



جامعة الملك فهد للبترول والمعادن
King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals

**College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies Policies
at King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles underpinning the graduate studies as well as the admission and progression of the students to ensure compliance with university rules and regulations.

SCOPE

1. This policy applies to all KFUPM graduate students.
2. This policy shall be read in conjunction with the admission and registration policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

The University acknowledges the importance of a graduate studies policy to ensure the success of the graduate programs and fairness for all students.

General Laws and Definitions

The following terms shall have the meanings set out for each term hereunder, unless the context suggests a different meaning:

1. Policy: The general policy of King Fahd University, approved by Royal Order No. 29460 of 29/5/1440 AH.
2. University: King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals (KFUPM).
3. Manual of Internal Policies: A manual prepared by the Graduate Council and its committees and approved by the University Council, this manual sets out detailed rules for the articles of the regulations related to Graduate Studies that are periodically updated.

Chapter One: Objectives of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies

Article One

Graduate Studies aims to achieve the following purposes:

1. Contribute to the enrichment of human knowledge in all fields in accordance to programs offered by the University through specialized studies and research in order to achieve new scientific and applied contributions and create innovative discoveries.
2. Attract a distinguished and diverse group of students and provide opportunities for undergraduate students to pursue their graduate studies locally.
3. Develop qualified scientific and professional human resources.
4. Prepare and train students in the discipline and skills necessary for understanding and undertaking applications and practice or conducting research in the field of study.
5. Encourage qualified scientists to keep pace with the rapid developments in science and technology to direct their research towards the solution of problems in Saudi society.
6. Contribute to the improvement of undergraduate programs in order to interact efficiently with graduate studies/programs.
7. Promote linkages with society and industry for the development of new graduate programs and enhancing their instructional delivery through technology.
8. Ensure compliance with institutional regulations as they relate to program quality, program approval, and program funding requirements.

Chapter Two: Scientific Degrees

Article Two

The University Council shall approve and confer the following degrees based on the recommendation of the Department Council and the endorsement of the Graduate Council and Academic committee.

1. Master degrees.
2. Doctorate degrees.

Chapter Three: Organization of Graduate Studies

Article Three

The College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies will report to the Vice President for Academic affairs. The College will supervise, coordinate, and when appropriate, recommend approval of all graduate programs in the university subject to periodic review.

Article Four

The College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies shall have a council to consider and make decisions on all matters relating to graduate studies in the university in general and make the necessary decisions within its authority as per the university's regulations. Specifically, the Council will:

1. Serve as the oversight committee for the graduate programs.
2. Initiate new Graduate Studies policies, revise existing policies, and act upon any questions affecting those policies.
3. Establish and publish internal rules and regulations governing graduate programs in coordination with the academic departments, including the revision and updating of the Graduate Bulletin in accordance with approved policy changes.
4. Propose admission criteria to graduate studies in coordination with academic departments and supervise their implementation.
5. Recommend the approval of new or revised programs or courses in coordination with existing programs.
6. Recommend actions regarding low performing graduate students.
7. Approve, modify, or reverse actions taken by the council committees.
8. Foster the relationship between graduate education and scholarly research.
9. Formulate general guidelines for research plans; set up rules and regulations for writing theses; print, submit and develop forms for their defense and evaluation.
10. Assist and advise the Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies.
11. Study the items referred to by other university entities or top officials, such as Academic Committee, University Council, VP for Academic Affairs, the President, etc.

Article Five

The Graduate Council consists of the following:

1. Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies acting as the Chairman of the Council.
2. Dean of Research Oversight and Coordination.
3. Deputy Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies, if any, holds the secretariat of the Council.
4. One faculty member of professorial rank from each college with graduate programs. They are appointed by a decision of the University Council based on the recommendation of the college councils and the approval of the University President. Their appointment is for a renewable period of two years.

A minimum of two-thirds of its members is required for a quorum. Its decisions are taken by simple majority, and in case of a tie, by the chairperson's casting vote. The decisions of the council should be considered final if there is no objection from the VPAA within fifteen days from the date received in the Vice President's office. The Council can form standing or ad-hoc committees from its members or others and charge them with various tasks.

