THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

A number of academic departments of the university have a long history of providing formal graduate study. The first master's degree from NMSU was awarded in 1896. In 1921, the president of NMSU appointed a committee to oversee graduate study. The Graduate School was formally established in 1956 with a full-time dean, and in the same year, 57 master's degrees were awarded.

The Graduate School mission is to facilitate the exchange of ideas and the creation of knowledge, while fostering academic excellence. The Graduate School promotes a high-quality learning environment that embraces diversity. New Mexico State University is one of the few research extensive universities that reflect Hispanic, Native American, and other American cultures and the world. Our international students from Latin American, Asian, African and European countries add to the richness of our diversity. The quality of life for our students is of critical importance to the Graduate School and NMSU. We cultivate the marriage of academic, professional and personal skills while helping students graduate in a timely manner.

Policies

Since graduate degrees are awarded for attainment in scholarship, the requirements stated in this catalog are to be considered as minimal. The major department or the dean of the graduate school may make additional requirements as deemed necessary for each candidate. Each student’s program is subject to the approval of the respective department head. Responsibility for securing approval of the proposed program of study rests with the student. Frequent consultation with the advisor is essential to satisfactory progress toward degree completion.

Graduate Degree Programs

For a full listing of the Graduate Programs offered at New Mexico State University, please see the Graduate Admissions webpage http://gradadmissions.nmsu.edu/graduate-programs/.

Admission for Graduate Students

A student seeking admission to graduate school at New Mexico State University must hold a minimum of a bachelor’s degree or an advanced degree from a regionally accredited institution. The program of preparation should be substantially equivalent in the distribution of academic subject matter to the requirements for a comparable degree at NMSU.

No student is officially admitted into a graduate program until a Certificate of Admission has been issued by the Graduate School. Although the Graduate School considers this certificate valid for a one year period, academic departments may require re-application if the admitted applicant does not enroll in the semester noted in the certificate.

Formal application is required of all prospective students, including graduates of NMSU, who seek admission to a graduate program.

• Students must submit: the Application for Admission as well as other supplemental documents required by the academic department.

Supplemental documents may include, but are not limited to, unofficial college transcripts, test scores (TOEFL, IELTS, GRE, and GMAT), statement of purpose, writing samples, and letters of recommendation.

If a student is recommended for admission by the academic department, the student will be required to submit official transcripts, test scores, and the appropriate application fee directly to the Graduate School. Other official documents may be required. Official transcripts must be sent directly from the prior colleges or university directly to the Graduate School.

Categories of Graduate Students

A student seeking admission to a graduate program is assigned one of the following categories based upon previous academic performance:

Doctoral Student

To be considered for admission to a doctoral program, an applicant must have a minimum grade-point average of 3.0. Some doctoral degree programs also require a master’s degree or its equivalent.

Master’s Regular

An applicant whose scholastic record is satisfactory will be admitted as a regular student. This classification includes:

1. an applicant whose grade-point average is greater than or equal to 3.0, or a grade-point average greater than or equal to 3.0 in the last half of undergraduate work,
2. an international applicant whose grade-point average (or its equivalent) is greater than or equal to 3.0,
3. a continuing graduate student whose grade-point average is greater than or equal to 3.0, or
4. a student with prior graduate work at another institution whose minimum grade-point average is 3.0.

Master’s Provisional

An applicant whose scholastic record is not satisfactory can be admitted as a provisional student. Students admitted with this classification can be either:

1. transferring graduate students whose cumulative grade-point average is less than a 3.0
2. Students whose grade-point average the last half of undergraduate work is less than a 3.0, but who does have a minimum grade-point average of 2.5

A student admitted provisionally must complete his or her first three courses, a total of 9 credits of graduate work, with a minimum grade-point average of 3.0. A provisional student who does not meet the 3.0 grade-point average after at least 9 credits of graduate work is subject to dismissal. A student admitted on a provisional basis is prohibited from working as a teaching assistant. However, he or she may work as a research assistant or a grader for one semester. A provisional student can be employed for one semester as a grader. To hire a provisional student, departments must submit an official letter to the Graduate School requesting permission.

