

Graduate Student Handbook

2026-27

NDSU

COLLEGE OF
GRADUATE AND
INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

NDSU Graduate School

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Non-Discrimination Policy

North Dakota State University (NDSU) does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, participation in lawful off-campus activity, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, spousal relationship to current employee, or veteran status, as applicable. Direct inquiries to: Vice Provost, Title IX/ADA Coordinator, Old Main 201, NDSU Main Campus, Fargo, ND, 58108, 701-231- 7708, ndsu.eoaa@ndsu.edu.

This publication is available in alternate format upon request. Please contact the owner of the publication (701) 231-5945 or ndsu.gsa@ndsu.edu.

NDSU Land Acknowledgement

We collectively acknowledge that we gather at NDSU, a land grant institution, on the traditional lands of the Oceti Sakowin (Dakota, Lakota, Nakoda) and Anishinaabe Peoples in addition to many diverse Indigenous Peoples still connected to these lands. We honor with gratitude Mother Earth and the Indigenous Peoples who have walked with her throughout generations. We will continue to learn how-to live-in unity with Mother Earth and build strong, mutually beneficial, trusting relationships with Indigenous Peoples of our region.

Acceptable Use of Electronic Communication Resources

[Policy Section 158](#) defines the acceptable use of computing and networking resources of North Dakota University System (which includes NDSU). The policy provides examples of unauthorized and unacceptable uses of resources and defines electronic communication devices.

Recent Changes to Graduate College Policies and Procedures

The following policy and procedural changes are effective fall semester 2026 unless otherwise noted.

Policy/Procedure	Explanation/Notes
Graduate School Representative (GSR)	The GSR title has been changed to “Graduate Faculty Representative” as the student and advisor choose this member, no the Graduate School.
Summer semester enrollment	All students holding an oral preliminary examination, final defense or completing the publication review process must register for summer semester.
Disquisition Format Review	With the addition of accessibility requirements, the Format Review Process is now the Publication Review Process

The Graduate Student Handbook provides general information and degree requirements. For complete university and Graduate College policies, always consult the [University Catalog](#). Additionally, check your departmental handbook for program-specific policies.

We wish you all the best in your graduate studies!

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Section 1 College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies

The College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies (Graduate College) is home to the Graduate School, the Center for Writers, and graduate interdisciplinary programs. We're here to support every step of your advanced degree.

The Graduate School

The NDSU Graduate School serves as the central administrative unit for all graduate programs at North Dakota State University. It is responsible for overseeing graduate policies, procedures, admissions, records, and degree completion.

The Graduate School provides a wide range of services and support, including:

- Processing applications for admission and maintaining graduate student records.
- Reviewing and approving Programs of Study, comprehensive exam results, and thesis/dissertation submissions.
- Administering graduate assistantships, fellowships, and scholarships.
- Ensuring compliance with university and North Dakota University System policies related to graduate education.
- Offering professional development opportunities and resources tailored for graduate students.

The [Graduate School website](#) is an essential resource for forms, deadlines, and guidelines for all aspects of your graduate education.

[Graduate School Staff Directory](#) is available on the [Graduate School website](#).

Center for Writers

The [NDSU Center for Writers](#) offers free writing support to all NDSU students, including graduate students, at any stage of the writing process and for any type of writing project.

Writing consultants can assist with:

- Brainstorming and outlining.
- Developing arguments and structuring papers.
- Citing sources and avoiding plagiarism.
- Improving clarity, conciseness, and style.

- Working on dissertations, theses, research papers, proposals, grant applications, presentations, and more.

Appointments can be made in person or online. This is an invaluable resource for refining academic writing skills.

Grad Hub

The Grad Hub is a space for graduate students to study, socialize, host events and relax. Located in the Main Library, the space is available during library hours.

The Grad Hub is also dedicated to enhancing the professional and personal development of NDSU graduate students beyond their academic coursework, including:

- Communication skills (oral presentations, scientific writing for publication).
- Leadership and teamwork.
- Grant writing and funding acquisition.
- Career exploration and job search strategies

Your Role as an NDSU Graduate Student

As a graduate student at NDSU, you are embarking on a specialized academic journey that comes with distinct roles and responsibilities. Beyond completing coursework, you are expected to be an active participant in your education and contribute to your field.

