

Graduate Handbook

Department of Political Science,
International Development
and Affairs

Updated 8/18/06

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the University of Southern Mississippi Department of Political Science, International Development and Affairs! You have selected a rigorous program that will prepare you for the many opportunities and challenges of a wide array of careers in government, education, business, the military, or the law. This document summarizes some of the important procedures and regulations that will govern your activities as you proceed toward your master's or doctoral degree. When you first read this document, you may feel overwhelmed by the many "rules" governing your graduate career. However, having clear goals, objectives, and procedures helps to ensure that students complete their degree in a timely fashion.

The material contained herein is not intended to substitute for or otherwise modify the regulations that are contained in the current [Graduate Bulletin](#) or in other official University documents. This document supplements and explains general University- and Departmental-level requirements as they might apply specifically to the department's graduate programs. This Policy and Procedures Manual will be updated periodically. If you find any portion of Manual to be unclear, or if you believe there are other topics that should be included please contact the current Department Chair, [Dr. Denise von Herrmann](#), or post anonymously to the General Discussion area in the [WebCT](#) software.

All students will be provided a copy of this document on entry to the program. You will be asked to read this document in the first week of your enrollment, and to sign a form to indicate that you have read this document and have had the opportunity to ask questions about its contents. The most recent copy of the document can be downloaded from the Department website (www.usm.edu/polsci/). You will be notified (via e-mail and listserv) every time the document is updated. Please download and read the updated document as soon as possible after receiving notification.

ADMISSIONS

The Graduate Admissions Committee of the faculty makes recommendations on all admissions, including all programs offered through the department. Admissions decisions to all graduate programs are competitive, and are made based upon the totality of the student's admissions packet. Students must present at least a 2.75 overall GPA (with at least a 3.0 in Political Science courses) for regular admission to the Master's program, and at least a 3.5 overall GPA (on all master's coursework) for regular admission to the Doctoral program. The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is required for all graduate admissions. A test score taken within five years of the application is expected. While we have no pre-determined cut-off scores, in a competitive situation, (and with all other things being equal) students with higher scores will be given preference both for admission and financial assistance. Students conditionally admitted are considered probationary until they have met the requirements of their conditional admission.

INCOMING STUDENTS

Each Fall, generally during the first two weeks of the semester, a departmental orientation is held for incoming graduate students. Attendance at the meeting is required of all students on assistantship or fellowship; other graduate students are welcome to attend. All new students should check with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) to learn when and where it will be held.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with all university calendars for advising and registration, bill payment, dropping classes, and other procedures of the university. While we will

attempt to make timely announcements to remind you of deadlines, it is your responsibility to comply with the university calendar and deadlines. All of the calendars are posted on the university web pages.

A Special Note to Students in the Hybrid Format Doctoral Program: If you are taking primarily online and hybrid format courses you will find that you have to make an effort to keep in contact with the activities of the university and the program. A listserv has been established to keep students informed. You must be subscribed to the listserv, dvlist@usm.edu. Contact Associate Director [Dr. Robert Pauly](#) to be added to the list. All announcements to the general student body of the program and often to specific classes will be posted through the listserv. If you miss deadlines, appointments, or classes because you were not subscribed to this listserv you will not be granted any exemption from the consequences. A central site inside of the department website (<http://www.usm.edu/international>) has been established where you will find information about faculty, virtual class times, etc. Both of these resources are critical to providing for your information needs. However, you are the key to accessing the information you need to be successful, you must be proactive and practice the professional behavior that distinguishes all graduate students, you must return to the resources frequently, and keep up to date with what is happening.

Please take moment each semester to send an email with your current mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address to the department secretary at naomi.hurtienne@usm.edu It is also your responsibility to keep the department informed of any changes in your email, physical address, phone, or your enrollment plans. Failure to keep us informed of your contact information could cause you to miss important notices related to classes, schedules, or events.

Students will find that each faculty member conducts his or her classes differently; students should never assume that just because faculty member X did such and such that faculty member Y will as well. You must read course syllabi, and all other documents provided to you by your professors. If you do not understand something, ask the professor, not another student. While your classmates will be tremendous resources for you, they are no substitute for the official instructions of your professors and the university.

