation of the thesis proposal;
- b) guiding and monitoring his/her thesis research; and
- c) endorsing his/her master's thesis for oral defense.

Article 34. A Thesis Committee, consisting of the Adviser, Co-Adviser, if any, and a Reader, shall be constituted upon completion of course work.

The Thesis Committee shall consist of full-time regular faculty members who are master's degree holders except in highly meritorious cases as approved by the Dean upon the recommendation of the appropriate bodies. Professorial Lecturers, Professors Emeriti and experts from external institutions may also serve as Co-Adviser, Reader, and panelists upon approval by the Dean.

Article 35. The functions of the Thesis Committee are to:

- a) approve the thesis proposal; and
- b) endorse the thesis draft for oral defense.

Article 36. The functions of the Reader are to:

- a) evaluate the thesis for defense; and
- b) endorse the thesis to the Oral Defense Panel.

Article 37. If the Adviser/Reader goes on leave for more than one (1) semester/trimester, the Dean shall appoint a new Adviser/Reader upon the recommendation of the appropriate bodies.

A student who wishes to change an Adviser/Reader shall write the Dean, through channels. On the other hand, an Adviser may request to be relieved of his/her duties for justifiable reasons.

Article 38. The student shall submit a written thesis proposal to the Thesis Adviser, Co-Adviser (if any) and Reader. Upon approval of the thesis proposal, the student may then carry out the thesis research. A certified copy of the approved proposal and a form endorsing the thesis proposal, duly signed by the Thesis Committee, shall be submitted to the Dean, through channels.

Article 39. After the student's completed draft has been evaluated favorably by the Thesis Committee members, they shall endorse it for oral defense to the Dean, through channels.

Article 40. The oral defense examination panel shall consist of at least three (3) members and no more than five (5) members who shall be appointed by the Dean upon the recommendation of the appropriate bodies. A maximum of two (2) out of five (5) or one (1) out of three (3) members of the master's oral defense panel may come from an external institution (i.e., outside the Department, College, or University) with whom the University has an existing MOA.

The panel shall be chaired by one (1) of the examiners other than the Adviser or Co-Adviser.

Article 41. The master's defense must be held in the College/Unit at a time recommended by the panel, endorsed by the appropriate heads, and authorized by the Dean.

The time and place of the master's defense shall be officially announced at least two (2) weeks before the scheduled oral defense. The schedule of the defense may be changed only upon the recommendation of the defense panel, through channels, and the formal authorization of the Dean.

Article 42. The defense may be held only if:

- a) the thesis manuscript has been received by each member of the panel at least one (1) month before the scheduled examination;
- b) all members of the examination panel are present, except for programs that require the inclusion of a foreign Co-Adviser or foreign external examiner. If the latter is absent, s/he shall be required to send her/his comments to the Chair of the Panel who shall integrate this in the final report. If any other member of the panel is absent, the oral defense shall be rescheduled.

Article 43. The master's defense shall be a public oral examination, the duration of which shall be left to the discretion of the panel. However, the evaluation and rating of the student's defense shall be done by the panel in a closed-door meeting to be held immediately after the defense.

Article 44. There shall be three (3) ratings for the defense: "Pass," "Provisional Pass," or "Fail." "Fail" means substantial revisions are required by at least two (2) of the five (5) panel members or one (1) of the three (3) panel members. Any member who fails the student must specify the reason(s) in writing, a copy of which shall be attached to the report of the panel.

"Provisional Pass" means minor revisions are required. All members of the panel must agree on the recommended revisions, which must be specified in writing and attached to the final report. A second rating sheet shall be signed only after the student incorporates the revisions and the defense panel certifies that the revisions were made.

The result of the oral defense must be reported by the panel to the Dean, through channels, within the first working day after the examination.

Article 45. If the student passes the defense, his/her master's thesis shall be considered approved.

Article 46. If the student fails the defense, s/he may submit herself/himself to a second master's defense within one (1) academic year after the first defense. Failure to pass the second defense disqualifies the student from her/his current master's program.