Proactive Academic Engagement

- Take initiative in your studies, explore topics beyond assigned readings, and actively seek out knowledge in your field.
- Adhere to all [academic deadlines](#) set by your program, department, and the Graduate School (e.g., course registration, POS submission, thesis/dissertation deadlines).
- Consistently strive for academic excellence, maintain the required GPA, and uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in all your work.

Effective Communication & Collaboration

- Maintain open and frequent communication with your academic advisor and supervisory committee. Schedule regular meetings, provide updates on your progress, and seek guidance on academic and research matters.

- Interact respectfully and professionally with faculty, staff, and fellow students. This includes active participation in seminars, discussions, and collaborative projects.
- Engage with peers, faculty, and professionals in your field. Attend conferences, workshops, and departmental events to build your professional network.

Research & Scholarly Contribution (especially for thesis/dissertation programs)

- Develop and execute original research, demonstrating critical thinking, analytical skills, and adherence to ethical guidelines.
- Understand and strictly adhere to all [university policies](#) on research ethics, including IRB/IACUC protocols, data management, and responsible conduct of research.
- Actively work towards disseminating your research findings through publications, conference presentations, and your thesis/dissertation.

Campus & Community Citizenship

- Familiarize yourself with and abide by all [NDSU policies](#), including the Student Code of Conduct and academic integrity policies.
- Utilize university resources (libraries, labs, equipment, IT services) responsibly and efficiently.
- Where appropriate, contribute to the academic community through participation in departmental activities, student organizations (like the GSC), or mentoring opportunities.

Embracing these roles and responsibilities will not only facilitate your academic success but also prepare you for a successful career beyond graduate school.

Section 2 Academics

Course Registration

Graduate School policy requires all graduate students to enroll each fall and spring semester until all degree requirements have been completed. For students completing a disquisition (master's paper, master's thesis or doctoral dissertation), that includes the successful completion of the Graduation School's disquisition format review.

NDSU uses [Campus Connection](#) for student registration and academic records. Always consult with your academic advisor before registering for courses to ensure they meet your program's requirements.

Graduate Student Registration Essentials

To ensure a smooth path to graduation, you must register for at least one graduate-level credit every fall and spring semester until all your degree requirements are met, even during your disquisition's final review.

- If you hold a [graduate assistantship](#), you'll need to register for a minimum of six graduate credits each semester to maintain it.
- If you plan an oral preliminary exam, final defense, or are completing the disquisition publication review during the summer, summer registration is required.
- Find the latest course information in [Campus Connection](#), NDSU's official student system.
- Full registration instructions and Campus Connection help pages are on the [One Stop](#) website.
- Be aware that individual departments may have their own continuous enrollment rules (e.g., specific minimum credit loads or summer registration). International graduate students must also comply with [specific visa regulations](#).

Holds

Be aware of any holds on your account that might prevent registration. These can include:

- Conditional Admission (CNA): You have conditions to complete before being a full-standing student.
 - Important points for conditionally admitted students:
 - You are automatically on Academic Warning.

- You can earn a maximum of 12 graduate credits before meeting your admission conditions.
- Accelerated degree program exceptions: You can earn up to half of your program's required graduate credits while on conditional standing.
 - Credits beyond 15 while conditionally admitted might not qualify for undergraduate financial aid and will be charged at the graduate tuition rate.
- Financial Holds: Unpaid tuition or fees.
- Financial Obligation Agreement (FOA): You must [review and accept](#) the FOA in Campus Connection each semester before you can register. This agreement confirms your financial responsibility to the university.
- Graduate School Hold (GSH): More information is needed, generally final transcripts or degree certificates from your previous institution(s), before you can register.
- Graduate Academic Standing (GAS): If you're on Academic Warning or Academic Probation, you can't register for the next semester until the Graduate School reviews your grades. Refer to the Scholastic Standards section in your handbook for more details.

