

Northern Arizona University  
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, PLANNING & RECREATION

**GPR GRADUATE PROGRAMS STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Fall 2009 (version 09.6d, updated 10 November 09) - Subject to revision

MA Rural Geography \*\*\* MS Applied Geographic Information Science \*\*\* Graduate GIS Certificate  
\*\*\* MS Applied Geospatial Sciences \*\*\*

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**A. Admission to the MA, MS and Certificate Programs**

**1. Admission Requirements**

**2. Admission Standing**

- a. Graduate Regular Standing
- b. Graduate Conditional Standing
- c. Graduate Non-Degree Standing

**3. GIS Certificate Program Fee**

**4. Changing from another NAU Graduate Degree Program**

- a. Changing from GIS Certificate Program to the MS program

**B. Progressing through the MA, MS and GIS Certificate Programs**

**1. Advisors**

- a. Who can be an Advisor

**2. Program of Study Form**

- a. Changing from Thesis to Non-Thesis Option

**3. Registration**

**4. Full-time Study**

**5. Continuous Enrollment and Leave of Absence**

- a. Six-Year Course Time Limit
- b. Returning After an Unauthorized Absence

**6. The MA or MS Committee**

- a. Forming a Committee
- b. Committee Changes

**7. Financial Assistance and Graduate Assistantships**

- a. Department Graduate Assistantships and Scholarships
- b. FERPA

**8. Directed Study**

**9. Grade Requirements**

**10. Incomplete Grades**

**11. Semester Review**

**12. Petitions and Appeals**

- a. Transfer Units from another Institution
- b. Extension of Six-Year Course Limit
- c. Leave of Absence
- d. Appeals

**III. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND COMPLETION**

**A. Course Requirements**

**B. Thesis and Practicum Requirements**

**1. Thesis/Practicum Proposal and Approval**

- a. IRB Approval for Research using Human Subjects
- b. Typical Thesis Process

**2. The Thesis Defense and Practicum Presentation**

- a. Thesis Defense Retakes

**3. The Thesis or Practicum Document**

**C. Graduating**

#### **IV. NON-ACADEMIC CRITERIA**

##### **A. University Regulations**

##### **B. Professional and Ethical Standards**

###### **1. Plagiarism**

###### **2. Unprofessional and Unethical Behavior**

##### **C. Procedures When Students Do Not Meet These Standards**

##### **D. Student Grievance Procedure**

#### **V. SERVICES AT NAU**

##### **A. GPR Department Resources**

1. Office Space
2. Office and Building Keys
3. Grad Student Photo Board & Other Bulletin Boards
4. Graduate College Newsletter and Webpage, and Department Newsletter
5. Your Department File
6. Departmental Mailboxes, Board, and NAU email accounts
7. GPR Department Office Assistance to Teaching Assistants (TA's) and Research Assistants (RA's)
8. Supplies and Computer and Xeroxing Facilities

##### **B. NAU Resources**

###### **1. The NAU Graduate College Resources**

###### **2. The NAU Graduate Student Organization**

#### **APPENDIX**

##### **A. Checklist for Thesis Track Students**

### **MS APPLIED GEOSPATIAL SCIENCES**

The MS Applied Geographic Information Science will be renamed as the **MS Applied Geospatial Sciences** starting Fall 2009. Student in the current MA Rural Geography and MS Geographic Information Science are encouraged to switch to the new MS Applied Geospatial Sciences curriculum, in consultation with their advisor. However, students admitted prior to the Fall 2009 semester have the option of remaining in the MS Applied Geographic Information Science or the MA Rural Geography for the catalog year in which they started their degree. Students admitted for Summer 2009, even if no classes were taken, fall under the 2008-09 academic year catalog.

**Guidelines in this Handbook that referring to the MA Rural Geography and MS Applied GIS also apply to the new MS Applied Geospatial Sciences.**

For current information about the MS Applied Geospatial Science program, please see link to the new program on the GPR Department homepage <<http://www.geog.nau.edu/geog>>.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This manual summarizes the procedures for graduate students in the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation at Northern Arizona University. Questions concerning program matters discussed in this manual should be directed to the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator of the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation.

The official *Northern Arizona University Academic Catalog* and the *NAU Student Handbook* also govern students in the graduate programs in the GPR Department, and take priority over the policies covered in this document if a conflict exists.

The Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation offers the Master of Arts (MA) degree in Rural Geography, the Master of Science (MS) in Applied Geographic Information Science, and the Graduate Certificate in Geographic Information Systems. The student's thesis or practicum committee and its chair, or the student's advisor in the GIS Certificate program, oversee the conduct of each graduate student in the department. Many decisions on a student's progress in the program are subject to approval by the Graduate College, as well as the Department. In most cases, the GPR Department submits the forms necessary for such approval to the Graduate College after the student has provided the required information or documents to the department, as described later in this manual.

Graduate students in GPR graduate programs are professionals in training. As such, they must respect all federal and state guidelines and laws pertaining to privacy, confidentiality, and conflict of interest; and to ethical standards of study and research.

In some instances, GPR Department policies and procedures may be more stringent than those of the NAU Graduate College. In other instances, Graduate College policies may have higher standards than GPR Department policies. In all instances, where a situation involves both the GPR Department and the Graduate College, the more stringent and higher standard policy applies.

All GPR graduate students are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook (Note: There are some time lines you are expected to meet.) Failure to adhere to these can lead to disciplinary actions ranging from a reprimand to expulsion from the Graduate Program. Following completion of review of this Handbook, you will be asked to sign an acknowledgement of your awareness and understanding of the outlined policies and procedures.

## II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### II.A. Admission to the MA, MS and Certificate Program

#### II.A.1. Admission Requirements

These guidelines are presented in the application packet and, therefore, are not repeated here.

#### II.A.2. Admission Standing

All graduate students are admitted to the MA and MS programs in one of three possible categories of standing:

**II.A.2.a. Graduate Regular Standing:** Regular graduate standing is full admittance to the program. The department gives its strongest consideration for regular standing to applicants who meet the following criteria:

- 1) an overall grade point average of 3.0 or greater on a 4.0 scale;
- 2) acceptable scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) – low scores in the written or math portions of the GRE may result in an additional class being required in that area
- 3) three positive letters of recommendation;
- 4) a statement of goals that is well written and appropriate for the program and which clearly identifies a focused topic and Emphasis Area (geospatial techniques, planning and recreation, or custom emphasis) that the student wishes to pursue;
- 5) appropriate undergraduate coursework for the topic and Emphasis Area that the student wishes to pursue;
- 6) a signed agreement by a faculty member to serve as the student's academic advisor.