All new graduate students must obtain an ID card as soon as possible. Information about having photos made can be found in the front section of the Graduate Bulletin. Lost ID cards cost \$15 to replace. Once an identification card is obtained (and after students register for classes), students should go to the circulation desk of Cook Library and have a barcode placed on the back of the card. The barcode is necessary to gain access to a variety of services on campus.

SPECIAL NOTES FOR THOSE TAKING WEB-ENHANCED OR HYBRID COURSES

Your computer and your Internet Service Provider (ISP) are the way distance education students go to class. Your vehicle for attending and participating in class is the computer and your ISP. Just as you are responsible for providing your own way to get to class, you are also responsible for your computer and ISP. You should check the minimum computer requirements and computer skill requirements before you enroll in any online class. You should also evaluate whether your computer will be sufficient to adequately serve a software system that requires you to have a Java intensive application open at the same time as other programs. The speed of signal transfer will impact your ability to participate in real time chats and to work with the software.

GRADUATE SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

Academic Honesty

It is important to be familiar with the information found in the USM Student Handbook and the USM Graduate Bulletin or the USM Undergraduate Bulletin. The following is from the USM

Graduate Bulletin:

When cheating is discovered, the faculty member may give the student an F on the work involved or in the course. If further disciplinary action is deemed appropriate, the student should be reported to the dean of students. In addition to being a violation of academic honesty, cheating violates the Code of Student Conduct and may be grounds for probation, suspension, and/or expulsion. Students on disciplinary suspension may not enroll in any courses offered by the University of Southern Mississippi.

Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is scholarly theft, and it is defined as the unacknowledged use of secondary sources. More specifically, any written or oral presentation in which the writer or speaker does not distinguish clearly between original and borrowed material constitutes plagiarism. Because students, as scholars, must make frequent use of the concepts and facts developed by other scholars, plagiarism is not the mere use of another's facts and ideas. However, it is plagiarism when students present the work of other scholars as if it were their own work.

Plagiarism is committed in a number of ways:

1. Reproducing another author's writing as if it were one's own.
2. Paraphrasing another author's work without citing the original.
3. Borrowing from another author's ideas, even though those ideas are reworded, without giving credit.
4. Copying another author's organization without giving credit.

Plagiarism is a serious offense. An act of plagiarism may lead to a failing grade on the paper and in the course, as well as sanctions that may be imposed by the student judicial system.

* Taken from the USM Student Handbook

The Department of Political Science, International Development and Affairs at The University of Southern Mississippi considers the submission of a single paper or assignment to two different courses, whether in the same semester or not, to be academic dishonesty. Any paper or assignment determined by faculty to have been used in another course, or having been submitted to more than one course will receive a failing grade, unless agreed to in advance by both faculty.

If you have any question about the appropriateness of submitting an assignment contact your instructor.

Some program faculty require students to sign a form or send an email stating that they understand USM's academic honesty policies and that if they do not uphold the standards of academic honesty, the instructor will enforce all applicable punishment.

Undergraduate students are bound by the same regulations in regard to academic honesty and plagiarism.

Additional policies related to courses

* The decision to grant an Incomplete for any course rests solely with the instructor of record for that course. Students should be aware that most faculty will not grant an incomplete to students who simply failed to complete assignments.

* A student who receives an Incomplete will have only ONE semester in which to complete the work, and generally must work according to guidelines pre-established with the instructor.

* If a student commits plagiarism, that student may receive an F in the course.

* If a student commits self-plagiarism (submits work done in another course) without receiving prior permission from the instructor, the work submitted will be assigned zero points. NO make-up or substitute assignments will be permitted. A second submission of this type will

result in an F for the course.

* If a student stops attending class, and does not complete the appropriate withdrawal papers or procedures with the registrar, that student will be assigned an F. If the student is taking only one course and wishes to drop that course then the student must contact the dean of the College of Arts & Letters' office providing the following: Student's full name, student id number, full mailing address, email address and phone number and a statement that they wish to withdraw from the course, include the course abbreviation, number and title and that it is the only course that was being taken so s/he is withdrawing from the university. The student may include information about his or her reasons for withdrawing if s/he so chooses. The document must be signed (it can not be an email) and mailed or faxed to the dean of the college. Failure to complete this procedure will result in the student not being withdrawn from the course and would result in an F for the course.