It is crucial to resolve all holds promptly, as they can delay your registration and impact your academic progress. Check Campus Connection regularly for any active holds.

Credit/Course Load

Full-time status: 9 or more graduate credits per semester.

Half-time status: 5 graduate credits per semester.

- You can take up to 15 graduate credits per semester.
 - To exceed the 15-credit limit, you must submit the [Over 15 Credit Petition](#) form.
- Assistantships: You need to enroll in at least 6 credits during fall and spring semesters to be eligible for an assistantship.
 - Some departments may require a higher minimum or summer registration.
- International students must follow visa compliance guidelines.

In some cases, a student with a 20-hour-per-week assistantship and 6+ graduate credits may be considered full-time. Check with your lender or funding provider for their specific requirements, as loan deferment may also depend on your enrollment status.

Dropping Courses or Withdrawing from Graduate School

Dropping Courses: Check official NDSU calendars for drop deadlines. You cannot drop all your courses (to zero credits) through Campus Connection; you'll need to complete specific forms by the deadline. More details are in the [NDSU Catalog](#).

Withdrawing from Graduate School: If you plan to stop your studies, you must complete the ["Request to Withdraw from Graduate School" form](#). Also, inform your advisor, graduate program coordinator, and assistantship supervisor of your decision.

Leave of Absence and Reactivation

You can request a [Leave of Absence](#) (LOA) to pause your studies for up to four fall/spring semesters at a time with advisor and program coordinator approval.

- You must request an LOA before the fourth week of the semester.
- Multiple leaves are allowed, but an LOA does not extend your total time to degree completion (seven years for certificates/master's, ten years for doctorates).
- To return, submit a [Reactivation](#) form approved by your advisor and program coordinator.
 - If you didn't file an LOA, you'll need to register for one credit for each fall and spring semester you missed.
 - If you're away for more than four fall/spring semesters, you must reapply to the Graduate School and pay an application fee.

Family and Medical Accommodation Policy

This policy helps students dealing with serious health issues, a new child, or a seriously ill family member. You can request:

Modified Assistantship Duties: This means adjusting your assistantship tasks and goals for a limited period without a reduction in stipend or workload.

Eligible students get a Parental Accommodation period of up to six weeks after the birth or adoption of a child under age 6.

Modified duty agreements must end within 12 months.

Extensions: You can request extensions for preliminary exams, final defenses, or disquisition format review deadlines.

- Extensions are granted case-by-case, with a maximum of two calendar years.
- You can also request a Leave of Absence in addition to an extension.

- The full policy is available in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

898 Continuation Credit

The 898 continuation credit is a fee-based option for students who need to enroll in graduate credits when other courses don't apply. This includes students who have:

- Completed all degree requirements except for their disquisition.
- Returned to graduate studies after an absence without filing for a Leave of Absence.

International Students: Before enrolling in 898 credits, you must work with the Global Programs and Services office to confirm your eligibility.

Students registered for 898 credits only will have access to

- Email
- NDSU web resources
- Library
- IT Help Desk
- Career Center

But not access to

- Wellness Center
- Athletic events
- Student Health Services

Deadlines

Pay close attention to registration deadlines, add/drop periods, and withdrawal dates published in the [academic calendar](#).

Degree Requirements

Develop an official Plan of Study (POS) in consultation with your advisor and committee. This document outlines all courses, research, and other requirements for your degree. It must be formally submitted and approved by the Graduate School.

- Credit Hours: Understand the total credit hours required for your specific master's or doctoral program.
- GPA Requirements: Maintain the minimum cumulative GPA (typically 3.0 for graduate studies).
- Transfer Credits: Familiarize yourself with policies regarding transferring graduate credits from other institutions.

Academic Standing

To remain in good academic standing, graduate students are typically required to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.

If your cumulative GPA falls below the minimum requirement, you will be placed on academic warning. Specific departmental or Graduate School policies will outline the conditions and duration, which usually involve a set period to raise your GPA.

If you enter the grading period on academic warning and achieve a minimum semester GPA of 3.00, demonstrating adequate progress, but your cumulative GPA remains below the 3.00 minimum, you will be placed on continued academic warning.