**II.A.2.b. Graduate Conditional Standing:** Applicants who have deficiencies in any of the six areas of require for regular standing (above) may be considered for admission with "Conditions". Applicants admitted with conditions must address their conditions within their first year of full-time (or equivalent) study. Students with conditional standing must be admitted to regular graduate standing by the start of their second year of full-time study in order to continue in the program. In all other respects, students with conditional status are treated in the same manner as those with regular status.

A student admitted to conditional graduate standing must inform the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator when they have completed their conditions so that they may be changed to unconditional status. In addition, to qualify for this change in standing, the student must also maintain a minimum grade of B in all coursework taken to remedy deficiencies and must achieve a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 ("C") in the graduate program while in provisional standing. The Graduate College checks the status of all provisional students with the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator each semester to make the changes. It is advised that the students notify the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator when requirements are met.

**II.A.2.c. Graduate Non-Degree Standing:** Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements for either regular or provisional standing, or those who do not apply directly to the MA, MS or GIS Certificate programs, but who still meet the Graduate College's minimum requirements for graduate study may be considered for admission with non-degree-graduate standing. This last standing also is available to students who, from the start of their graduate career, choose not to pursue a formal degree. The Graduate College grants non-degree-standing; the Department is not involved in the decision. Due to limited resources, non-degree-standing students are not advised nor supported by the Department. Policies on shifting from non-degree standing to provisional or regular graduate standing are discussed below.

A student admitted to non-degree graduate standing may also apply for provisional or regular standing. To qualify for this change in standing, the student must go through the Department's formal application process for admission to the MA, MS or GIS Certificate programs. In addition, the student must apply to the Graduate College to have their standing changed. This may involve submission of all undergraduate transcripts, as well.

Applicants changing from non-degree-standing may apply no more than twelve (12) units of graduate coursework taken in non-degree-standing towards the student's GPR graduate program degree or certificate. The student's academic advisor, with approval of the GPR Department Chair, the Graduate College, and possibly the entire GPR Department, determines the total number (up to 12) that will be accepted. A petition form for this is available from the Graduate College. [The 12 units policy has not been strictly enforced and may be rewritten by the Graduate College. Please check the NAU Catalog for current wording on this policy. (4/6/09)]

### **II.A.3. GIS Certificate Program Fee**

The GIS Certificate program is a special program, and has a special program fee that is charged to each student in the first semester that they are in the program. A student must formally withdraw from the GIS Certificate program by the 21<sup>st</sup> day of classes to avoid being charged this non-refundable fee. Withdrawal from the program requires the submission of a letter to the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator that is signed, dated and received prior to the 21<sup>st</sup> day of classes. The GPR Program Coordinator, will notify the GIS Certificate Advisor and the NAU Graduate College where the student's status will be changed to that of a non-degree seeking student.

### **II.A.4. Changing from another NAU Graduate Degree Program**

Students transferring to the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation from another graduate program at Northern Arizona University may request to have some or all of their prior NAU graduate coursework units applied to the student's GPR graduate program degree or certificate. The student's academic advisor, possibly with approval of the GPR Department Chair and the entire Department, determines which courses will be accepted.

**II.A.4.a. Changing from GIS Certificate Program to the MS Applied Geospatial Sciences program:** The GIS Certificate program students may be admitted to the MS degree by applying to the program as a new student. If admitted, students may apply any and all of the courses taken in the GIS Certificate program to the MS degree, with approval of the student's advisor, and possibly in consultation with the entire Department. In addition, students may pursue the GIS Certificate program and a graduate MA/MS degree program at the same time and apply all courses to both programs simultaneously. *Please remember that the six-year time limit for completing the MS starts with the oldest course approved for your program of study, not with the term of admission to the MS.*

### **II.B. Progressing through the MA, MS and GIS Certificate Programs**

Time spent by students at NAU, unless the student pays full out-of-state tuition, is subsidized by the citizens of the state of Arizona. It is student's personal responsibility to progress through the program in a timely and efficient manner according to the policies cited in this document.

*The following guidelines are based on full-time and continuous study in one of the graduate programs in the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation. Students who are studying part-time or take an NAU-authorized Leave of Absence should adjust their progress accordingly and in consultation with their academic advisor.*

### **II.B.1. Advisors**

Each student works with a formally identified academic advisor, who oversees the student's entire program.

New MA and MS students must identify the academic advisor that they wish to work under. Both the student and the advisor must sign an agreement form before the student's application for admission will be evaluated. New students will be expected to meet with their academic advisor at the earliest possible convenience. The academic advisor will also serve as the chair of the student's thesis committee.

New MA and MS graduate students must also meet at least once upon their arrival with the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator; GIS Certificate graduate students must meet at least once upon their arrival with the GIS Certificate Advisor. Once a faculty advisor is designated for a student, the student is strongly discouraged from changing advisors. A petition made in the form of a letter to the Department is required to change the academic advisor, and must be approved by the GPR Department faculty.

Each MA and MS student is required to meet at least twice each semester with their academic advisor (once at the beginning and once at the end of the semester) during any semester that they are enrolled full time at NAU. In addition, each student is required to arrange a meeting of his or her committee at least once each year, beginning in the second semester of full-time attendance at NAU. If the student is not attending full-time, then some other arrangements may be made in consultation with the academic advisor. It is the student's responsibility to arrange these meetings.

**FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE SUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR (1) A FACULTY MEMBER RESIGNING AS THE STUDENT'S ADVISOR, (2) DISCONTINUATION OF ASSISTANTSHIP OR TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS, AND (3) ADMINISTRATIVE DISMISSAL FROM THE GRADUATE PROGRAM BY THE DEPARTMENT AND GRADUATE COLLEGE.** The Department is not responsible for finding a new or alternative advisor for the student. Students may petition any such decision following the guidelines in Section 12.

The student's academic advisor serves to assist in issues and problems that may arise regarding procedural matters within the student's graduate program. Problems not resolved at this level come to the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator, or to the GPR Department Chair, who may elect to bring the situation before the faculty as a whole. Should the department not solve a problem in a manner satisfactory to the student, the student should refer to the official university guidelines in the *NAU Student Handbook* for further options.

Faculty occasionally go on leave from the university, for example during a sabbatical or research leave. If the student's academic advisor, or a member of the student's MA or MS committee, plans to be on leave during a crucial part of the student's degree work, such as during completion of the thesis, the student must make prior arrangements with his or her academic advisor to ensure continuity of advisement. Students should inquire of their advisors, as soon as possible in their first semester, as to the possibility that such a leave may occur.