Master’s Undeclared

An applicant that has not decided on a specific graduate degree program and has an undergraduate minimum grade-point average of 2.5 may be considered for admission as an undeclared master student. International students with an F-1 visa are not eligible for undeclared master status. Advising for an undeclared master student can be obtained from the Graduate School.
Only undeclared regular status students who meet all Title IV eligibility requirements are eligible to receive federal financial aid for one consecutive 12-month period beginning the first term of enrollment. Questions about financial aid and undeclared master’s should contact Financial Aid and Scholarship Services. An applicant admitted as an undeclared master is not eligible to receive a graduate teaching assistantship.

**Student Enrollment Restrictions**

- Students in this standing are restricted to enrolling in 9 graduate credit hours. To continue enrollment the student must apply and be admitted into a degree-seeking program.
- Course restrictions placed by the graduate department may constrain enrollment by an undeclared student.
- An undeclared master student is restricted to transferring 9 graduate credit hours to a degree program.

**Transfers**

Transferring from an undeclared master’s to a degree program requires a new Application for Admission.

- If the student has nine or more graded graduate credit hours, the cumulative minimum grade-point average (GPA) must be 3.0 for the request to be considered.
- If the student transferring to a degree program has fewer than nine graded graduate credits and the undergraduate GPA is between 2.5 to 2.9 the recommendation for admission will be provisional student status.
- If the undergraduate GPA is 3.0 or greater, the admission recommendation will be regular student status.

**Admission to a Graduate Certificate Program**

The graduate certificate program of study is designed to develop or enhance a focused area of expertise. The primary purpose of a graduate certificate program is to provide specific skill training to meet employment needs locally, regionally, nationally and globally.

A graduate certificate is a focused collection of courses, consisting of 12-18 credits, successfully completed by a student in a given discipline or a set of related disciplines. A graduate certificate is not an official graduate degree of NMSU. A student that successfully completes a certificate program at the graduate level will receive a certificate of completion statement on his or her official transcript and a formal certificate from the Graduate School. A student has three years to complete a graduate certificate program.

The graduate certificate program is offered to both currently enrolled, degree-seeking students and students who enroll solely to obtain a certificate. Currently enrolled degree-seeking students must apply separately to the graduate certificate program. Students wishing to enroll solely in the certificate program must still meet all admissions criteria. Successful completion of a certificate program does not guarantee admission into a graduate degree program.

A student enrolled in a graduate certificate program cannot transfer credits from another institution towards the completion of the program. However, transfer credits taken in a graduate certificate program may be applied towards a graduate degree program in the same area of focus. The number of transfer credits will be determined by the program of study. The time limit on transfer credits is 5 years after the completion of the certificate.

Students only enrolled in a graduate certificate program are not eligible for a graduate assistantship.

**Graduate Certificate Student**

A student enrolled in a certificate program is not automatically enrolled in a graduate degree seeking program at NMSU. The status will change if he or she applies and is accepted to a graduate degree program. A student enrolled in a graduate certificate program is not eligible for a graduate assistantship.

**Application Dates and Deadlines**

Contact the graduate degree program for published application deadlines. If the graduate program does not publish a deadline, the Graduate School encourages the applicant to apply by March 15th for fall enrollment and by October 15th for spring enrollment to be considered for financial support. The Graduate School will continue to accept applications 30 days prior to the first day of classes.

**Transcripts**

An applicant is required to arrange to have one official transcript from each institution attended sent directly to the Graduate School.

If the applicant’s undergraduate coursework is not complete at the time of application, she or he must submit a transcript showing the completion this course work directly after the degree has been granted. No application materials will be returned to the applicant.

**Standardized Tests**

Certain graduate programs may require standardized test scores for admission. An applicant may be required to take one or more of the following examinations as determined by the academic department:

- Graduate Record Examination,
- the Miller Analogies Test,
- the Graduate Management Admission Test.

(See academic department description for required testing.)

**Readmission**

An NMSU student who has been out of school for more than two consecutive terms is required to make formal application for readmission to the institution. The application will be reviewed by the academic department and the Graduate School. The application should be submitted at least 30 days prior to the start of the semester.