* Course attendance and participation are required. It is not possible to receive a passing grade without appropriate attendance and participation. Failure to participate or missing three or more classroom meetings without prior permission of the instructor and documented appropriate reasons may result in a failing grade for the course regardless of all other work. Extraordinary circumstances will be adjudicated by the instructor and/or director.

* **In online courses**, virtual classroom attendance and participation are required. Failure to participate or missing any virtual classroom meeting will result in a lower grade. Missing three or more virtual classroom meetings without documented appropriate reasons and prior permission of the instructor may result in a failing grade for the course regardless of all other work. Extraordinary circumstances will be adjudicated by the instructor and/or director.

* Writing skills: All work must be in standard English; inappropriate grammar, punctuation, and/or spelling will result in lower grades.

* All papers, whether in print or electronically submitted should all have the student name, course number, and date on each page, unless otherwise instructed by the course instructor.

* Each instructor employs naming conventions that students are to use when submitting papers, files or assignments. These conventions are so faculty can better manage your documents; if you fail to follow the naming conventions your documents will be misplaced and may not receive a grade. Please follow naming conventions as provided by each instructor.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

There are several faculty members who will handle academic advising. Who you consult for advising will depend upon your degree program and admission date. Students are grouped according to degree seeking status: Masters of Arts, Master of Science, or Doctor of Philosophy. The Director of Graduate Studies will advise all master's students initially. Master's students may request that any member of the faculty serve as their advisor. Doctoral students will initially be assigned to one of the research groups and will be advised by its director. Advising may be accomplished via email, and is required before you will be able to enroll in any courses. The university uses the Student Online Advising Registration ([SOAR](#)) system that is accessed via your student identification number and password. The system requires the department to certify whether you are eligible to enroll, based upon your status.

Students should be aware of certain issues that could affect the ability to register:

1. Those admitted conditionally will generally not be able to register themselves through SOAR, and will need to request that the department secretary or Graduate Director register them for their courses.
2. Certain courses, especially "special projects" such as 692 and thesis or dissertation hours, require departmental permission. This involves a department representative entering a permission code for a specific student and course into the registration system. If you are attempting to register for one of these courses and receive an error message, call the department or email the [master's program director](#) or [doctoral program associate director](#).
3. Students on most forms of Assistantship are REQUIRED by university and federal

guidelines to enroll for 12 hours and to perform no more than 20 hours of service to the department as either teaching, research, or general assistance (by assignment). Normally students attending classes in Hattiesburg as on site students will be allowed to enroll in more than nine hours without special permission; students enrolled as distance students normally need the specific permission of the director to enroll for more than nine hours.

4. Students who receive a C are placed on probation during the semester they are enrolled after receiving the grade. If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 as a result of the C, they will have only the one probationary semester of enrollment after earning the C to raise their GPA to 3.0. If the student fails to raise his or her cumulative GPA to 3.0 during the probationary semester the student will be discontinued from the program. If the GPA does not fall below 3.0 the student may remain in the program only so long as they do not receive another C during the probationary semester. If the student earns a C during the probationary semester regardless of GPA they will be discontinued.

5. Students may not enroll in PS 698 (Thesis Research) or IDV 898 (Dissertation Research) until they have signed up for or passed comprehensive exams unless specific permission is given by the director.

COMMUNICATION

All Southern Miss students are given an email account that ends with @usm.edu. Please contact the iTech help desk to obtain your account name and password. We strongly encourage all graduate students to use this email address for ALL communications with Southern Miss faculty and the department office. These email addresses have been established to enable faculty to send email to their registered class members, and to students without having to keep a special listing of email addresses.

Listservs

idvlist: Student Electronic Mailing List

All IDV students should be subscribed to the student electronic mailing list, idvlist. It is a primary means we have to communicate rapidly if WebCT coursesites go down.

Instructions for subscribing:

* Subscribe or unsubscribe by emailing the doctoral program associate director, [Dr. Robert Pauly](#).

Other noteworthy information:

* If you would like to post to the list, please remember that this message will be sent to all those on the listserv!