**II.B.1.a. Who can be an Advisor:** The Advisor / Committee chairs of MA and MS students in the GPR Department must be tenured or tenure track faculty members of the department, except in the following circumstances:

1. An individual who is not a tenured or tenure track GPR faculty member may serve as a Co-Advisor / Co-Chair with a GPR faculty member who is a tenured or tenure track faculty member.
2. The Department Graduate Committee may vote to allow a non-tenure track GPR faculty member to serve as the Advisor / Committee Chair on one-time basis (for one student). The student must be informed that the department cannot guarantee that the Advisor / Committee Chair will remain employed by NAU through the completion of the student's degree. The Department Graduate Committee may vote at any time to remove the one-time Advisor / Committee Chair status.
3. The Department Graduate Committee may vote to allow a non-tenure track GPR faculty member to serve as the Advisor / Committee Chair on an on-going basis. All of the students advised by the individual must be informed that the department cannot guarantee that the Advisor / Committee Chair will remain employed by NAU through the completion of their degree. The Department Graduate Committee may vote at any time to remove the on-going Advisor / Committee Chair status.
4. The Department Graduate Committee may vote to allow a non-GPR individual to serve as the Advisor / Committee Chair on one-time basis (for one student). The student's committee must have at least two GPR faculty members. The Department Graduate Committee may vote at any time to remove the one-time Advisor / Committee Chair status.

### **II.B.2. Program of Study Form**

The academic advisor assists the student during the first semester in the program to form a statement of the student's intended program of study. (There is a form for this purpose available from the department website.) This statement sets forth the student's general goals within the program, areas of topical interest (including a minor program, is appropriate), and a schedule for completing the requirements for the degree. This statement may be revised as needed during the student's program to serve as a continuing guide and focus of communication between student and academic advisor.

With the assistance of the student's academic advisor, the student is required to update their program of study form within the first month of each semester that classes are taken at Northern Arizona University. This original form is filed in the student's official department file and must be kept current of any changes (adds/drops/withdrawals) during the semester

### **II.B.2. Switching between the Thesis to Non-Thesis Options**

It is possible to switch between the thesis option to the non-thesis (practicum) option in the MS degree. Such a switch must be approved by the student's thesis or practicum advisor and full committee. If the student has already started taking thesis (699) or practicum (698) units, then those units will become permanent IP (in progress) grades when the student switches and they will not apply to the student's Program of Study for graduation. The student must still register for 6 units of thesis (699) or practicum (698) after the switch.

### **II.B.3. Registration**

New and continuing graduate students must register for classes in consultation with their academic advisor. Continuing students are strongly encouraged to use the early registration procedures available.

Students seeking to change courses ("Drop/Add") or to register late must use special forms, and may need to obtain additional approvals as indicated on those forms. (Advisor signatures are not required on Drop/Add forms.) The necessary forms are provided in the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation's main office.

Student may take 2 classes at the 400 level (maximum of 8 units). You must file the *Override Authorization - Audit/Class Links/Out of Career* form (available on the Registrar's Office forms webpage) to get credit for a 400-level course on your master's degree.

Students must take a minimum of 24 class-based units. Classes that are not class-based include thesis, practicum, research, independent study, and internship (fieldwork).

### **II.B.4. Full-time Study**

NAU considers graduate students to be "full-time" when they carry at least nine semester units. Federal laws governing many kinds of financial aid, including graduate assistantships, require the student to be enrolled full-time to maintain their eligibility. Audited courses do not count towards the requirement of full-time enrollment.

Graduate assistantships require that a student take a minimum of 9 units of courses, all of which can be directly applied to the degree program. For summer assistantships, the student is required to take 4 units of courses in either the 10-week summer session, or in each of the shorter summer sessions.

A graduate student may take a maximum of 16 units in one semester. Special "course overload" forms must be approved by the student's academic advisor to take more than 16 units in one semester (or 6 units in one summer session). NOTE that graduate assistants (R.A.s and T.A.s) may take no more than 12 units in one semester.

### **II.B.5. Continuous Enrollment and Leave of Absence**

When you begin working on a master's Practicum (689) or Thesis (699), NAU expects you to enroll each semester from the time you begin this work until completion of degree. You must register for a minimum of one credit each fall and spring semester. If you are using research or other university facilities, or the professional time of faculty members, you should enroll for at least three units. During the term you complete and defend your practicum or thesis, you must enroll for at least three units to reflect the increased demands on faculty time.

You may petition for a one year Leave of Absence during which time you are not required to register for classes, though you would also not be allowed to use department resources for your thesis or practicum. See also II.B.12. on Petitions, below.

If the written thesis is not completed in the semester of defense, the NAU Graduate College requires that the you register for a minimum of one credit hour of thesis in the semester that the thesis is completed, and final graduation is awarded. Students must also register for at least one credit hour in any semester or summer session that they expect to

receive advising or use any facilities on the NAU campus. Depending on the level of NAU involvement, the student may be required to register for more than one credit hour.

**II.B.5.a. Six-Year Time Course Limit:** All coursework applied to your degree must have been taken within the six years prior to the awarding of the degree (i.e., graduation). You may extend this deadline either by petitioning for an extension in your sixth year of study. An authorized Leave of Absence does not affect the six-year time limit. (see II.B.12. on Petitions, below).

**II.B.5.b. Returning After an Unauthorized Absence:** If you miss one or more semesters of continuous enrollment after you have started your thesis/practicum, you must take additional thesis/practicum units equal to the number of terms that you missed. For example, if you miss one semester, then you must register for a minimum of 2 thesis/practicum units in the semester you return. If you missed three semesters, then you must register for a minimum of 4 thesis/practicum units in the semester you return. You may also need to register for additional units if you are making significant use of NAU facilities and faculty resources.

If you do not maintain continuous enrollment for three (3) semesters after you have begun your thesis or practicum, and you do not have an authorized Leave of Absence on file with the NAU Graduate College, then you will be considered to have withdrawn from the university and you will need to reapply for readmission to resume your program. Re-admission is not automatic and may be denied by the department. The six-year time limit will still apply to all of the classes that you apply to your degree, although at the same time that you reapply, you may also petition to extend the six-year time limit, as indicated in II.B.12., below.

It may be possible for students to complete a degree if they have coursework beyond the six year time limit *and* they have completed all coursework except for the thesis or practicum, or if the student had other extenuating circumstances that caused an unauthorized leave beyond the six year limit. The student must have support from the student's advisor, the GPR Department Chair and the NAU Graduate College. The Graduate College has a process in which a contract is agreed to in which the student must complete the degree within one year. Students have been known to apply courses that are 10 year old under this option. This is an exception to the policy and may not always be permitted.