If your cumulative GPA continues to be below 3.0, you will be placed on academic probation. Students on Academic Probation may not continue their studies until an acceptable remediation plan is filed and approved by the Graduate School.

Failure to meet the conditions your remediation plan or severe academic misconduct can lead to academic dismissal from your program or the Graduate School. Dismissal is documented on your official NDSU transcript

It is essential to understand and adhere to the academic standing policies outlined by the NDSU Graduate School and your specific department. Consult your advisor immediately if you are concerned about your academic standing.

Section 3 Graduate Degree

To earn your graduate degree, you must meet the following requirements:

- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Complete all coursework as specified in your plan of study.
- Fulfill all research expectations, including any required training and protocols.
- Successfully complete your final project, which could be a master's paper, master's thesis, culminating experience, or doctoral dissertation.
- Maintain continuous enrollment (fall and spring semesters and summer semester if applicable) until all Graduate School and program requirements are satisfied.
- Complete all degree requirements within the time limit set for your specific degree type.

Academic Advising

Your academic advisor is your primary resource for academic planning, course selection, research guidance, and navigating program requirements. Maintain regular communication with your advisor throughout your program.

Steps to Degree Completion

While the specific path may vary slightly by program, the following outlines the general steps graduate students at NDSU typically follow from admission to earning their degree.

Your first semester of study

Meet with your academic advisor to discuss program requirements, coursework, and research interests. For most thesis/dissertation-based programs, you will begin the process of forming your supervisory committee.

Plan A, Plan B and doctoral students must have a supervisory committee that meets the Graduate School requirements. Your committee is documented on your [Plan of Study](#).

You may include a non-Faculty ([full](#) or [affiliate graduate faculty](#)) Expert on your committee.

Before starting your research project, work with your PI to ensure the **research protocol(s)** has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate compliance office.

Research involves human participants:

[Institution Review Board \(IRB\)](#)

Research involves the use of biohazards:

[Institution Biosafety Committee \(IBC\)](#)

Research involves live-vertebrate animals:

[Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#)

When you submit your [Plan of Study or Change to Supervisory Committee form](#), be sure to include:

- A letter of support from the department chair explaining how this expert will contribute to your committee.
- Their curriculum vitae (CV).

Any changes to your committee can be made with the Change to Supervisory Committee form.

For doctoral students: The Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) acts as a neutral party on your supervisory committee, ensuring that both you and your committee follow Graduate School policies and procedures. The GFR doesn't need to evaluate the content of your work.

	Master's Plan A & B	Master's Plan C	Doctoral
Number of Required Members	3	1	4
Advisor (full or affiliate graduate faculty at appropriate level)	✓	✓	✓
Member 2 or Co-Advisor (full or affiliate graduate faculty member)	✓	NA	✓
Member 3 (full or affiliate graduate faculty or non-faculty expert)	✓	NA	✓
Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) (full graduate faculty member)	NA	NA	✓

End of your second semester of study:

In consultation with your advisor and committee, formally outline all courses, research, and other requirements for your degree. Submit the [Plan of Study and Supervisory Committee form](#) (Not all programs require a Plan of Study form be filed. See the list below.)

Your Plan of Study is a crucial agreement between you, your academic program, and the Graduate College. It details all the courses you'll complete to earn your graduate degree. This may include:

- Qualifying transfer credits.
- Review transfer credit policies

- Up to 10 credits earned as a non-degree NDSU graduate student that you'll apply toward your degree.

Students in the following degree programs are not required to submit the Plan of Study and Supervisory Committee form. With the exception of Plan C master's students, the [Form Supervisory Committee form](#) must be submitted by the end of the student's second year of study.