Chapter Four: New Programs

Article Six

The University Council shall set detailed standards to approve graduate programs based on the recommendations of the Graduate Council, provided that:

1. There is a sufficient number of Professor and Associate Professor faculty members who are specialized in the program. In addition, sufficient research facilities including laboratories, computer resources, etc. should be available to ensure the success of the program in terms of teaching, advising, and research.
2. The expected number of students admitted to the program should be appropriate for the continuity of the program.

Article Seven

In accordance with the provisions of Article Six the department, after deanship of academic development approval, submits to the Graduate Council a detailed proposal of the program according to the University Regulations.

Article Eight

The Graduate Council will review program proposals and coordinate its requirements and other existing program requirements, if any, to avoid duplication of effort. Once agreed upon, the Council forwards its recommendations to the Academic Committee, which in turn submits it to the University Council for approval.

Article Nine

Any adjustments in the curriculum, program requirements, or admission requirements shall be approved by the University Council as per recommendations of the deanship of academic development, Graduate Council and the Academic Committee in coordination with the concerned department.

Article Ten

More than one department may participate in the development of an interdisciplinary graduate program.

Chapter Five: Admission and Registration

Admission Requirements

Article Eleven

The University President determines the number of students to be admitted each year to the graduate programs based on the recommendations of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies and Academic Departments.

Article Twelve

For admission to Graduate Studies the following general requirements shall be met:

1. Applicant must have a university degree from a university recognized by KFUPM.
2. Applicant must achieve an appropriate score in one of the acceptable English proficiency tests.
3. Two letters of recommendation, preferably from faculty who taught the applicant, or if required by the program, their supervisor or workplace manager.
4. Any other general requirements added as necessary by the University Council.

Article Thirteen

Admission to a Master's degree program requires a minimum overall undergraduate performance of "very good" (B) (3 out of 4). However, the Graduate Council may waive this condition for "upper good" (C+) (2.50 out of 4) given that the undergraduate major GPA is not less than "very good" (B). The Graduate Council may revise these requirements as per the recommendations of the Department Council.

Article Fourteen

Admission to a Doctoral program requires a minimum overall performance of at least "very good" (B) (3 out of 4) in the Master's program. The Graduate Council may add other necessary admission requirements as per the recommendations of the Department Council.

Article Fifteen

An applicant may be admitted to a Master or Doctoral program other than his or her original field of study as per the recommendations of the concerned department and the approval of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies.

Article Sixteen

The concerned department may require a student in a Master or Doctoral program to take up to four deficiency courses, with the following considerations:

1. Each deficiency course must be completed at the first attempt with a grade not less than "good" (C+); the cumulative GPA in all deficiency courses must not be less than "very good" (B).
2. A student must complete all the deficiency course(s) within the first year of enrollment.
3. The time period required for completing the deficiency courses is not considered part of the maximum residency period.
4. Deficiency courses are neither included in the GPA calculation for graduate studies nor counted for credits towards the graduate level degree.

Article Seventeen

Admission and registration of graduate students shall be conducted through the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies in coordination with the Deanship of Admission and Registration.

Article Eighteen

A student cannot enroll in two graduate programs at the same time.

Withdrawal and Deferral

Article Nineteen

A student's admission may be postponed for not more than two semesters based on the approval of the relevant department and the Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies. This deferral period shall not be included in the maximum residency period allowed for completing the degree.

Article Twenty

Students may request postponement of studies if it is approved by the concerned department and the Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies according to the following:

1. The student must complete at least one semester or more.
2. The total period of postponement shall not exceed six semesters (three academic years).
3. The student must submit a postponement request two weeks before the beginning of the semester.
4. The postponement period is not counted within the maximum period required for completing the degree.

Article Twenty-One

A student can request to withdraw from a semester by providing an acceptable excuse, as follows:

1. Semester withdrawal request must be submitted before the start of final exams (as specified in the University's academic calendar).
2. Request must be approved by the concerned department and the Deanship of Student Affairs, before final approval by the Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies.
3. Withdrawn semester must not be part of any extension period given to the student.
4. Withdrawn semester is counted as part of the postponement period mentioned in Article Twenty.