#### **II.B.6. The MA or MS Committee:**

Early in the second semester of full-time study at NAU, MA and MS students must form a thesis or practicum committee to oversee their final research project. The committee members must be selected in consultation with the student's advisor. Once a student has formed a committee the chair and members of this committee becomes the student's academic advisor and committee through to graduation. The MA or MS committee chair is the student's official academic advisor for purposes of registration approvals and related advisement matters. However, all students must still obtain the written approval of the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator and the GPR Department Chair on all GPR Department formal procedural matters, such as petitioning to transfer units from another school, as described throughout this Program Guide. The GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator is also available to answer questions on procedural matters pertaining to the student's degree.

**II.B.6.a. Forming a Committee:** Each student is admitted to the MA program or MS program with an academic advisor, based upon an agreement form signed by the academic advisor and the student prior to admission. In addition, the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator serves as an advisor on the technical aspects of the degree process. The chair of the committee is normally the academic advisor originally assigned to the student. The student should then consult with the committee chair and with other faculty to identify prospective faculty or other professionals to serve on the full committee. This must be done by the middle of the student's second semester in residence. In addition, the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator must also approve the committee.

The MA or MS committee consist of a minimum of three persons, including the committee chair, who must be a GPR Department tenured or tenure-track faculty member (though see section II.B.1.a, above). A minimum of two committee members (including the committee chair) must have regular, continuing faculty status in the GPR Department. One or more of the committee members may be part-time faculty or faculty from another department or university. In addition, one or more members of the committee may be a working professionals in a field closely related to the student's thesis topic.

All members of the committee must hold at least a Master's degree and the student must obtain the approval of their academic/thesis advisor before inviting others to be members of the committee. ***All committee members will be required to attend the student's thesis defense, either in person or by conference call.***

Upon obtaining the verbal consent of the prospective chair and committee members, the student must obtain their signatures, as well as those of the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator and the GPR Department Chair using the department's Graduate Committee Recommendation form. At its discretion, the full faculty of the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation may also request to review and approve a committee's composition.

As stated above (Section II.B.1), the student must arrange a formal meeting with his or her graduate committee by the end of the second semester in full time residence. In addition, the student must arrange a formal thesis committee meeting each year that he or she is registered full-time at NAU. Students who are not in residence or full-time must make some other arrangement through their academic advisor.

**FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE SUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR (1) A FACULTY MEMBER RESIGNING AS THE STUDENT'S ADVISOR, (2) DISCONTINUATION OF ASSISTANTSHIP OR TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS, AND (3) ADMINISTRATIVE DISMISSAL FROM THE GRADUATE PROGRAM BY THE DEPARTMENT AND GRADUATE COLLEGE.** The Department is not responsible for finding a new or alternative advisor for the student. . Students may petition any such decision following the guidelines in Section 12.

**II.B.6.b. Committee Changes:** Changing the composition of a thesis committee is an unusual move that should first involve discussion between the student, the committee chair, and any committee member directly involved. Consultation with the MA or MS program coordinator is also encouraged, but not mandatory. If after consultations, the student, the committee chair, or a committee member(s) agree to seek a change, the next step is for the party requesting the change to submit a written request to the MA or MS program coordinator explaining the rationale for the change. The student, the members of the thesis committee and the GPR Department Chair should also receive copies of the request. If asked, the student and/or faculty members involved will meet with the GPR Department Chair to discuss the matter.

### **II.B.7. Financial Assistance**

Students desiring financial assistance of any kind should inquire about these opportunities as early as possible. The department and Graduate College offer several opportunities for financial aid, primarily in the form of graduate assistantships, work-study, and tuition waiver scholarships. Graduate assistantships may be for either research or teaching assistance to faculty. Graduate assistantships also provide non-resident students with a waiver of non-resident tuition fees and health insurance for students with full assistantships (20 hrs per week). Resident tuition fees are not automatically waived for graduate assistants in the state of Arizona. Tuition waiver scholarships (for either resident tuition or non-resident tuition) are offered by the Graduate College based upon the department's recommendation. They are very limited and competitive.

Part-time, temporary, occasional, and summer employment are sometimes available. These types of employment are offered through the university and may be treated as either graduate assistantship or hourly wages. Non-paying internships and volunteer positions may also be available for those students desiring to gain skills leading to employment. Other than tuition waiver scholarships, financial aid for graduate students is primarily limited to student loans and work-study positions. Information on these opportunities is available from the NAU Office of Student Financial Aid.

NAU will not allow students to work more than 20 hours a week on campus while they are taking classes. Additional hours can be worked during vacation periods, with the graduate dean's permission.

Work-study and assistantships are also awarded by other programs on campus. It is the student's responsibility to explore these possibilities through the appropriate offices on campus. The department does not administer any of these programs, but students are asked to notify the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator whenever they are working on campus outside of the GPR Department.

**II.B.7.a. Department Graduate Assistantships and Scholarships:** Applications for assistantships and tuition waivers must be received by February 15 for priority consideration for the Fall semester of the same year. Acceptance of a graduate assistantship or a scholarship may affect a student's eligibility for Federal financial aid. A student applying or approved for Federal financial aid should consult a counselor in the Office of Student Financial Aid before accepting an assistantship.

A student awarded a graduate assistantship in the department must appear for work at the times designated in their expectation agreement/contract. This is usually the week prior to the first week of school, during which time both the NAU Graduate College and the GPR Department hold graduate student orientations. If students fail to arrive by their contract date, they may forfeit their assistantship. Exceptions are granted only if requested in writing and approved by the academic advisor supervising the assistantship. Research assistants are on a 45-day probationary period. Teaching assistants are on a one-semester probationary period. At the end of the probationary period, the student's progress will be evaluated and a decision to extend or withdraw the assistantship will be made.

The amount of work time required of a student awarded a full assistantship is up to 20 hours per week. The work period begins one week prior to the start of classes each semester and is complete at the end of the week of final examinations (unless otherwise indicated in the student's contract.) Assistantships with smaller stipends are also awarded; these require fewer work hours per week. The scheduling of the contracted hours of work for each assistantship will be negotiated between the faculty member supervising the assistantship and the student. Some weeks may involve more work hours and other weeks may be less.

It is the policy of the department that graduate assistantships are re-evaluated each year. There is no guarantee that a student who is awarded an assistantship one year will continue with an assistantship into the next, though in most instances, if the student is progressing in a satisfactory manner, they will be continued for two years. The department's funding for graduate assistantships is subject to change from year to year, which could also impact the continuation of an assistantship.