A student who has attended other institutions during the absence is required to submit official transcripts to the Graduate School prior to the date of registration and be eligible to return to the college or university last attended. Admission status will be determined by previous NMSU academic standing. Academic performance at other institutions attended during the applicant’s absence from NMSU may be taken into consideration in determining the student’s admission status.

**Renewal of Application for Admission**

The admission credentials for an applicant who does not register for the semester admitted are retained at the Graduate School for a period of one calendar year from the date of application. At the end of this
International Graduate Students

English Proficiency for Admission

- TOEFL 79 IBT; 550 PBT
- 6.5 IELTS

International students admitted with TOEFL 68 to 78 IBT, 520 to 549 PBT or 6.0 IELTS are required to sit for the English Placement Exam prior to beginning academic coursework. The International Student and Scholar Services Office arranges this test upon arrival. If the results of the English Placement Exam do not meet the requirements for academic coursework the student may be required to take additional academic English classes (SPCD 110 and/or SPCD 470).

English Proficiency

International students who wish to become teaching assistants must demonstrate that they are proficient in the English language. This is done by participating in an International Teaching Assistant Screenings (ITAS). The purpose of the ITAS exercise is to determine whether candidates will be required to take COMM 485 International Teaching Assistant Development before being allowed to be assigned a teaching assistant position.

The ITAS requires that a teaching assistant candidate deliver a short, ten minute teaching demonstration of a typical introductory undergraduate level course in a specific area relevant to the his or her area of studies. The demonstration is observed by CELP faculty and an actual undergraduate student.

Based on the results of this exercise, a full report by the CELP observers will be presented to the head of the department in which the graduate student wishes to be a teaching assistant.

- COMM 485 International Teaching Assistant Development not required
- COMM 485 International Teaching Assistant Development recommended, but not required
- COMM 485 International Teaching Assistant Development required

Ultimate authority to enforce the recommendation lies with the Department Head.

Preferably during Summer Session II, or before the start of the first semester of enrollment, all international students that wish to be considered for a teaching assistantship must take the ITAS, which is administered by the CELP. The ITAS can be waived for international students who hold a degree from an accredited university in the United States, or a country where English is the official language of instruction. Departments also have the discretion to allow waivers for special circumstances.

Enrollment

All international graduate students on F-1 or J-1 visas are required to comply with Department of Homeland Security regulations governing maintenance of status related to full-time enrollment and making normal progress toward completing a degree. Therefore, all international graduate students are required to enroll in 9 or more credits (exclusive of audited work) during fall and spring semesters.
Transfer of Graduate Credits into a Degree Program

1. Graduate credits taken at NMSU as undergraduate electives may be transferred to the student’s graduate program at NMSU.
2. Graduate credits from another university may be transferred to NMSU, provided the credits were earned on the campus of an accredited institution.
3. Transferred course work (grades and hours) is maintained separately from NMSU course work.
4. Immediately after initial enrollment in the Graduate School, students must submit forms to obtain formal permission from their advisor, department head, and the dean of the Graduate School to transfer graduate-level course work. The department has the responsibility to accept or reject any number of transferred credits based on such elements as whether the work fits into a logical program for a degree, if grades of A or B have been earned in the courses proposed for transfer, and any other elements it deems relevant. Credit granted for work done at another institution is tentative until proved by satisfactory work in residence. The department may also require work to be validated by examination.
5. Transfer credits must meet the same time-limit requirements (seven years) as graduate classes at NMSU.
6. Course work taken at other institutions after initiation of Graduate School at NMSU must have prior approval of the department head and the dean of the Graduate School if such work is to be transferred. All requirements as to accreditation, level, grades and other elements described for initial transfer work will apply. Request for Transfer of Credit forms are available online at http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/04/transfer_of_credit_form.pdf

Graduate Certificates

Students enrolled in certificate programs may not transfer credits from another institution towards the completion of the certificate program offered by NMSU. However, they can transfer credits taken in a graduate certificate program at NMSU into a graduate degree program at NMSU, provided that the courses will lead towards a graduate degree in the focused area of the certificate program. The number of transfer credits will be determined by the program of study. The time limit on course transfer is five years after the completion of the certificate.