* When you receive a message from idvlist and desire to reply to the person sending the message, do NOT click the reply option, but instead compose a new e-mail message to be sent to that person's individual e-mail address.

* Students are asked not to use this listserv to send personal messages.

SOUTHERN MISS OFFICE FOR DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

The primary function and mission of the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA), located at 114 Bond Hall (entrance on the south side), is to provide those services necessary to assure equal educational opportunity to all students pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you feel you have a disability that qualifies for accommodations under Section 504 or the ADA, please contact Suzy Hebert, Coordinator, at (601) 266-5024.

PERSONAL COUNSELING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICES

Numerous services are available in the areas of personal, social, and marital counseling, and psychotherapy. On-campus services include the University Counseling Center, which is located in Room 200 of Kennard-Washington Hall. Off-campus facilities include Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources which is a publicly supported mental health facility located about three miles from campus at 103 S. 19th Street, as well as a number of private practitioners in psychology and psychiatry.

CHILD CARE

College policy prohibits students from bringing children to class. The Southern Miss Center for Child Development provides facilities for children ages 6 weeks through 5 years old. The program consists of planned activities, educational programs, hot meals, and snacks. There is a long waiting list, so apply early and directly to the Center. Hours of operation are 7:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. Monday through Friday. There are other child care providers in the community, and many of these also have a wait list. If you have dependent children, we recommend that you begin to make your childcare arrangements well before you arrive on campus.

SERVICES AND ORGANIZATIONS DESIGNED TO ADDRESS STUDENTS WITH OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS

There are many services and organizations at Southern Miss designed to address the special needs of minority students, women, gays, lesbians, and international students. The office of the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs, located in Room 219 of the R.C. Cook Union, will be happy to provide additional information on these organizations and services. Phone: (601) 266-6331.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS AND GRADUATE WORK-STUDY APPOINTMENTS

Graduate assistants receive a stipend through a graduate assistantship or work study assignment through the school. If you accept one of these appointments, you will commit to work 20 hours per week, on campus. In almost all cases, students will participate in activities that will enhance their training and professional development. Students may, for example, help faculty to conduct research or serve as teaching assistants within the department. Only students granted regular admission to the program who are able to meet both the work and registration (12 hours each term, Fall and Spring) requirements will be considered for graduate assistantships. Please read the following information carefully.

A. Students must have an average of B or better each semester, and must perform work assignments in a satisfactory manner, in order to maintain a graduate assistantship or graduate work-study appointment.

B. Students on a graduate assistantship or graduate work-study appointment must maintain a 12 credit hour course load during the period of the appointment.

C. General tuition and the non-resident fee are waived for those holding a graduate assistantship or graduate work-study appointment. To qualify for this waiver, students must be registered for graduate courses totaling twelve (12) hours each semester (9 hours during Summer term). Courses taken as Audit do not count toward these hours, nor do any courses taken as "out of career." The tuition waiver does not cover tuition for courses during intersessions.

D. The Perkins Loan Program (formerly NDSL) and the Federal Work-Study Program are available to graduate students who meet certain criteria. All students in the graduate program are expected to make application for the Federal Work-Study program if they wish to be considered for any form of departmentally administered financial assistance. The faculty wishes to support as

many students as possible, and at the highest level possible within the resources available to the program. One important way of maximizing that level of support is for students to qualify for the work-study program. The Federal Work-Study match significantly augments the overall resources remaining for all of our graduate students. An advantage for students who do qualify for work-study is that they are normally funded during the summer. Summer funding is not always available to those who are on a graduate assistantship, however students should note that a summer tuition waiver IS provided to all students who received funding in Fall and Spring.

E. Applicants for Perkins Loans and Federal Work-Study Program should apply by March 15 (priority date) for loans and work to begin the fall term. Applications for the Perkins Loan Program and the Federal Work-Study Program may be obtained from the USM Office of Financial Aid.