### **II.B.7.b. FERPA**

All students who have access to grades, advising/academic files, and any other potentially confidential student information are required to take the NAU tutorial on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is a US government law governing what can and cannot be done with private educational information. All teaching assistants, graders and office workers must take this tutorial at the beginning of their assignment. Other student employees may also be required to do the FERPA tutorial, which can be found here: <https://www4.nau.edu/ferpa/>

### **II.B.8. Directed Study**

Directed graduate study may be undertaken through any one of the following courses:

- GGR 566 Legislative Internship (1-12)
- GGR or PL 608 Fieldwork Experience (1-12) [internship; special fee]
- GGR 685 Graduate Research (1-6) [pass/fail only]
- GGR or PL 698 Professional Practicum (1-9)
- GGR or PL or PRM 697 Independent Study (1-3) [graded only]

These non-classroom courses involve direct supervision of a student's work by a faculty member in an area of the supervisor's expertise. *The NAU Graduate College requires a minimum of 24 classroom units for a Masters degree.* (Online classes are considered "classroom" based on how they would be taught in a face-to-face setting.) Therefore, in a 36 unit Masters program, students could apply a maximum of 12 units from the courses listed above, including thesis. You may take more than 12 units to maintain enrollment, but the excess would not apply to the degree. Since six units of thesis are already required in Rural Geography, ***only six additional units from the other directed study courses may be applied to the degree.***

A student wishing to pursue directed study must arrange with a specific faculty member to supervise the work. Students may not normally take a directed study course when the subject matter is covered in a regularly scheduled course. A student wishing to pursue directed study, excluding the thesis and practicum, must also:

1. Develop a detailed description of the proposed project. This must be done prior to requesting approval from the department. The description should be worked out with the student's academic advisor and the faculty member who will supervise the work.
2. Develop a detailed description of the work expected of the student, on which the supervising faculty member will base his or her evaluation. These expectations should address time commitment, required readings, required written or oral work, schedule of work and schedule of times when the student and supervisor will meet, and any other requirements agreed to by the student, supervisor, and academic advisor. The student must submit a documented report at the end of the course, to be graded by the faculty supervisor and retained in the student's file.
3. Establish the number of units to be awarded for the work. Arizona Board of Regents guidelines stipulate that one credit hour must correspond to a minimum of 15 hours of classroom instruction, and that the student will spend at least two hours working outside of the classroom for every hour spent in the classroom. This results in 45 hours of directed study for one hour of academic credit.
4. Prepare a *Form for Approval of Graduate Independent Study*, available on the GPR graduate student webpage, to which must be attached the documentation for items 1-3, above. The student submits this form to the faculty member who will supervise the work, and to his/her academic advisor, for formal authorization. With this authorization, the student submits the form to the GPR Department Chair. The chair must approve the proposal before the

coursework can begin. The department office then assigns a sequence number for the course, and the student may complete the paperwork for registration.

### **II.B.9. Grade Requirements**

The Graduate College maintains strict policies on the minimum cumulative GPA necessary for graduation with any degree, and on the number of semester units for which the student may receive a grade of C without forfeiting her or his graduate degree status. These policies are set forth in the *NAU Academic Catalog*. Courses in which the student receives a grade below "C" will **not** count toward the 36 units required for the graduate degree. They may, however, with approval of the student's academic advisor, count toward meeting degree content requirements, in which case the student need not repeat the same course over. *In addition, only two courses with a grade of "C" may count towards the required 36 units.*

IT IS THE NAU GRADUATE COLLEGE POLICY THAT GRADUATE STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE A GRADE OF "C" IN 10 UNITS OF COURSES WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE GRADUATE COLLEGE AND THE MA, MS OR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM. GRADUATE STUDENTS WHOSE GPA FALLS BELOW 3.0 FOR TWO CONSECUTIVE SEMESTERS WILL ALSO BE REMOVED. THE NAU GRADUATE COLLEGE WILL NOT ALLOW A STUDENT WITH AN ASSISTANTSHIP TO CONTINUE IF THE STUDENT RECEIVES A GRADE OF "C" OR BELOW IN ANY CLASS. Graduate assistants must also maintain 9 units of courses that may be applied directly to the degree program while they are on an assistantship (except for summer when the requirement is 4 units.)

### **II.B.10. Incomplete Grades**

If you are unable to complete coursework in a scheduled course within the term in which you are enrolled, you may petition your instructor to receive a grade of "I" (Incomplete). If accepted, a contract must be written which stipulates the date by which all work will be completed, which must be less than one year. If the instructor does not submit a grade by the end of the contract period, then the incomplete will automatically change to a permanent incomplete in the student's record. An incomplete grade agreement form is available from the department. Students are strongly advised to avoid an incomplete grade, as the lack of completed units may jeopardize their eligibility for current and/or future assistantships and other forms of financial assistance administered by the department. Certain courses may carry the grade of IP (in progress). These include Thesis, Independent Study, Directed Reading, Professional Practicum and Internship. IP grades may extend beyond the time limitation placed on incomplete grades.

### **II.B.11. Semester Review**

The department faculty hold periodic (semester or annual) review of all graduate students, to evaluate the progress of individual students in the MA, MS and Certificate programs, and the effectiveness of the programs overall. This review is held at the beginning of each semester. The faculty review each student's record for the past year, based largely on the Program of Study Form and input from the student's academic advisor, evaluate whether the student is making satisfactory progress. In instances where the student is not making satisfactory progress, either the student's committee or the faculty as a whole may offer recommendations to the student to allow him or her to remedy the situation. Such recommendations are based on a timetable of reasonable expectations for completion of the MA, MS and Certificate programs.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ADVISORY DECISIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT'S PERIODIC REVIEW IS SUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR (1) A FACULTY MEMBER RESIGNING AS THE STUDENT'S ADVISOR, (2) DISCONTINUATION OF ASSISTANTSHIP OR TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS, AND (3) ADMINISTRATIVE DISMISSAL FROM THE GRADUATE PROGRAM BY THE DEPARTMENT AND GRADUATE COLLEGE. The Department is not responsible for finding a new or alternative advisor for the student. Students may petition any such decision following the guidelines in Section 12.

### **II.B.12. Petitions and Appeals**

A petition is a written request to the department faculty for approval of a course of action which departs from the requirements set forth in the NAU Academic Catalog and this guide. For example, a student may petition for permission to waive a required core course for some reason. Petition forms are available on the NAU Graduate College website. Before filing a petition, the student should meet with her or his academic advisor to discuss whether a petition would be an appropriate action. If it appears appropriate, the student then petitions, via a letter of explanation, either the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator or the GPR Department Chair to examine the requirement in question and consider any alternatives proposed by the student for meeting that requirement. The petition is then circulated to the entire departmental faculty for discussion at the next department faculty meeting, where a recommendation for disposition of the petition will

be made and voted on by the department faculty. The recommendation and will be placed in the student's file, with a copy provided to the student and to her or his academic advisor.