Accountancy	Family and Consumer Science Education
Agricultural Education	Family Nurse Practitioner (D.N.P.)
Architecture	Health Administration
Athletic Training	Human Development and Family Science – except Developmental Science subplan
Business Administration	Industrial and Manufacturing Systems Engineering (M.Engr.)
Business Analytics	Landscape Architecture
Clinical Research	Leadership in Physical Education and Sport Coaching
Community Planning and Resilience	Music (M.M. and D.M.A.)
Computer Science (Plan C)	Project Management
Construction Management	Public Health
Counseling	Public Policy
Criminal Justice (M.S.) - fall 2026 admits	Software Engineering (M.S.E)
Data Science	Sport Management
Education (M.S., M.Ed.)	Supply Chain Management
Educational Leadership	
Exercise Science and Nutrition (M.S.)	
Extension Education	

	Master's						
	Plan A	Plan B	Plan C	Ph.D./Ed.D.	DMA	DNP	
Minimum Credits * (post-baccalaureate)	30	30	30	90	90	86	
Didactic Credits**	16	21	N/A	27 (15 at 7-800 level) ***	N/A	N/A	
Research Credits	6-10	2-4	N/A	No maximum/minimum	4	6	
Coursework completion and final defense deadline	7	7	7	10	10	10	
* Some master's programs may require more than 30 credits. ** Graduate didactic courses are numbered 601-689, 691; 700-789, 791; 800-889, 891. *** Students matriculating with a previous master's degree must take a minimum of 15 didactic credits at the 7-800 level.							

Prepare for Preliminary Exams (Ph.D. and D.M.A. students only)

This examination includes both a written and an oral portion, though only the oral portion requires notification to the Graduate School. Passing your preliminary examinations formally admits you to candidacy for your doctoral degree.

- Submit the [Notification of Preliminary Examination form \(Ph.D.\)](#) or [Notification of Comprehensive Examination \(D.M.A.\)](#) to the Graduate School a minimum of seven calendar days before your scheduled exam date.
 - Forms received less than seven calendar days prior to the defense date will not be processed.
 - A new oral preliminary examination date must be scheduled, and a new notification form filed by the seven-calendar day deadline.
- Submit the [Report of Preliminary Examination \(Ph.D.\)](#) or [Report of Comprehensive Examination \(D.M.A.\)](#) within 14 calendar days after your examination date.
 - If the Graduate School has no approved Notification of Preliminary Examination form on file, your report will not be processed, and you'll need to repeat the examination.

Thesis/Dissertation Research (for thesis/dissertation programs): Develop and defend (if required by graduate program) your research proposal. Conduct your research, collect data, and write your thesis or dissertation under the guidance of your committee.

Semester Before Graduation

Review your Plan of Study and Supervisory Committee form or Academic Progress report to verify the information is accurate.

- Coursework updates can be made with the Change to Plan of Study form.
- Advisor and/or supervisory committee changes can be made with the Change to Supervisory Committee form.

Review the deadlines for degree completion below and start planning the timeline to finish any remaining coursework requirements, hold your final defense, and submit your disquisition for format review (if applicable).

Semester You Plan to Graduate

At the beginning of the semester, submit the Graduation Application in Campus Connection according to the Graduate College deadlines.

You will not be term activated for future registration unless you are continuing in a different program or degree option. If you do not graduate in the expected term, contact your Academic Support Specialist to be term activated.

For Plan C students, the Graduate Application is the only form to submit to signify expected degree completion.

Finalize your plans to hold your final defense (Plan A, B and doctoral programs).

Final Defense (Plan A, Plan B and doctoral programs)

Successfully defend your disquisition in an oral examination with your committee. After successful defense and any required revisions, submit the final, approved document to the NDSU Graduate School according to their formatting guidelines and deadlines.

Disquisition is another term use to describe a master's paper, thesis, or dissertation.

The [Notification of Scheduled Examination](#) or [Notification of Final Lecture Recital \(D.M.A.\)](#) form must be received by the Graduate School a minimum of seven calendar days prior to the scheduled defense date.

- Forms received less than seven calendar days prior to the defense date will not be processed. A new defense date must be scheduled, and a new notification form filed by the seven-calendar day deadline.

A preliminary Graduation Audit is completed when the notification form is received. Review the audit as it will indicate any remaining coursework or grade issues that may keep your degree from posting. Contact your Academic Support Specialist if you have questions or concerns.

The Graduate School requires you to provide a copy of your disquisition to your supervisory committee for review a minimum of seven days prior to the defense.