Occasionally grants or other forms of assistance may become available. Students on such assistance generally receive a stipend and waiver of fees, but not a tuition waiver. *Such students are NOT, however, required to work 20 hours per week, nor are they required to take 12 hours per term.*

Carrel Assignments

Graduate assistants have assigned carrels in the department office suite. Students should use their carrels to hold office hours, read, and write. When occupying their carrels, students should remember that the group office is a decidedly public space: clutter and noise should be kept to a minimum. Personal items should be secured when unattended by the responsible student. Carrels will be accessible to graduate assistants at all times. Keys that open the front door and the group office will be issued students when carrel assignments are made.

METHODS EMPLOYED TO FACILITATE PROGRESS OF STUDENTS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTY IN THE PROGRAM

When a student experiences difficulties in the program, several steps may be taken. These include, but are not limited to, (a) reducing the student's course load, (b) approving a request for a semester leave-of-absence, (c) referring a student to remediation courses, (d) requiring repeating courses.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO TERMINATE THE ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS

Failure to meet Program, Graduate Studies guidelines, or comply with university regulations of conduct is grounds for termination. Students may appeal termination decisions, consult the Student Handbook for appropriate procedures.

COURSE SCHEDULING

Please remember that not all graduate courses are offered every semester. Furthermore, personnel changes and other scheduling considerations sometimes require modifications to the timetable of classes (USM Class Schedule Guide) published each year by the Office of the Registrar. It is important to consult with a faculty advisor in order to plan a schedule that will satisfy the selected program-of-study.

TRANSFER OF GRADUATE COURSES FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Transfer of Required Core Courses: Students who believe that a required core course taken at another accredited institution is equivalent to the one required for the Master's or Doctoral degree program may request that it be considered for transfer by providing the department with a copy of the transcript on which that course grade appears, a copy of the course syllabus, and any other

available materials which will be helpful in determining whether the course in question is equivalent to the one required at USM. The material will be furnished to the USM instructor who normally teaches the course. That person, in turn, will make a recommendation to the DGS and the department regarding course equivalence.

As many as six (6) semester hours of graduate credit from other *regionally* accredited institutions may be transferred to your program at USM, if such course work is within the time limitations that the University allows for the degree, earned at least a 3.0 on a scale of 4.0, and are approved by the DGS and USM faculty of record.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND RESEARCH SKILLS REQUIREMENTS

All graduate students must demonstrate competency with either a Foreign Language, a Research Skill, or both. M.A. students are required to complete either PS 511 or 512, and to have competency in one foreign language, unless approved for exception by the Thesis Chair, DGS, and Department Chair. Competency can be achieved by completing 9 hours of study in an appropriate language as an undergraduate, provided that the sequence includes at least one sophomore level course and provided that grades of "B" or better were achieved in all language courses. Students who did not meet that requirement as undergraduate students may take the 501/502 foreign language course sequence. Those courses are always offered during the summer semester and typically at other times, too. For M.S. and Ph.D. students the required sequence in Research Methods and Statistics will normally fulfill this requirement.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

The content of the examination will be determined by the student's graduate committee. Normally the examinations are written, and will be administered by a departmental faculty or staff member; exams are given in the late fall and late spring. Students failing the exam must pass on their second attempt. Normally, this will be scheduled for the next regular exam date (in the following semester). During the interim period, students should meet with committee members and the DGS to prepare. A second failure will result in a hearing with the Department Chair and the DGS and in a recommendation of expulsion from the graduate program.

In general, for Master's students the examination will cover the major and minor subfields of Political Science. Consequently, students should take content courses with their committee members. Students should seek directions from committee members on preparations for comprehensive examinations. For these reasons the Department of Political Science urges graduate students to decide on their fields and to consult with advisors and the DGS to form a coherent play of study as soon as possible in their graduate career. Students in the M.A. program may, at the discretion of their committee, be examined orally in conjunction with the thesis defense.

Doctoral students likewise are examined on their major and minor subfields of International Development. Students should decide on their fields and to consult with advisors and the DGS to form a coherent play of study as soon as possible in their graduate career. Students must make a passing grade on each part of the doctoral comprehensive exams in order to pass. Doctoral students must also present an oral defense of any sections judged to be weak by the committee as soon as possible following the written exam. If the oral committee deems the student has passed the defense, the entire exam will be judged as a pass. If the committee feels the defense was not successful, the student will be judged to have failed the comprehensive exam and the result will be reported to the Graduate School.