**II.B.12.a. Transfer Units from another Institution:** This petitions must also be made to the Graduate College. The general guidelines to transfer units from another university are: (1) the coursework must not have applied toward another degree awarded to the student; (2) the coursework must be acceptable as graduate credit at the school where it was awarded; (3) the student must have received either an A or B in the classes; (4) the coursework must have been completed within the six-year time period that the degree at NAU will be awarded (see II.B.12.b., below); (5) meet the ABOR requirements transfer credit; and (5) the course and petition form must be approved by the student's academic advisor and the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator. The maximum number of units that may be transferred is 12 for the MS and 7.5 for the GIS Certificate (25% of the total units required).

**II.B.12.b. Extension of Six-Year Course Limit:** All courses applied to the degree must be completed within a **six-year period**, starting with the oldest course applied to the degree. A single one-year extension of this six-year limit may be granted. Justifications for the extension include, but are not limited to: job relocation, military duty, pregnancy, illness, serious accident, divorce, or other personal tragedies or challenges within the student's immediate household. The petition must include a Plan for Completion that includes (1) details on how and when the student will complete the degree, and (2) which courses will be allowed to be exempt from the six-year limitation. The plan must be accepted by the student's advisor and the GPR department, with the NAU Graduate College making final approval.

The general policy of the GPR department is to strongly discourage a one-year extensions for thesis projects. Instead, students are encouraged to change their final project from a thesis to a practicum as a requirement for the one-year extension. Extensions beyond one-year are only considered by the NAU Graduate College in highly extraordinary circumstances. Your preferred alternative is to take additional approved courses to replace the older, outdated course units.

**II.B.12.c. Leave of Absence:** Students who will be away from the department due to extenuating circumstances without enrolling for a semester or longer must request permission for a leave of absence from the Graduate College in writing at least one month prior to departure. This petition must be submitted before the last day to add classes in the semester that the Leave of Absence is to begin, and is valid for one year only. Students who continue to be absent beyond one year must reapply for admission to NAU and the department. (Note that this policy is in conflict with the NAU Graduate College policy indicated in II.B.5.b., above, which states that you will not need to reapply unless you do not enroll for three consecutive semesters.)

**II.B.12.d. Appeals:** An appeal is a written request by the student to have the faculty reconsider or review a decision that affects the student's status in the graduate program. A student who intends to submit an appeal should consult first with his/her academic advisor and members of the MA or MS committee and, when necessary, with the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator and the GPR Department Chair. The student should also become acquainted with the procedures involved in appealing to extra-departmental authority outlined in the *NAU Academic Catalog*. A written record of each meeting related to the appeal is required, and should consist of a written summary of the meeting. A student who feels it is necessary to seek redress from a decision is required to exhaust departmental procedures before turning to extra-departmental offices.

The student seeking to submit an appeal of a decision made by the department on a petition works with her or his academic advisor and members of the MA or MS committee to prepare a written request together with such documentation as is deemed necessary. The appeal is then submitted to the GPR Department Chair who circulates it to the entire departmental faculty. At the next departmental faculty meeting, the GPR Department Chair appoints a committee to investigate the merits of the appeal. This committee prepares a report on the merits of the appeal, and makes a written recommendation for disposition of the case to be voted on by the departmental faculty. This recommendation and a report of the faculty vote are placed in the student's file, with a copy provided to the student and to his/her academic advisor.

The grade appeal process is outline in outlined in the *NAU Academic Catalog*.

### III. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The MA and MS are offered under the Graduate College's thesis plan or professional practicum plan. Students seeking either of these degrees must complete a minimum of 36 units of formal coursework. These 36 units are subject to several restrictions which are additional to several Graduate College restrictions, set forth in the *Graduate Catalog*:

1. Thesis (GGR or PL 699) and Professional Practicum (GGR or PL 689) - units beyond the 6 required by the department are not counted toward the student's degree under any circumstances, though they are counted for financial aid purposes.
2. The department recognizes both the diverse needs and goals of its students and the interrelationships of geography with many other disciplines. Consequently, the student is encouraged to take some courses in one or more departments at NAU and count these toward the 36 unit degree requirement. Any courses taken outside the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation for inclusion in the student program of studies must be approved by the student's academic advisor.
3. As specified in the Graduate Catalog, no more than 8 units (or a maximum of two courses) at the 400 level may be included in the graduate program of studies. All 400 level courses must have prior approval from the student's academic advisor.

### **III.A. Course Requirements**

Please refer to the current *NAU Academic Catalog* for your degree or certificate requirements. To change or waive a required core course, the student must petition the entire department. This must be done through the student's academic advisor and should consist of a letter of explanation and any supporting materials. (See "petitions" in section 12 of this document.)

For most MS and MA students, the first semester of the program is taken up with GGR 681 (3 units) Geographic Thought and Method, and GGR 687 (1 unit) Professional Development Seminar (Thesis/Practicum Proposal Writing). These two classes are offered in the Fall semester only.

### **III.B. Thesis and Practicum Requirements**

The thesis must be an original piece of work, and should contain description, analysis, and interpretation of a body of geographic information collected by the student from documentary sources or through field or laboratory research. The thesis should demonstrate the student's ability to complete a full cycle of problem formulation, method formulation, research, and evaluation under the direction of the MA or MS committee. The scope and duration of the thesis project will depend both on the student's research interests and on a reasonable schedule for the completion of the degree. The thesis is the preferred route for students who are considering continuing their education for a Ph.D.

The professional practicum is considered a "non-thesis" option by the NAU Graduate College. It may take several forms, include the results of an internship or a professional project with a government or nonprofit organization. It should be a cohesive applied study with a beginning and end or completion. The practicum should demonstrate the student's ability to complete a significant applied research or consulting project under the direction of an MA or MS committee. The scope and duration of the practicum project will depend both on the student's professional interests and on a reasonable schedule for the completion of the degree. The practicum is considered a terminal experience for a professional degree for students who are not considering continuing their education for a Ph.D.

For both the thesis and practicum, the department has adopted the *Chicago Manual of Style* (also known as the *Manual of Style*, University of Chicago Press) as the official format guide for a thesis and practicum. This is the same format used in the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. For most theses and practicums, you should be able to find all of the formatting information you need in a single issue of the *Annals of the AAG*.