Article Twenty-Two

A student may be considered to have voluntarily discontinued their program and may be dismissed in the following cases:

1. If a newly admitted student is accepted into the program and does not register during the registration period without a legitimate excuse.
2. If a student registers in a semester but does not attend classes in that semester without a legitimate excuse.

Article Twenty-Three

If a student requests to return to a graduate program from which he or she has voluntarily withdrawn or discontinued studies, then the student must satisfy all current admission requirements.

Dismissal and Readmission

Article Twenty-Four

The College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies and/or the Graduate Council may decide to dismiss a student if:

1. Student did not pass the deficiency courses according to the conditions mentioned in Article Sixteen.
2. Student withdraws or discontinues for one semester without an acceptable excuse.
3. Student did not show seriousness in studying or does not fulfill their academic duties see Article Forty-Six.
4. Student has not reached the minimum GPA required in two consecutive academic semesters. See also Article Twenty-Six.
5. Student exceeds the total postponement period specified in Article Twenty.
6. There is evidence of scientific dishonesty in the student's course of study or during his or her thesis work, or if the rules and regulations of the University are violated.
7. Student fails the comprehensive exam during the second attempt, if required.
8. Thesis Committee disqualifies the thesis for defense or rejects it after the defense, as specified in Article Fifty-Three. See also Article Twenty-Seven.
9. Student fails to graduate within the maximum residency period specified in Article Thirty-Three.

Article Twenty-Five

Readmission is permitted to a student who was dismissed from graduate programs due to extreme circumstances that are accepted by the academic department. The readmission is to be approved by the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies with the following considerations:

1. If the period between dismissal and the application for readmission exceeds six semesters, the student will be treated as a new applicant regardless of the number of credit hours already earned.
2. If the period between dismissal and the application for readmission is six semesters or less, the student may be asked to repeat some courses. These courses will be specified by the concerned department and approved by the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies. The credit hours earned after readmission will be counted in his or her GPA calculation. The previous period attended in the program by the student will be counted as part of his or her maximum residency period for the degree in question.

Additional Attempts

Article Twenty-Six

Paragraph four (4) of Article Twenty-Four may be exempted to give a student an additional attempt at graduating for one or two semesters (maximum) as per the recommendation of the department and the approval of the Graduate Council.

Article Twenty-Seven

An exception may be made to Article Twenty-Four, paragraph eight (8), by giving the student one additional attempt of no more than two semesters on the basis of a report from the thesis advisor and the recommendation of the department and the Graduate Council.

Transfer

Article Twenty-Eight

A student may transfer credits earned at a recognized university to his or her program at KFUPM upon recommendation of the concerned department and approval of the Graduate Council with the following considerations:

1. The student must satisfy the admission requirements and any other requirements that the department deems necessary.
2. The student has not been dismissed from the university he or she is transferring from, for any reason.
3. Courses under consideration should not have been taken more than six semesters preceding the application.
4. The topics/course description of the credit hours to be transferred must meet the current program requirements.
5. The total credit hours to be transferred must not exceed 30 percent of the total credits of the current program.
6. The grades earned in the transferred courses are not less than “very good” (3.0 out of 4.0).
7. The grades earned in the transferred courses are not included in the student’s KFUPM GPA.

Article Twenty-Nine

A student can change their major upon approval of the department that the student is transferring from and the department that he or she is transferring to, and with the approval of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies, with the following considerations:

1. The student should meet the admission and any other requirements deemed necessary by the department that he or she is transferring to.
2. Credit hours earned at the University may be counted if the department he or she is transferring to considers that the transferred courses are compatible with the new major. All grades obtained in such courses will be included in the GPA calculation.
3. The student should not have been dismissed for any reason.
4. The period spent in the previous major will be considered part of the maximum residency.
5. Changing the student’s major is only allowed one time during the maximum period of obtaining the degree.

Chapter Six: Study System

Article Thirty

A Master’s degree can only be pursued in one of the following two options:

1. Coursework and thesis, with a minimum of 24 credit hours in addition to the thesis.
2. Coursework in some fields of a professional nature, with at least 30 credit hours of coursework including a graduation project that consists of a minimum of 3 credit hours.

The Master’s degree plan may include other graduate courses that are related to the specialization from other departments whenever needed.