After Your Final Defense

- Submit the [Report of Final Defense](#) within 14 calendar days after the examination date or by the [Post-Defense Submission for Format Review deadline](#), whichever comes first.
- Report forms received with no approved Notification of Scheduled Examination on file, will not be processed and the examination must be repeated.
- Submit the [IRB/IACUC/IBC Compliance Notification](#), even if your research does not involve human subjects, live vertebrate animals, or biohazards. The Graduate School is not responsible for obtaining supporting documents or determining if approval is required for the research conducted for the disquisition.
- Complete all the revisions to your disquisition required by your committee.
- Obtain the signed [Approval Page](#) (Copy 1) from your committee and department chair (program coordinator if your program is not within a department).
- A [typed copy \(Copy 2\)](#) of the Approval page must be included in the disquisition submitted to the Graduate School for review.
- [Pay](#) the required \$175 processing fee.
- [Submit your disquisition](#) to the Graduate School for publication review.

All items must be received (with all required signatures) by the Graduate School prior to submitting your disquisition for format review. If the fee and/or forms are not received by the submission deadline, your submission date is considered to be the date on which the last item is received.

Submit Disquisition for Publication Review (Plan A, Plan B and dissertation)

All disquisitions must be submitted for the disquisition publication review process and publication. As with any publication, NDSU has format requirements for publishing disquisitions in the institutional repository. Thus, each disquisition must be reviewed to ensure the format and accessibility requirements have been met.

- This review is the final step before your work is published. Therefore, submit your document to the Graduate School only after you have completed all preceding steps and all written content is in its final form.
- The format guidelines cover every aspect of your disquisition, from the title page and preliminary materials to your chapters, references, and appendices. Please note, this review focuses solely on formatting; it is not a copy edit of your content.

Final Steps

- Verify that incomplete grades and outstanding items on your Graduation Audit have been completed.
- Verify your final semester grades post. A degree cannot post if there are outstanding grades.
- Final clearance of academic requirements will be made when current term grades have been submitted.
- Update your [MAILING address](#) in Campus Connection to ensure proper delivery of your diploma and final transcript.
- Update your [Preferred Name](#) in Campus Connection as this is the name that is printed on your diploma.
- Review the information regarding your [NDSU accounts and access](#) after you graduate.

Section 4 Campus Community

North Dakota State University is committed to fostering a welcoming and inclusive campus environment where all graduate students feel a sense of belonging. The university strives to create a community where every individual is valued, respected, and supported in their academic and personal pursuits.

We encourage you to actively engage with the NDSU community, participate in campus events, and contribute to an environment where everyone can thrive.

Community

Grad Hub

The Grad Hub is a space just for you. If you need a place to focus, host a graduate student event (e.g., game nights, writing group), or hang out, Library Room 6 is available to graduate students during Library hours.

Student Organizations

There are more than [250 student organizations](#) at NDSU. Many departments have their own graduate student organizations.

The [Graduate Student Council \(GSC\)](#) represents graduate student interests, organizes social events, and provides professional development opportunities.

Center for Community and Belonging (CBB)

The [CBB](#) hosts cultural events and programming, refers students to services and promotes a more equitable campus environment.

Goods for the Herd

[Good for the Herd](#) is a project that provides supplemental food assistance and base necessities to NDSU students.

Other NDSU and community services information is listed on the [Dean of Students website](#).

Campus Health Services

Counseling Center

[The Counseling Center](#) provides confidential counseling for personal, academic, and mental health concerns. In addition to workshops on stress management, anxiety, depression, and other relevant topics, there are a variety of student support groups available.

Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources (CADR)

[CADR](#) supports students with disabilities to provides accommodations to ensure equal access to education. All services are confidential.

Student Health Service

The [on-campus clinic](#) offers primary medical care, preventative health services, and referrals, as well as immunizations and health screenings.

Wellness Center

The [Wellness Center](#) has state-of-the-art fitness facilities, including weight rooms, cardio equipment, swimming pool and exercise studios. Group fitness classes, intramural sports, and wellness programs are also available.