Section 10. Residence Rules

Article 47. The graduate student is in residence when s/he is officially enrolled.

Article 48. The student must be officially enrolled in residence at least one (1) academic year prior to the conferment of his/her degree.

Article 49. A graduate student may request in writing for a leave of absence (LOA) for at least a semester/trimester from the Dean of the college/school concerned. Approval of LOA is granted for not more than one (1) year at a time.

Article 50. The student who leaves his/her work during an academic term without a formal LOA permit is considered absent without leave (AWOL) and loses his/her registration privileges.

A student who is considered AWOL for at least one semester/trimester must apply for readmission into his/her graduate program at the concerned college/school.

Article 51. The maximum residence rule (MRR) states that: Students have five (5) academic years from their initial enrollment in the program to fulfill all requirements for a master's degree. The five-year maximum time of program completion includes all leave periods.

Article 52. The regular period for completion for a graduate student transferring from another university shall be reduced by one (1) semester.

If there are courses taken by the student prior to his/her admission to the program and credited to his/her course requirements, then his/her allowed period of completion will be reduced by a number of semesters equivalent to one (1) semester for every nine (9) units of courses credited to his/her program.

Article 53. In exceptionally meritorious cases, an extension of residence (waiver of MRR) beyond the above regular period of completion may be approved by the Dean upon recommendation of the appropriate bodies.

Each extension shall be for a period not exceeding one (1) semester at a time. In no case shall the extensions exceed more than five (5) years. The student granted an extension shall take additional units of graduate courses in his/her discipline or area (with the approval of the student's Program Adviser) during the extension period at a rate of three (3) units for every two (2) years of extension or a fraction thereof.

Section 11. Graduation Requirements

Article 54. A student shall be considered a candidate for graduation if s/he meets the following requirements:

- a) must have a GWA of "2.000" or better in all courses taken in her/his approved Program of Study, including those taken in compliance with the Residence Rules, if applicable;
- b) must have passed the oral defense of her/his thesis and submitted the required number of approved copies of the thesis; or must have passed the comprehensive examination; or must have successfully completed a special problem, research project, capstone project, or its equivalent;
- c) must satisfy all other requirements prescribed by the degree program; and
- d) must have been in residence one (1) year immediately prior to graduation.

Article 55. The student must file the application for graduation and diploma with the college/school concerned according to the schedule in the academic calendar.

Article 56. After the graduation of the student shall have been recommended by the College Faculty Assembly, endorsed by the University Council, and approved by the Board of Regents, s/he shall be officially conferred the master's degree.

Special Award for Highest Academic Standing for Graduate Students

(as approved at 7th UC Meeting on 2019 February 13 and at 8th UC Meeting on 2019 June 13)

A graduate student will be eligible to receive the award if s/he satisfies the following conditions:

- must obtain an absolute minimum General Weighted Average (GWA) of 1.25; and
- must graduate on time based on the program's approved study plan.

All graduate students who satisfy the conditions for the award will be announced as “Graduating with Distinction.”
The graduate student with the highest GWA will receive the “Most Outstanding Graduate” award.

Section 12. Second Master’s Degree

Article 57. A student who has earned a master’s degree in UP Cebu or any UP unit and wishes to earn another master’s degree therein, must satisfy the following requirements:

- a) earn in the University at least eighteen (18) more graduate course credits in the second master’s degree in addition to the common course requirements of his/her first master’s degree; and
- b) complete all other requirements of the second master’s degree.

Article 58. In case of thesis programs, the additional units required for the second master’s degree are exclusive of the thesis. In the case of non-thesis programs, the additional units are exclusive of the comprehensive examination.

The additional course work in the program of study shall be in advanced courses that strengthen the area of specialization in the University.

Effectivity: The Rules and Regulations, as approved, will take effect starting Second Semester/Trimester AY 2018-2019, excluding students who have already enrolled in the master’s thesis course (300) prior to the term of effectivity. For the latter students, the previous practice applies. (as approved at 6th UC Meeting on 2018 September 12)