Article Thirty-One

A Doctoral program must consist of courses and thesis, with a minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate courses after a Master's degree in addition to 12 credit hours of thesis. The Doctoral degree plan may include other graduate courses that are related to the specialization from other departments whenever needed.

Article Thirty-Two

The span of study for obtaining a degree starts from the beginning of the registration in graduate courses until the student satisfies the program requirements.

Article Thirty-Three

1. The span of study for a Master's degree must not be less than two semesters and not more than ten semesters (excluding summer sessions).
2. The span of study for a Doctoral Degree must not be less than six semesters and not more than fourteen semesters (excluding summer sessions).

Article Thirty-Four

Doctoral degree students who completed their coursework are required to spend at least one year (two consecutive semesters excluding summer semesters) working on their dissertations on a full-time basis at the University.

Article Thirty-Five

A graduate student must take at least 70 percent of the required credit hours in the University and all work related to his or her thesis must be completed while enrolled in the University.

Article Thirty-Six

A student can graduate only after completing the degree requirements with an overall grade of, at least, "very good" (3.0 out of 4.0) for all graduate programs. The minimum GPA requirement for graduation from certain programs approved by the University Council is 2.75 out of 4.0.

Chapter Seven: Examination System

Article Thirty-Seven

Conducting and grading graduate courses for Master's and Doctoral degrees should follow the KFUPM undergraduate studies and examination rules and regulations with the exception of the following:

1. A minimum of "Good" (C) grade is required for the student to pass a course.
2. With regard to alternative exams and courses requiring more than one semester of study, the Graduate Council should set appropriate regulations as per the department recommendation.
3. A graduate course may be completed without examinations, based on the nature of the course, and upon approval of the department or College Council.
4. Doctoral students are required to pass the Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam.

Chapter Eight: Thesis

Preparation and supervision of Thesis

Article Thirty-Eight

Each graduate student, when joining the graduate program, should be assigned an academic advisor to guide them through their study. The student must be assigned a thesis advisor by the second semester to guide and help the student in choosing the subject of the thesis and research plan according to the regulations approved by the University Council, as per recommendations of the Graduate Council.

Article Thirty-Nine

Upon successful completion of all admission requirements and at least 50 percent of the coursework required for the program, with a minimum cumulative GPA of "B" (3.0 on a 4.0 scale), the graduate student may, where applicable, submit a thesis proposal to the relevant department. The Department Council shall review and approve both the proposal and the composition of the thesis committee. Once approved, the department shall forward this information to the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies for formal and final endorsement.

Article Forty

Master's thesis should reflect originality and authenticity. Doctoral thesis should also reflect originality and innovation, together with an effective contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the students' field of study.

Article Forty-One

The Master and Doctoral theses should be written in English and the abstract of the thesis should be translated into Arabic.

Article Forty-Two

The thesis advisors must be professors or associate professors from the student's academic department. An assistant professor, from the student's academic department, may be a Master's and Doctoral theses advisor if he or she has at least two papers published or accepted in ISI journals.

Article Forty-Three

Thesis advisor may be a distinguished KFUPM researcher who is not a faculty member. This requires the approval of the Vice-president of Academic Affairs based on the recommendation of the relevant department and the approval of the Graduate Council.

Article Forty-Four

The departments shall develop an internal policy about the number of students assigned to a faculty member as main advisor.

Article Forty-Five

If the advisor cannot continue supervising the thesis, the concerned department should suggest a replacement, to be approved by the Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies.

Article Forty-Six

Based on the student advisor's report, a lack of commitment by a student towards his studies and other academic duties will result in an academic warning by the concerned department. If, after two warnings, no improvement is evident, the Graduate Council may dismiss the student as per the recommendation of the department.

Thesis Defense

Article Forty-Seven

For a Master's thesis, there must be at least one semester with a minimum of a four-month separation period between the thesis proposal approval and planned public oral defense. For a PhD dissertation, this duration is at least two semesters with a minimum of a nine-month separation period.

Article Forty-Eight

The thesis proposal, including the thesis committee formation, is approved primarily based on the recommendation of the Department Council. The College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies grants the final approval.