Master's level

In order to meet residency requirements at the master’s degree level, students must take at least 50 percent of their required coursework at NMSU.

Masters of Fine Arts

Before consideration for candidacy, the department head and the graduate advisor will determine the number of transferable credits from a previous graduate program.

Specialist in Education Degree

A maximum of 6 graduate credits earned at another approved institution may apply to the Specialist in Education degree. Transfer credits must have been earned during the five-year period prior to completion of the specialist in education degree.

Doctorate Level

At the doctoral level, students may transfer course work required for their master’s degree.

Funding Opportunities for Graduate Students

The Graduate School offers awards, assistantships and fellowships to qualified graduate students. All awards require faculty nominations. Continuing and newly admitted students can request either a faculty member or the department head to nominate them for the awards of the Graduate School. In selecting individuals for any assistantship or fellowship and in the administration of appointments, New Mexico State University will not discriminate on grounds of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation or veteran status. The University limits the number of years a student may be supported on funds from the state of New Mexico. Departments may place additional limitations on the years of support. The student must be admitted to the Graduate School before a request for an assistantship or fellowship will be considered by the department or the Graduate School. For detailed information, application process and deadlines please consult http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/ga-resources/ (http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/ga-resources)

A student should check Graduate Assistant Employment Guidelines of the Graduate School at http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/ga-resources/. Departments may place additional limitations on the years of support.

Assistantships

Graduate assistantships, including teaching and research, offered by New Mexico State University are awarded primarily by the students’ academic department. Employment guidelines may be found at: http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/ga-resources/.

Students with assistantships must ensure that they are enrolled in, as well as successfully complete, 9 graded credits for full-time status. Graduate assistants should take no more than 15 course credits per semester. Students must also maintain a 3.0 grade-point-average. Courses taken for audit may count for the total course load, but may not be counted in the minimum graduate assistant course load requirement. If course deficiencies are identified, the student can register for 3 undergraduate credits and a minimum of 6 graded graduate credits during their first semester at NMSU to be eligible for a graduate assistantship. The duties of a graduate assistantship normally require about 20 hours per week (full-time, fall and spring) of student’s time.

Teaching Assistantships

A student seeking appointment as a teaching assistant will be required to demonstrate proficiency in communication skills necessary for satisfactory service in the classroom. All graduate students awarded an assistantship must attend a mandatory orientation offered by the Graduate School. Departments may also require students to complete workshops/orientations in order to qualify for assistantships.

Eligibility for teaching assistantships includes:

- Acceptance by and subsequent registration in the Graduate School and academic department
- Classification as a “regular” graduate student

All international students seeking a teaching assistantship must demonstrate proficiency in English and competency in pedagogy.
Prior to the first semester in which the teaching assistantship is to be received, international students must undergo the NMSU International Teaching Assistant (ITA) screening administered by the Center for English Language Programs (CELP) on behalf of the Graduate School. Students who pass the screening exam are immediately eligible for assignment to a teaching assistantship. Those who do not pass the screening exam must enroll in and satisfactorily complete COMM 485 International Teaching Assistant Development before being eligible for a teaching assistantship. To aid those incoming international students who plant to teach in the fall semester, COMM 485 International Teaching Assistant Development is offered in the summer. International graduate students wishing to hold a teaching assistantship should check with their department to determine when they should arrive on campus to meet the screening requirement. International students who don’t pass the screening exam may be eligible to serve as graders for their academic departments. The academic departments must receive approval from the Graduate School in order to hire these students.

**Assistantships for Provisional Graduate Students**
Graduate students accepted on a provisional basis cannot serve as teaching assistants. However, they can serve as research assistants. Eligibility includes:

- Acceptance by and subsequent registration in the Graduate School and academic department
- Classification as a provisional graduate student
- Enrolling in and successfully complete 9 graded credits
- Funded on research projects of the faculty of NMSU

Provisional students can also be hired as graders for one semester. The department must submit a formal letter to the Graduate School requesting that the student be allowed to work as a grader. The Graduate School can approve or deny the request.

