Policy: 05-31-00

Graduate Admission

OFFICE OF RECORD: Office of Graduate Studies & Research
ISSUED BY: Dean of Graduate Studies & Research
APPROVED BY: Douglas D. Knowlton, 05-31-00
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(Revised 10/26/10)

Policy

Dakota State University (DSU) and its graduate programs seek highly motivated individuals with educational and professional credentials that will enable them to be successful graduate students. Minimum admission requirements are established by the DSU Graduate Council. Degree-specific requirements are established by the college offering the graduate program and reviewed and approved by DSU Graduate Council. Additional restrictions and requirements may be based on Board of Regents policy.

DSU bases admission to its graduate programs upon the academic qualifications of applicants. The underlying principle for acceptance is a demonstration of ability to successfully complete the desired program.* Admission to all degree programs is competitive and subject to the resource constraints necessary to provide quality graduate education within each program.

Requirements for unconditional admission into a graduate program include:

1. Completion of a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
2. A minimum undergraduate grade point average of 2.7 or a minimum graduate grade point average of 3.0;
3. Demonstration of sufficient proficiency in written and oral English as noted below (applies to international applicants only).

Individual programs may have additional admission requirements. Those requirements are listed at http://www.dsu.edu/gradoffice/grad-admission.aspx.
Additional admission requirements for International/Foreign Students Admission

The U.S. Department of Justice expects all international applicants to demonstrate sufficient proficiency in written and oral English to be successful in graduate school. Applicants whose native language is not English, and who have not obtained an undergraduate or graduate degree from an accredited American college or university must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Required minimum score for the TOEFL is 79 for the Internet-based test (iBT), 550 for the paper-based test, and 213 for the computer-based test (CBT). Applicants who score below the minimum required score stated above, but who otherwise meet the academic requirements for admission, will be required to take non-credit concentrated English Language training at the Dakota State University Language Institute or some other similar language program. Those applicants will not be admitted to an academic degree program until they meet the minimum TOEFL score or pass the Michigan Test of English Language.

International students, except for those entitled to establish a legal domicile in South Dakota, are required to purchase the South Dakota Board of Regents’ endorsed student health insurance plan for themselves, their spouses and their dependents. (See BOR Policy 3:14).

Admission Status:

Unconditional admission, also referred to as 'regular' or 'full' admission, is granted to applicants who fully meet the minimum admission standards listed above and the program-specific admission requirements listed on http://www.dsu.edu/gradoffice/grad-admission.aspx.

Applicants who do not fully satisfy all admission criteria, (e.g. grades, test scores, demonstrated basic knowledge in the discipline, or other credentials) but do show sufficient promise may be conditionally admitted to a graduate degree program. Conditional admission permits the applicant to enter the program on a trial or probationary basis. A student admitted on a conditional basis must:

- Satisfy any condition serving as the basis for conditional admission within the allotted time period as required by their program and/or the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research; and/or

- Demonstrate potential for success by achieving at least a grade of "B" in each course taken during the first 9 credit hours of enrollment.

Students who do not meet these criteria will be suspended. The college offering the degree program, in consultation with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, is responsible for monitoring and tracking the student's status. (See DSU Policy 05-34-00 Satisfactory Progression/Good Academic Standing).
Special Student - Post-Graduate Status

The term ‘graduate student' applies only to those students who meet minimum standards for admission and/or have been recommended for admission either unconditionally or conditionally. A student who holds a baccalaureate-level degree who wishes to take course work but who does not want to enter (or has not been admitted to) a graduate degree program, may enroll in graduate-level courses provided that the student meets prerequisite conditions for the specific course(s), as determined by the course instructor. These students will be designated as holding special student-post-graduate status.

Any student holding a baccalaureate or professional degree from a regionally accredited institution may register for individual courses at the graduate level without making formal application to a degree program. An applicant seeking special student status is not required to furnish transcripts or recommendations. There is no minimum GPA requirement. To apply for admission to specific courses, the student must complete the Special Student Post-Graduate Status Form and meet prerequisite conditions for the specific course(s), as determined by the course instructor.