REVIEW OF ALL RESEARCH BY THE HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION REVIEW COMMITTEE OR THE INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE

The Southern Miss Human Subjects Protection Review Committee must review and approve all research conducted using human subjects. This includes interviews, surveys, or observations. The USM Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee must review and approve all research using non-human subjects. Such approval must be obtained prior to the beginning of any data collection. The appropriate approval forms may be obtained from the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board (IRB) web pages at <http://www.usm.edu/irb/>. These regulations are discussed in detail in IDV 740 Grantsmanship and Research Administration.

MASTER'S THESIS OR DOCTORAL DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Your Master's Thesis or Doctoral Dissertation will be conducted under the guidance and direction of a faculty committee chosen in a consultative process involving the student, faculty members, and DGS. Committees must be named and approved on the appropriate Graduate School forms, and must be filed according to regular published Graduate School deadlines. These forms and deadlines for their submission may be found at the Graduate Studies [website](#).

Thesis Committees

Thesis committees normally consist of three faculty, at least two of whom must be members of the department. All members must have at least Graduate Faculty Status Level II, and non-department committee members must be approved in advance by the DGS, the Department Chair, and the Dean of the College.

Doctoral Committees

Dissertation committees normally consist of four or more faculty, at least three of whom must be either members of the department or faculty approved for Affiliated Faculty status. Such faculty are either (1) USM faculty with Level II or Level III status in a department with education and/or research relevant to the student's topic, or (2) Non-USM faculty (those from other universities or organizations) who hold an appropriate terminal degree, have educational and research backgrounds of sufficient level and quality to qualify them for Level II or Level III status at USM, and have education and/or research relevant to the student's topic. A listing of Affiliated Faculty is found on the [IDV website](#); updated listings may be obtained from the DGS.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT POLICY

Students must normally enroll for a minimum of 1 credit hour (or 3 hours during the term they plan to defend their thesis or dissertation). Failure to enroll for the appropriate hours will result in the student's being discontinued from Southern Miss and will require that the student reapply for admission to the program (see the USM Graduate Bulletin).

UNIVERSITY GRIEVANCE POLICY

Students' right to resolve grievances with the University is affirmed, and specific appeal procedures have been established to assure timely and appropriate consideration of each grievance. Student grievances generally originate at the departmental level, and the resolution of grievances is sought within the department chair. The grievance should be made known within fifteen (15) days of the occurrence. The decision by the chair should normally be made within five work days to either the Dean exercising jurisdiction over that academic department, or to the administrative official having jurisdiction over the nonacademic department involved. This official will render a decision on the grievance normally within five (5) work days of the receipt of the grievance. If the student desires to appeal to the appropriate Vice President exercising jurisdiction over the matter, the Vice President shall confer with the student and if the grievance is not resolved, the Vice President shall refer the matter to a standing committee, or appoint a committee of from three to five persons, including student representation, to hold an official hearing on the matter. The student may either represent him or herself, or request the assistance of another student. The hearing shall be held within ten (10) days of receipt of the grievance by the Vice President. Upon completion of the hearing, the committee will inform the Vice President

of the decision, and the Vice President will inform the student. The Vice President may utilize the decision of the committee, or amend the decision as he/she deems appropriate. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Vice President, he/she may appeal to the President of the University. The President shall render a final decision in the case, normally within ten (10) days of the written receipt of the appeal.

USM SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In its efforts to foster an environment of respect for the dignity and worth of all members of the University community, USM is committed to maintaining a work-learning environment free of sexual harassment. It is the policy of the University that no member of its community shall sexually harass another. Any employee or student who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action. Sexual harassment is illegal under both state and federal law. Vice Presidents, Deans, Chairs, Directors, and Supervisors are directed to take appropriate steps to disseminate this policy statement to inform students and employees of procedures for lodging complaints. USM has established informal and formal procedures intended to provide alternatives for resolving complaints of sexual harassment, and the University fully retains all rights to discipline or discharge any employee or student who engages in misconduct or other behavior which is prohibited by law or other University policy, notwithstanding the remedies and procedures offered in the sexual harassment policy. The USM Division of Student Affairs publication entitled Social Issues Update and Policy Guide provides a definition of sexual harassment, examples of quid pro quo harassment, and environmental sexual harassment, investigatory procedures, and prescribes procedures for handling policy violations:

Informal Procedures

OPTION 1:

Report the violation to the most appropriate administrator in the following suggested listing:

1. The Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Officer
2. The Director of Human Resources
3. The Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs
4. The Dean of Student Services
5. The Dean of Students
6. The Academic Dean

OPTION 2:

Report the violation to the alleged offender's immediate supervisor. The supervisor will discuss the policy and the allegations with the alleged offender. This meeting will be reported to the department head or dean of the area.