**Diversity Graduate Assistantships**
The diversity awards are allocated to departments on a competitive basis to help increase the diversity and quality of the student body. Departments will commit matching funds to support these awards for the student. The diversity award can be used to recruit domestic students. Please note that the award is for an academic year. Departments will need to commit funds to the selected student for at least one additional semester or preferably a year. The selected student must be admitted to the department prior to applying for the diversity award.

**Fellowships**
The Graduate School maintains a Fellowship and Grant Information webpage [http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/funding-opportunities](http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/funding-opportunities) providing a database of grants, fellowships and assistantships for graduate students. The university offers a number of fellowships available to both new and continuing students.

**Graduate Assistant Tuition Fellowships**
As an opportunity for departments to recruit outstanding graduate students to their programs, the Graduate School awards tuition fellowships to graduate assistants. Master’s degree students will receive up to two years of support and doctoral degree students will receive up to three years of support. In order for students to qualify for a second and third year of support, they must maintain their status as graduate assistants for the duration of the tuition fellowship period. These awards are for students receiving 10 hour and 20 hour graduate assistantships. The tuition fellowships do not include fees.

**McNair Graduate Assistantships**
The Graduate School wishes to support and recognize the success of the McNair program by offering several McNair Graduate Assistantships for one academic year with a match of one year from a department.

**Merit-Based Enhancement Fellowships for Current Graduate Assistants**
To help departments reward outstanding graduate assistants, the Graduate School offers Merit-Based Enhancement Fellowships to graduate assistants who are engaged in the teaching or research mission of New Mexico State University. The amount of the award is $4,000 for an academic year. Nominations must come from faculty.

**The Mike Watts Outstanding Leadership Graduate Fellowships**
The Graduate School encourages faculty to nominate outstanding graduate assistants for a Mike Watts Outstanding Leadership award. The fellowship is made available through the generosity of the family and friends of Michael E. Watts. The Watts Fellowships are available to graduate assistants from any area of Graduate School.

If awarded, the fellowship will be paid as salary supplement to the regular assistantship. Please note that for those students who also receive financial aid, the fellowship can have an impact on the amount of financial aid received. The Graduate Council Fellowship Committee will review the applications and select recipients.

**Outstanding Graduate Assistantship Award**
We also offer Outstanding Graduate Assistant awards of $2,000 to recognize the contributions of graduate assistants to the teaching and research mission of New Mexico State University. The awards allow faculty to show appreciation for the excellent work of graduate assistants. Current graduate assistants must be nominated by their faculty to be considered for the awards.

**State of New Mexico Department of Higher Education (NMHED) Graduate Scholarship Programs**
The State of New Mexico Higher Education Department Graduate Scholarship Program offers Graduate Fellowships/Assistantships for women and minority persons who are citizens or permanent U.S. residents and who are a first year student or a student that is beginning graduate studies in any graduate department at the master’s or doctoral level at NMSU. The selected student must be admitted to a graduate program prior to applying for this award.

NMHED fellowships carry stipends of $7,200 per annum and matched with half-time (10 hours per week) teaching assistantship provided by the student’s department for a total award of $15,800.

The total amount of this award is based on the salary for a 20 hour graduate assistantship and usually increases from year to year, based on raises awarded by the State of New Mexico.

Fellowships are available for two years for master’s students and four years for doctoral students. One of the NMHED fellowships is, when possible, designated for a McNair Scholar. The nomination process can be found at: [http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/](http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/).

In order for the student to establish financial need, students must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form available in the Financial Aid Office. This form is not to be returned to the Graduate School. The form must be mailed to the Federal Student Aid...
Programs address listed on the application or submitted via computer at the Financial Aid Office. The results will be sent to the student and the Financial Aid Office. Students must have a complete file and have been approved for financial aid to be considered for this fellowship.

Preference will be given to those students that have a current FAFSA form on file at the NMSU Financial Aid office.