If a special student decides to work toward a graduate degree, he/she must apply for admission into the degree program. Courses taken as a special student will be applicable to a graduate degree only by permission of the program coordinator and the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. A maximum of nine (9) graduate credit hours earned while enrolled as a special student may be applied to a graduate degree program. Students who have been denied admission to a degree program are permitted to apply for special student status and may enroll for individual courses. Special students are not eligible for financial aid.

Readmission

Graduate students who withdraw from the university or are suspended from their program must apply for readmission through the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at least one month prior to registration for that semester. Readmission forms are available in the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. If any graduate work was undertaken at another institution during the intervening time, those transcripts must be furnished to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

The degree program's Graduate Admissions Committee will review the readmission request and make a recommendation for readmission. The student's advisor and/or advisory committee, in consultation with the program coordinator, may require the student to file a new Plan of Study. Note that the program description and curriculum in effect at the time of readmission applies to the student's academic program plans.
Procedures

The Office of Graduate Studies and Research is responsible for processing all applications. The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the application file is complete. The following documents are required:

1. Completed Graduate Application Form, including statement of educational goals, signed by the applicant.

2. Non-refundable application fee. An additional fee is assessed for international applicants.

3. One official transcript (in sealed envelope) from all post-secondary institutions attended other than South Dakota Board of Regents institutions. Applicants who have not yet completed an undergraduate degree should send a current transcript and arrange to have another transcript sent directly to the DSU Office of Graduate Studies and Research after a degree has been awarded.

4. Three letters of recommendation, using the recommendation form in the application, and sealed in signed envelopes, as directed in the application instructions.

5. A completed Assistantship Form must be submitted if an assistantship is being requested.

6. If required by the individual graduate program, scores from a standardized graduate admission test should be sent directly to the DSU Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

7. Other documentation as required by individual graduate programs.

The signed application form, other supporting documentation and the application fee are submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

In addition to those items listed above, applicants presenting foreign educational credentials must also submit/provide proof of:

- If applying for a master’s degree program: a university degree that is recognized as equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree prior to beginning graduate study.

- If applying for a doctoral degree program: a university degree that is recognized as equivalent to a U.S. master's degree prior to beginning graduate study.
study.

- Transcripts translated into English, including a calculated grade point average, either on the transcript or in a separate, notarized document. The university reserves the right to ask for an evaluation of foreign transcripts by a DSU recognized transcript evaluation agency.

- International student fee (one-half to be paid with application fee and one-half before registering for classes)

- TOEFL test score

- Declaration and Certification of Finances Form and a statement of financial self-sufficiency, including evidence of financial support for at least two years. Appropriate supporting documentation of financial self-sufficiency includes certified bank statements or sponsor letters and must be stated in U.S. currency.

The Office of Graduate Studies and Research will review application packages to ensure applications are complete and accurate and apprise the applicant of deficiencies in the application packet. Once complete, the Office of Graduate Studies and Research will forward completed applications to the respective program admission committee for review.

After review by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research graduate student applications will be designated as:

- Recommended for regular (unconditional) admission: These are applications meeting minimum Graduate Council and graduate program requirements. The program admission committee may recommend to admit (conditionally or unconditionally) or may deny admission based on a complete review and assessment of the application.

- Recommended for discussion by the program admission committee to determine admission status: These are applications that do not fully satisfy all admission criteria. The program admissions committee will recommend admission decision (conditional, denied, or special-student). Students not meeting all program admission criteria may be admitted conditionally upon recommendation by the program admission committee and approval by the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. It is the obligation of program coordinators to notify the Office of Graduate Studies and Research in writing of the specific terms and deadlines to be met by students admitted conditionally.

The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research will act on the applications based on the recommendations of the program admission committee. The Office of Gradu-
Dakota State University Office of Human Resources

Graduate Studies and Research will notify applicants, the respective program coordinator, and the student's academic advisor (if any) relative to the applicant's admission status.

Upon admission, and to be able to register for courses, newly admitted students are required to provide proof of immunity for Measles (Rubeola), mumps, and Rubella. Applicants born before January 1, 1957, are exempt from this requirement. International students are also required to provide proof of medical insurance.

Applicants who are denied admission may appeal this decision to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research will bring the appeal before Graduate Council for further review and determination of admission status. (See DSU Policy 03-30-00 Appealing Academic and Administrative Decisions.)

*Academic Maturity