OPTION 3:

Discuss with the offender the behaviors that are perceived as violations of this policy, either in person or in writing. If assistance is needed, the Student Counseling Center, the Office of Personnel Services, and the EEO/AA Officer offer their services.

If the informal procedures do not serve to rectify the situation or to satisfy the parties involved, formal procedures are recommended.

Formal Procedures

An employee or student who believes he or she has been sexually harassed may pursue the following formal procedures as an attempt toward resolution:

* A written report of the violation is prepared by the complainant and presented to one of the

University administrators listed in Option 1 above.

* The administrator shall consider the written report as a formal complaint of sexual harassment and shall proceed with a thorough investigation of the incident(s) prompting the complaint.

* The findings of the investigation shall be discussed with both complainant and the alleged offender and action taken to rectify the situation.

* Disciplinary procedures, if warranted, will be prompt and applicable to the actions and situation.

In all cases of sexual harassment, the alleged offender has the right to review the material on which charges are based. Therefore, disciplinary action in cases of sexual harassment is possible only when the complainant is willing to make a written statement describing the specific incident.

GRADE REVIEW POLICY

The instructor (defined as one who has the responsibility for a class, special problem, thesis, or dissertation) has authority over all matters affecting the conduct of the class, including the assignment of grades. The instructor may impose requirements upon students more stringent than those of the school, college or university, but may not apply less stringent policies than the school, college or university. When a student is suspected of violating academic policy standards the instructor will consult the DGS and/or the department chair. Instructors retain the right to impose appropriate academic penalties for such actions in their own courses, but this will always be done in consultation with the department chair. Student performance will be evaluated according to the criteria made available to all students within the first two weeks of each semester. Grades are not to be determined in an arbitrary or capricious manner.

If a student disagree with the final grade given by an instructor, an orderly appellate procedure is available. Consult the Student Handbook for the detailed instructions. The student must initiate the appeal procedure within 30 school days (excluding Saturday, Sunday, and official student holidays) of the beginning of the semester subsequent to the one in which the grade was awarded, or 120 calendar days after the issuance of spring semester grades, if the student was not enrolled during the summer term. The procedure assures due process for the student as well as for the instructor. The policies and procedures governing grade review can be obtained from the Dean of the College or the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

RECORDS ACCESS POLICY

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, or the Buckley Amendment, deals with the subject of access to educational records, and it requires institutions to establish policies, which set forth the procedure by which these records are to be reviewed or inspected. University policy in this matter is specified in the current USM Student Handbook.

PRE-GRADUATION PROCEDURES AND THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Please carefully read the version of the Graduate Bulletin that governs your academic career (usually the Bulletin for the year that you entered the program) for relevant regulations, guidelines, and deadlines at least one year before your anticipated graduation.

Documents to be Filed in the Office of Graduate Studies (as of 2006-2007):

MASTER'S DEGREE

Plan of Study Form - A form detailing the coursework you must complete to fulfill master's degree requirements. **This form must be submitted by the second semester of enrollment in**

the program. Students may download the form from the [Graduate Studies website](#).

Application for Degree and Audit - This form is a request to obtain the master's degree. On or before the deadline in the semester before you wish to graduate with the master's degree, you must submit a signed, completed application for degree to the graduate degree auditor. The degree auditor will verify your application and notify you and your advisor of any problems. If, for some reason, you will not graduate in the semester for which you applied, you must notify the graduate degree auditor.

