

3.3 Graduate Plan of Work

Note that these (<https://grad.ncsu.edu/about/graduate-degree-audit/>) programs do not require a plan of work. These programs will now utilize the Graduate Degree Audit

A. Description

The Graduate Plan of Work is a document that serves both as a guide to successful degree completion and a contract between students and their programs. In this way, it serves to reduce the potential for misunderstandings about degree requirements and outlines the expected academic progress students should make. It is especially helpful when it is evaluated on at least an annual basis by students with their advisor(s), and, where applicable, their advisory committees, with any needed modifications recorded at that time. It should be viewed as a "living document" that reflects changes that may occur as students continue to develop and refine their academic programs.

B. Contents of a Graduate Plan of Work

At the time of final submission Graduate Plan of Work must include:

1. a list of the coursework to be undertaken
2. accurate information about any transfer credits to be used for the degree. Any request to include transfer credit should be submitted to the Graduate School prior to the start of the student's graduate program or no later than before the end of the first semester
3. the thesis or dissertation topic (except in non-thesis master's programs)
4. the name of the student's major professor
5. the members of the student's advisory committee

C. Formulation and Submission Process

The Graduate Plan of Work must be:

1. developed by the student in collaboration with his/her major professor and, where applicable, advisory committee
2. approved by the committee and the Director of the Graduate Program (DGP) or department head prior to submission to the Graduate School for approval
3. submitted online through MyPack Portal
4. evaluated by the Graduate School, which will inform the program as to whether or not the Graduate Plan of Work meets the Graduate School requirements. The Graduate School will deny approval of any student's Graduate Plan of Work until all documents necessary to complete that student's permanent file are received (e.g., signed Patent Agreement, Transfer of Credit form, if applicable). If any materials are missing, the Graduate Plan of Work will be denied with the reason for the denial communicated to the DGP and the student.

D. Timing of Submission

As the Graduate Plan of Work serves as a guide to promote successful progression through a given graduate program, it is important that various components of it be completed in a timely manner. Failure to complete the various components of the Graduate Plan of Work may result in a registration hold being placed on a student's record.

1. All Graduate Students: Course Component of the Graduate Plan of Work
 - By the end of their first year, and preferably earlier than that, students in all graduate programs must submit at least a preliminary course schedule using "place holders" where necessary, defining the specific courses or, at a minimum, courses in a curricular area, including electives, required to fulfill the degree requirements for their respective degree programs.
2. Thesis Master's/Doctoral Students: Committee and Other Milestone Components of the Graduate Plan of Work
 - By the completion of 18 hours, but no later than the third term of enrollment, those graduate students enrolled in master's programs that require a thesis or in doctoral programs must submit additional elements of the Graduate Plan of Work that include the topic of their thesis/dissertation research, their committee chair(s), committee members, and estimated completion times for important milestones, such as the preliminary and final oral examinations. Students in Option B master's programs requiring projects should also submit their topic and the name of their project advisor.
3. Submission of Final Graduate Plan of Work
 - The final version of the Graduate Plan of Work must be submitted before a master's student's final examination and before a doctoral student's preliminary oral examination. For Option B students, this should be submitted prior to the completion of their Application to Graduate in their final semester.

E. Revising a Graduate Plan of Work

The expectation is that the Graduate Plan of Work will be reviewed and revised annually to reflect students' academic trajectories as they become better defined during their academic careers. Given that an annual progress report is required (Section 3.4 (<http://catalog.ncsu.edu/graduate/graduate-handbook/time-limits/>)) as part of this process, the student's major professor and, where appropriate, advisory committee should review the Graduate Plan of Work to evaluate progress, suggest potential revisions, and provide guidance as necessary.

F. Annual Progress Evaluation

The Graduate School requires all graduate programs to complete an annual evaluation of progress toward degree for each graduate student. This evaluation process should involve the student, at least one academic advisor/committee chair, and the DGP. As part of each annual evaluation, the student's major advisor should review the Plan of Work/Degree Audit to evaluate progress, suggest potential revisions, and provide guidance as appropriate. Each evaluation must include the following items:

1. the student's report of activities and achievements for the preceding year (e.g., courses, honors, milestones achieved, and professional development);
2. the student's own evaluation of his or her progress;
3. an evaluative response to the student's progress report by at least one faculty advisor/committee chair; and
4. a completed Plan of Work/Degree Audit (see Plan of Work/Degree Audit requirements).