Academic and Career Support

NDSU Libraries

The [libraries at NDSU](#) house an extensive print and electronic collections, including journals, databases, and research tools. Subject-specific librarians for research assistance and literature reviews are available.

If you are looking for a place to study, take advantage of various study spaces, including quiet zones and group study rooms.

Career and Advising Center

Whether you are preparing for a job search or looking for networking opportunities, the [Career and Advising Center](#) can help. Offering resume/CV critiques, cover letter assistance, interview preparation, job search strategies, and career counseling, as well as professional development workshops.

Living in Fargo

Housing

[Residence Life](#) offers limited graduate student housing options may be available. Contact Residence Life for details. Many graduate students live off-campus in Fargo or Moorhead. Resources like the NDSU Off-Campus Housing page or local rental listings can assist.

Transportation

[MATBUS](#) is the public bus system serving Fargo-Moorhead offering campus specific routes and an on-demand service

On-campus parking lots require a permit. You may purchase a [parking permit](#) online through Campus Connection.

Fargo-Moorhead Community

[Fargo-Moorhead](#) offers a variety of dining, entertainment, cultural, and recreational opportunities. The community celebrates many local festivals, hosts farmers' markets and supports our teams' sporting events. There are many outdoor spaces to enjoy including parks, trails and the Red River.

Section 5 Financial Life

Tuition and Fees

Once you register, you're responsible for all tuition and fees. If you receive a tuition waiver, you'll still need to pay any differential tuition and student fees. You can find the current tuition and fee schedules on the One Stop website. Payment plans are available, and you can explore your options on the payment methods page.

External Funding Opportunities

As a graduate student, you may seek external funding opportunities via grants, fellowships, or other sources through the following channels.

Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) Database of federal fellowships and grants:

https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/harper.garfinkle/viz/CORMusicLibrary_16101209624180/CGSGFTDashboard

GradSense (GradSense), a financial planning resource for graduate students:

<https://gradsense.org/>

Students may also receive recognition through departmental scholarships. Most scholarships are awarded after a minimum of 1 year of enrollment.

Graduate Assistantships

A graduate assistantship is a form of employment at NDSU specifically for current, typically full-time, graduate students. The goal of the assistantship is to provide opportunities for professional development in the form of rigorous work alongside faculty and staff in different fields of study in higher education. Assistantships may vary in length and depend on the availability of funding. Usually, they are granted for an academic term or a year, and may be renewed for multiple years with satisfactory performance reviews.

Students may be offered a graduate assistantship at the time of admission or after they arrive on campus. Assistantships may involve research, teaching or administrative service.

All Graduate Assistants are required to read and abide by the Graduate Assistantship and Fellowship Policies.

Eligibility

To be eligible for an assistantship a student must:

- Be degree seeking

- Be in good academic standing
 - Students on academic warning or continued academic warning may maintain an assistantship
 - Students on academic probation may not maintain an assistantship
- Enroll in a minimum of 6 credits during the fall and spring semester
 - This policy does not apply if the student is in their final semester and has fewer than 6 credits remaining to complete their program of study.
 - International students who have completed coursework and have only research remaining must follow this policy, even if 6 credits are not necessary to maintain visa status.
 - Departments may require students to register for more than 6 credits to hold an assistantship.
 - Students seeking a summer assistantship must be enrolled for a minimum of 6 credits either during the spring prior or fall term immediately after the summer fellowship; summer enrollment is not required for a summer term assistantship.
- Complete the graduate assistant onboarding process
- Read and adhere to the graduate assistantship policy
- Complete training requirements

Additional Criteria:

- Consent to a criminal background check
- Maintain appropriate residency status
- Demonstrate English Proficiency (Teaching Assistants)

Seeking an Assistantship

Apply by Application: Incoming students may apply as part of their application process and may be hired upon admission and meeting other requirements. Students who are offered assistantships appointments via their admission letter unofficially accept as part of accepting admission to NDSU.

Apply on Handshake: Graduate assistantship opportunities from across campus will be posted in the Handshake platform as active job searches. You must be an admitted or current student with an NDSU.edu email account to view NDSU positions in Handshake.