The following instructions will help students complete the required form for Degree Application. Instructions from the Office of Graduate Studies page

1. Download and complete the Degree Application Cover Sheet [DOC] [PDF]
2. Download and complete the Plan of Study
3. Login to SOAR and download the GRD11 (Advising Transcript)
 - Log into SOAR
 - SA Self Service
 - Learner Services
 - Academics
 - Click on View Degree Progress Report
 - Print the Degree Progress Report
4. Complete the document and take it to the department to get the required signatures
5. Attach all three documents.
6. Pay fees at Business Office, then take the document to Sue Fayard in the Office of Graduate Studies, located in McCain Library, room 205.

Results of Comprehensive Exam Form (the DGS will prepare after exams are passed)

-OR-

Results of Dissertation Defense Form (the DGS will prepare following the defense) for students writing theses.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all of the necessary paperwork is on file and up-to-date at the Office of Graduate Studies.

DOCTORAL DEGREE

Plan of Study Form - A form detailing the coursework you must complete to fulfill master's degree requirements. **This form must be submitted by the second semester of enrollment in the program.** Students may download the form from the [Graduate Studies website](#).

Application for Degree and Audit - This form is a request to obtain the master's degree. On or before the deadline in the semester before you wish to graduate with the master's degree, you must submit a signed, completed application for degree to the graduate degree auditor. The degree auditor will verify your application and notify you and your advisor of any problems. If, for some reason, you will not graduate in the semester for which you applied, you must notify the graduate degree auditor.

The following instructions will help students complete the required form for Degree Application. Instructions from the Office of Graduate Studies page

1. Download and complete the Degree Application Cover Sheet [DOC] [PDF]
2. Download and complete the Plan of Study

3. Login to SOAR and download the GRD11 (Advising Transcript)
 - Log into SOAR
 - SA Self Service
 - Learner Services
 - Academics
 - Click on View Degree Progress Report
 - Print the Degree Progress Report
4. Complete the document and take it to the department to get the required signatures
5. Attach all three documents.
6. Pay fees at Business Office, then take the document to Sue Fayard in the Office of Graduate Studies, located in McCain Library, room 205.

Doctoral Committee Appointment Form (see information about committees above)

Results of Comprehensive Exam Form (the DGS will prepare after exams are passed)

Dissertation Proposal/Prospectus Meeting or Defense Results Form (your Dissertation Committee Chair will complete when the Proposal is accepted.)_

Results of Dissertation Defense Form (the DGS will prepare following the defense)

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all of the necessary paperwork is on file and up-to-date at the Office of Graduate Studies.

GRADUATE DEGREE CLERK

The Graduate Studies degree clerk is housed in the Office of Graduate Studies' in McCain Library. In preparing the degree applications for review, please note the following:

1. Master's thesis or internship credit remains an E grade until the project is complete and the grade reported. A grade of A, B, C, D or F (plus or minus grades are available) will be awarded.
2. Courses carrying the numbers 697 or 797 (Independent Study and Research) do NOT count toward the master's or doctoral degree.
3. Only six hours of transfer work is allowed toward the master's or doctoral degrees.
4. A grade-point average of B or better is required for graduate degrees by the time students complete the course-hour requirements for the degree.
5. An I (Incomplete) is allowed to remain on the record for one semester only. After that semester, it becomes an F.

AFTER GRADUATION

Please keep your address, e-mail, and telephone number current with the department office and the Southern Miss Alumni Office after you graduate! The program occasionally finds it necessary to contact its graduates, and it is important that we maintain up-to-date contact information. Similarly, we assist graduates to the extent possible in their attempts to attain new employment or additional education. MA and MS students interested in applying to Ph.D. programs at other schools should begin by discussing their plans with faculty members in their field of interest. They will guide the student to the best possible programs in the student's discipline. The department keeps up-to-date copies of the relevant program directories and lists of programs, and students should use these resources to learn about faculty at other institutions and to obtain mailing addresses. Most applications are due by the beginning of January, and students should write for application materials and information by September at the latest. Students looking for employment other than university teaching should contact the Student Employment Office. It offers various aptitude tests, workshops, and advisory services for all USM students. Students

looking for employment as faculty members at other universities should discuss application procedures and placement possibilities with their advisor during their degree program. The application process begins in September, almost a year in advance of when a job will begin, and lasts through the academic year.