**Graduate Assistants Salaries and Tax Withholding Guidelines**

Internal Revenue Service tax withholding guidelines require undergraduate and graduate students employed through New Mexico State University to maintain at least 6 credits of course work during the fall and spring semesters and 3 credits of course work for summer sessions to be eligible for the student FICA tax exemption. Student employees who do not meet this requirement during any given pay period will be subject to Social Security taxes at the rate of 6.2% and Medicare taxes at the rate of 1.45%. Salaries for graduate assistants in 2017-2018 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Salary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I- G1</td>
<td>$16,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II- G2</td>
<td>$17,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III- G3</td>
<td>$17,772</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level I (G1) - Applies to regularly enrolled students pursuing a master’s degree. This level is also for a first year student seeking a doctoral degree who does not currently hold a master’s degree. On the doctoral student becomes a second year student and passes their qualifying exam, they can obtain support as a Level II (G2) student.

Level II (G2) - Applies to students

1. pursuing the education specialist or doctoral degree who have passed the qualifying exam or
2. who have a master’s degree in the same or cognate field and the recommendation of the head of their major department.

Level III (G3) - Applies to a doctoral student who has passed the comprehensive examination and has advanced to candidacy.

Graduate assistants employed at least ten hours per week will be given in-state tuition during the first 12 months of tenure if Human Resources approve the hiring process prior to census data (stated by the Registrar’s Office as the third Friday of the semester each spring and fall semester).

If New Mexico resident status has not been established by the time of any reappointment, the graduate assistant may be subject to non-resident tuition rates.

Applications for state residency may be obtained in the Registrar’s Office located in the Educational Services building.

**Social Security Numbers in Student Records**

As required by law, social security numbers are collected from prospective and current students who

1. plan to seek employment on campus or
2. wish to receive financial aid.

In addition, the university is mandated by federal tax regulations to provide tuition and fee payment information to the student and the Internal Revenue Service, so that applicable educational tax credits may be computed. The social security number will be necessary to submit this tax reporting. The social security number is a confidential record and is maintained as such by the university in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

In order to be employed by New Mexico State University all students must have obtained a social security number within eight weeks of being hired or risk losing their assistantship.

When an official social security number is issued to an international student, it is the student’s responsibility to inform Human Resources or the Registrar’s Office as soon as possible.

**Hourly Work**

Eligibility for student payroll requires that a graduate student

1. be admitted to the Graduate School as well as to a department,
2. have a GPA of 3.0, and
3. be enrolled for at least 9 graded credits.

A student may not work more than 20 hours per week during the academic year. Students looking for current job postings should check with Career Services, Garcia Annex, Room 204; or visit http://careerservices.nmsu.edu/.

Students not classified as residents of New Mexico but working at an hourly rate are not eligible to receive in-state tuition.

**Contact Information**

For more information, contact:

Graduate School, MSC 3-GS
New Mexico State University
PO Box 30001
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001
Phone: (575) 646-5746
http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/

**Postdoctoral Fellowships**

Those individuals who are exemplary scholars, who have recently been awarded a doctoral degree, but who wish to continue their education and research experience under the direction of a professor at New Mexico State University are classified as postdoctoral. The postdoctoral fellowship is a regular professional appointment normally for one or two years. Under no circumstances will an individual remain in this classification for more than three years.

Postdoctoral fellowships are advertised and applications are submitted to the hiring department in compliance with the guidelines for hiring professional staff, but without the requirement for a position description questionnaire. An "E-Hire" staffing authorization request must be submitted to the office of Human Resources by the hiring department.

No offer of employment may be made until approval has been given by Human Resources.

A postdoctoral fellow has the following privileges:

- may take 6 credits in spring and fall semesters, 4 credits per summer session without tuition charge
- is eligible to purchase an employee parking permit
• is eligible for other employee benefits available to regular employees, including annual and sick leave, as well as health, dental, and life insurances
• may purchase athletic tickets, activity tickets, and gymnasium privileges
• is eligible for library privileges

Persons classified as postdoctoral fellows pay Social Security and New Mexico State Educational Retirement.