As discussed in Part II of this guide, the student should begin to form an MA or MS committee to oversee their thesis research as soon as possible during their first year of enrollment. The student also should have a fully authorized committee in place by the middle of the second regular semester of residence, by which time the student should also have completed at least 18 units of required formal coursework. The student should then prepare a written thesis or practicum proposal for approval by the MA or MS committee, including a schedule for carrying out the research and completing the thesis or practicum. The student should then proceed immediately to the research, and should notify the MA or MS committee of any changes in schedule or other significant difficulties that may arise.

**III.B.1. Thesis/Practicum Proposal and Approval:** Graduate students develop a prospective thesis or practicum project in close consultation with the thesis or practicum chair. Depending on the chair and student, committee members may be more or less involved in this aspect of the project's development. However, the committee typically becomes more involved and has more input at the time of the thesis or practicum proposal meeting, which normally takes place toward the end of the student's second semester of full time study at NAU. Committee members typically make recommendations about the proposal prior to, and during, the proposal meeting. Graduate students, when preparing for, and scheduling, the proposal meeting, should give committee members a *minimum* of two weeks to review a copy of their proposal. Students

are not to provide food or drinks during thesis proposal meetings. Students are not to buy committee members or committee chairs gifts or gift certificates.

**III.B.1.a. IRB Approval for Research using Human Subjects:** Once the thesis or practicum proposal is approved, the graduate student must submit the research proposal to the NAU Institutional Review Board (IRB) if it involves human subjects in any manner. The address for the NAU IRB homepage is <http://www.research.nau.edu/vpr/IRB/index.htm>. Before you can submit a research proposal to the IRB, you must complete the Online Tutorial, which is on the IRB homepage. The IRB reviews all human research projects on campus, and they must approve your project before you begin collecting data. In many instances, the IRB will grant an expedited review, which typically means that the research proposal will be reviewed and approved quickly. You can anticipate that the IRB review process will take up to one month. Your thesis chair and the GPR Department Chair must approve your application before you can submit it to the IRB. You must submit a copy of the IRB approval letter to the GPR Department to be put in your file before you can begin collecting data.

**III.B.1.b. Typical Thesis Process:** In a typical thesis process, once your data are collected, you should be ready for data analysis. (The practicum is more individualized and will often vary from this process.) Your thesis chair and committee members are important resources for analysis and statistical consultation. After your data are analyzed, your next task is to write the results and discussion sections. The results and discussion sections, in combination with the previously written proposal containing problem identification and literature review, constitute your thesis.

You will be working closely with your thesis chair preparing the thesis. Once your thesis chair determine that your thesis is sufficiently prepared, then it is appropriate to distribute it to the committee members to solicit their feedback. Plan to give committee members a minimum of three weeks to review your thesis.

### **III.B.2. The MA and MS Thesis Defense and Practicum Presentation**

Upon completing the MA or MS thesis or practicum, the student must satisfactorily defend it as a part of an oral thesis defense examination given by the entire MA or MS committee. (This is not required for the GIS Certificate practicum.) It is the responsibility of the student's committee chair to determine the readiness of a student's thesis or practicum for defense or presentation.

Once deemed ready, it the responsibility of the committee chair to schedule the defense or presentation date in consultation with the student and committee members. In setting a thesis defense or practicum presentation date, the committee chair should consider that a complete thesis or practicum draft document must be available for review by committee members three weeks prior to the proposed defense or presentation date. In addition, all members of the committee must be available to attend the defense. If necessary, some committee members may attend via conference call. Students who leave Flagstaff before their thesis has been successfully defended must be prepared to return to campus for the defense. The presentation must be made and passed by the week prior to final exams week of the semester of graduation.

Once a time has been set, the student should reserve a room through the department office.

The thesis defense or practicum presentation involves the oral presentation of the thesis or practicum, followed by questions and discussion. In your thesis defense, you should be prepared to answer a variety of questions about your thesis. Master's thesis defense and practicum presentations are open to all department faculty members, and other members of the university community and general public. The student may invite guests, faculty, or other graduate students to the defense; at the end of the presentation, the student and the guests will be invited to leave. Students are not to provide food or drinks during thesis or practicum thesis defense meetings. Students are not to buy committee members or committee chairs gifts or gift certificates.

A vote (either pass or fail) will be taken regarding the student's performance at this defense, and this vote will be shared with the student who will be invited to return to the room where the defense was held (minus the guests). The student's performance in the presentation and examination is evaluated by the MA or MS committee only. A student will be recommended for the MA or MS degree only if the members of the committee judge both the thesis and the performance on the oral defense to be satisfactory. A favorable vote of at least two thirds (2/3) of the committee is necessary to approve the thesis and the student's performance on the defense. This vote is recorded on a Final Oral Examination form, which the department will send to the Graduate College with a copy in the student's department file. You are also advised to bring the Cover/Top sheet of your thesis printed on the proper bindery paper to be signed in blue ink at this time.

**III.B.2.b. Thesis Defense Retakes:** If the student fails the thesis or practicum defense, with a vote of less than two-thirds of the student's committee in favor of passage, the student will have one opportunity to retake the defense. At least one month must pass before the second defense can take place. The student must work closely with the thesis or practicum chair to schedule this defense. The student will not graduate until the thesis defense is passed and all committee members sign both the thesis document and the Graduate College Final Oral Examination Form (which will change the thesis or practicum units from the grade of 'in progress' to 'pass.')

### **III.B.3. The Thesis or Practicum Document**

The thesis must meet certain standards of formatting and will be published and bound for archiving in the NAU Cline Library. You must provide a copy of your draft thesis to the Graduate College prior to scheduling your defense for format review. (This is not required for the non-thesis practicum.) Turn in an unbound copy of your thesis to the Graduate College's format editor. The editor will review your document and issue a report indicating what format requirements must still be met. Please note that it takes most students an average of two to three months from this initial formal review until they turn in their final copies and complete the process. Make sure you submit your thesis for initial review early enough to be able to graduate in the semester you intend.

The final copies of the thesis must be submitted to the Graduate College by the last day of the semester of graduation, and within six months after a successful oral defense.

The practicum documentation is not subject to Graduate College review and will not be archived in the NAU Cline Library. The final format is to be determined by the student's adviser and practicum committee. It should be in a format that is suited to archiving in the department with other theses and practicums.

### **III.C. Graduating**

Students are eligible to graduate upon completion of all degree requirements as set forth in the Graduate Catalog, including satisfactory completion of all coursework, and for MA and MS students, a thesis or professional practicum requirement and an oral defense, including submission of all required written work to the Graduate College.