Article Forty-Nine

Student completion of the thesis/dissertation must be reported by the advisor to the associated department chairperson, in order to initiate the completion of the procedure as determined by the Council of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies.

Article Fifty

A Master's thesis committee must satisfy the following requirements:

1. It must be chaired by the thesis advisor, comprise an odd number of members (including the advisor and co-advisor, if any), and have at least three members.
2. It must comprise at least five members if it includes a thesis co-advisor.
3. The committee members should meet the conditions of thesis supervision as specified in Article Forty-Two.
4. At least one member should be a professor or an associate professor.
5. Decisions of the committee should be based on a majority vote of at least two-thirds of the total number of members.

Article Fifty-One

A Doctoral thesis defense committee must satisfy the following requirements:

1. It must be chaired by the thesis advisor, comprise an odd number of members (including the advisor and co-advisor, if any), and have at least five members.
2. The committee members should meet the conditions of thesis supervision as specified in Article Forty-Two.
3. At least one member should be a professor, and subject to approval by the Graduate Council, the committee may include one member from outside the department or the University.
4. Decisions of the committee should be based on a majority vote of at least two-thirds of the total number of members.

Article Fifty-Two

If, for any reason, the thesis/dissertation advisor/committee member cannot participate in the defense of the thesis, the concerned department shall suggest a replacement to be approved by the Dean of College of Graduate and

Interdisciplinary Studies.

Article Fifty-Three

The thesis committee shall prepare a report that is signed by all its members. The report must be submitted to the Department Chairman within one week of the date of defense of the thesis, including one of the following recommendations:

1. The thesis is accepted and recommended for the award of the degree.
2. The thesis is accepted with some modifications, without a re-defense being necessary.
3. Further work is recommended on the thesis, followed by a second defense within a certain period of time to be decided by the Graduate Council, based on the recommendations of the concerned department. This period should not exceed one year from the date of the first defense, but the Graduate Council can approve a request for extension if necessary.
4. The thesis is rejected, and if the department recommends dismissal, the case is submitted to the Graduate Council for discussion and further action.

Each member of the thesis committee has the right to submit their comments or reservations in a detailed report to both the chairperson of the department and the Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies within two weeks from the date of the defense.

Article Fifty-Four

The chairperson of the concerned department must submit the report of the thesis committee to the Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies within two weeks from the date of the defense.

Article Fifty-Five

The Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies should submit the recommendation to award the degree to the University Council for approval.

Chapter Nine: Stipend and Allowance

Article Fifty-Six

A reward may be paid to the advisor and the members of the thesis as approved by the Graduate Council.

Article Fifty-Seven

Eligible graduate students shall be awarded a stipend in accordance with the University's regulations and policies.

Article Fifty-Eight

The University may provide accommodation to KFUPM-sponsored graduate students if university housing is available.

Article Fifty-Nine

Upon recommendation of the department, the Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies, and the approval of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, a graduate student may go on a scientific trip for which the University may compensate for according to internal regulation.

Article Sixty

Upon completion of the student thesis/dissertation work, the University may compensate internal and external defense committee members based on internal regulation.

Chapter Ten: General Regulations

Article Sixty-One

The Graduate Council makes recommendations for the regulations and the evaluation of the graduate programs to the Academic Committee. The results of the evaluation should be submitted to the University Council.

Article Sixty-Two

Every department chairperson should inform the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies of any update to their departmental graduate programs.

Article Sixty-Three

The University Council may issue exceptional decisions that have not been stated in these regulations, subject to the approval of the President and the University Council.

Article Sixty-Four

This document voids all the previous graduate studies regulations in the University. It will be valid and implemented from the first semester following its approval date. The College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies may take the appropriate action in cases where students joined the university under the previous regulations.

Article Sixty-Five

The Graduate Council may issue its own implementation rules in adopting the general policies stated in this document.

Article Sixty-Six

The University President shall be responsible for the circulation of these regulations to all concerned entities.

Article Sixty-Seven

The University Council has the right to interpret the regulations of this document.

Article Sixty-Eight

These policies will be periodically reviewed by the Dean of College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies for the purpose of updating them. Suggested amendments will be submitted to the University Council for approval.