To access Handshake and open your NDSU account, visit the Handshake website: <https://career-advising.ndsu.edu/handshake/> For technical assistance with Handshake, contact the NDSU Career and Advising Office.

Hiring Process Steps

After a successful admission application and/or job search with an assistantship offer, there are several steps before graduate students may officially begin their assistantship.

- Initial Offer and Acceptance
- Graduate Assistantship Contract
 - Background Check
 - English Language Proficiency Requirements
- Official Offer and Hire
 - Completion of I-9 Process

Required Trainings

All assistantships require employment trainings as part of the appointment, and some appointments may require additional training based on the position responsibilities. New Graduate Assistants should complete trainings within 30 days of their first day, and assistants in renewed appointments should complete trainings within 30 days of their renewed start date. Failure to complete the requirements can lead to sanctions, including revocation of your tuition waiver and/or termination of the assistantship. Training is available after your start date and may not be completed prior to working.

Graduate Assistantship Required Trainings are outlined on the contract form prospective assistants will review and sign via DocuSign. If you are unsure of which trainings you need to complete, reach out to your supervisor.

All trainings except for in-person Equal Opportunity and Title IX and Initial Waste Handling are available in Vector Solutions. Assistants must first have a Vector Solutions account, which is generated by NDSU HR upon official hire.

General Required Trainings for all assistantships include:

- Annual Notice of Policies and Designated Medical Provider Form
- Baseline Safety Training (first session in-person)
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Equal Opportunity and Title IX Training (in-person)

Additional Laboratory Trainings include:

- Laboratory Safety Training (NDSU Version)
- Radiation Safety Training (NDSU Version)
- Biosafety & Bloodborne Pathogens Training (NDSU Version)
- Nanomaterial Safety Training (NDSU Version)
- Initial Waste Handling Training (in-person)
- Waste Handling Online Refresher(s) (NDSU Version; by semester)

Trainings conducted in-person will be available online for registration; assistants must attend the in-person training in full to receive credit of completion; some trainings may have additional requirements. The completion of the training will be recorded and uploaded to Vector Solutions. For resources to access trainings, please visit the NDSU Starting Your Assistantship page (<https://www.ndsu.edu/graduate-school/graduate-assistantships/starting-your-assistantship#resources-3>).

Assistantship Tuition Waivers

Graduate Assistants may also receive a tuition waiver. All Graduate Assistantship Tuition Waiver awards will be outlined on the Graduate Assistantship contract, including a specified amount of base tuition waived. Application of a tuition waiver to a student's account is dependent on the following factors:

- Eligible, qualified, and maintained Graduate Assistantship(s) using criteria outlined in NDSU Graduate Assistantship and Fellowship Policies, including
 - Work a minimum of 160 hours during spring and fall semesters
 - Meet assistantship eligibility requirements and expectations
- Maintained eligibility and qualification using criteria listed in the academic college's assistantship policies; the graduate assistantship tuition waiver is provided by the student's primary academic college and is subject to the college's policies and budget.
 - Meet primary academic college's tuition waiver requirements

If you are enrolled in more than one program, and/or are enrolled in a program with differential tuition, please review with both colleges to confirm which policy will be utilized. Other parameters regarding tuition waivers:

- Tuition Waivers are awarded to assistants if they meet the criteria of both NDSU and their respective college.

- Students may also receive a tuition waiver during the summer semester, but they must first meet their college's policy requirements.
- Graduate Tuition Waivers awards are applied to accounts by semester after policy compliance review.

To be eligible for a tuition waiver, graduate assistants must (at minimum):

- Work a minimum of 160 hours during spring and fall semesters
- Meet assistantship eligibility requirements and expectations
- Meet primary academic college's tuition waiver requirements

If you are enrolled in more than one program, and/or are enrolled in a program with differential tuition, please review with both colleges to confirm which policy will be utilized.

What is Covered

The Graduate Assistantship Tuition Waiver covers only base tuition for NDSU graduate credits.

What is Not Covered

Students are responsible for differential tuition, student fees, and tuition for non-graduate level credits, Cooperative Education Credits and continuing enrollment credits.