**You must complete an Application for Graduation Form at the beginning of the semester that you wish to graduate in.** Dates and instructions for completing this form, and the application itself, are available at the following website: <http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/graduation.asp>.

Commencement ceremonies for all graduating students are held twice a year on the Friday of the week of final exams for the Fall and Spring semesters. For your name to appear on the graduation/commencement program, you must apply for graduate at least three months prior to the graduation ceremony. It is possible to walk in the graduation ceremony in the term prior to your graduation if you will not be able to make it to a later graduation ceremony. MA and MS students are often "hooded" at the graduation by their advisors (though this has sometimes not been done). Be sure to ensure that your advisor is aware that you will be walking in the ceremony so they can make arrangements to attend.

## **IV. NON-ACADEMIC CRITERIA**

### **IV.A. University Regulations**

When a student accepts admission to NAU, the University assumes that the student thereby agrees to conduct himself or herself in accordance with University standards. The University reserves the right, on the recommendation of the Dean of Students and with the approval of the President, to terminate at any time the enrollment of a student who proves to be an undesirable member of the student body.

In compliance with state law, the Arizona Board of Regents has adopted and promulgates a uniform Code of Conduct, which establishes rules and regulations governing the behavior of any person going upon or remaining upon property of the University. Copies of the Code of Conduct may be obtained in the Office of Student Life or on-line at [http://www4.nau.edu/stulife/Judicial/Code\\_of\\_Conduct.htm](http://www4.nau.edu/stulife/Judicial/Code_of_Conduct.htm).

### **IV.B. Professional and Ethical Standards**

**IV.B.1. Plagiarism:** The NAU Cline Library provides useful information about plagiarism and academic integrity at this site: <http://www.nau.edu/library/information/guides/plagiarism.html>. As described there, and drawn from the Webster's New World Dictionary, plagiarism is the taking of ideas, writings, etc. from another person and offering them as one's own. The Library guide goes on to add that... "At NAU, plagiarism is a form of misconduct known as 'Academic Dishonesty.' Check the Academic Dishonesty appendix of the NAU Student Code of Conduct and you'll see the various forms: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, fraud and facilitating academic dishonesty. All are subject to disciplinary action

under the Student Code of Conduct. Plagiarism can be deliberate or unintentional. NAU students are responsible for knowing what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.”

Just as there are general rules against plagiarism, it is not acceptable for a graduate student to utilize the services of consulting firms, companies, or individuals who conduct statistical analyses or prepare written reports for the student. It may be appropriate for the student to consult with such groups for the purpose of learning about statistical analyses, developing good writing style, and so on, but it is expected that the work submitted by the student (e.g., the thesis) will be the student’s own work.

**IV.B.2. Unprofessional and Unethical Behavior:** Another category of potential reasons for dismissal from the program includes instances of unprofessional or unethical behavior. Graduate students are expected to behave in accordance with accepted professional and ethical standards. Unprofessional conduct includes but is not limited to:

- a. Poor judgment that jeopardizes the safety and/or comfort of NAU student, staff and faculty.
- b. Verbally or physically abusing another person.
- c. Failure in safeguarding peer and professional confidentiality.
- d. Misappropriating of university or class-related resources.
- e. Fraud, misrepresentation or deceit in classes or any area related to academic work and affiliation with the department and university.
- f. Aiding, abetting or assisting any person to violate or circumvent any public or university law, rule or regulation
- g. Non-compliance with policies and/or procedures in the Northern Arizona University Student Handbook and/or course syllabi.
- h. Plagiarism and the inappropriate use of outside resources, as discussed above.
- i. Violation of any provisions of this Handbook or of the Code of Conduct adopted by the Arizona Board of Regents.

The department recognizes that these infringements vary in degree of severity and will be addressed by the department faculty accordingly. However, as representatives of the GPR Department and Northern Arizona University, it is important to behave in a professional manner. Graduate students may receive constructive feedback on professional and ethical behavior from their academic advisors, their thesis chair, and their graduate assistantship supervisors. These should not necessarily be construed as a negative evaluation. **HOWEVER, A BEHAVIOR OF A GRADUATE STUDENT THAT IS JUDGED TO BE A SERIOUS PROFESSIONAL OR ETHICAL VIOLATION, OR THE CONSISTENT DISPLAY OF SIGNIFICANT ERRORS IN JUDGMENT OR INAPPROPRIATE PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR CONSTITUTES SUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR (1) A FACULTY MEMBER RESIGNING AS THE STUDENT'S ADVISOR, (2) DISCONTINUATION OF ASSISTANTSHIP OR TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS, AND (3) ADMINISTRATIVE DISMISSAL FROM THE GRADUATE PROGRAM BY THE DEPARTMENT AND GRADUATE COLLEGE.** The Department is not responsible for finding a new or alternative advisor for the student. . Students may petition any such decision following the guidelines in Section 12.

#### **IV.C. Procedures When Students Do Not Meet These Standards**

The procedure for dismissal would typically involve an initial probationary period during which the GPR Graduate Program Committee provides the student (and his or her academic advisor) with detailed feedback about his/her behavior, and/or academic performance. The Committee may recommend additional arrangements for supervision (e.g., with practicum-related issues) or supervision by another (other) faculty member(s). Specific parameters for acceptable behavior would be outlined in writing by the Graduate Program Committee and the faculty member overseeing the student. The student would be monitored closely during this period and reevaluated at the end of the specified time. Within a specified period, the student would be expected to remediate the difficulty. At that point, the Graduate Program Committee would make a recommendation as to whether the student is dismissed or returned to regular standing.

Within ten (10) days of the student receiving the written decision of dismissal from the graduate program, the student may request in writing to meet with the GPR Department Chair to appeal the decision. The GPR Department Chair will render a written decision within ten (10) days of the meeting with the student and if the matter remains unresolved the student may follow procedures described by the student Disciplinary Procedures Sections 5-403-A-4, 5-403-D-G, and the University Code of Conduct.

#### **IV.D. Student Grievance Procedure**

The GPR Department adheres to the guidelines outlined in the NAU Student Handbook:

<http://www4.nau.edu/stulife/handbookgrievance.htm>. While the university endeavors to maintain a congenial and responsive atmosphere for its students conducive with the educational purposes of the university, it recognizes that, from time to time, misunderstandings and disagreements may arise during the course of a student's enrollment. In response to this situation, NAU has established several boards, committees, and procedures to resolve problems and ensure fair adjudication of students rights in the following functional areas: Code of Conduct and other discipline matters; Grade Appeal Procedures; Policy on Inspection and Review of Student Records. A policy to provide students with a procedure to deal with Title IX and Section 504 problems has also been established. Copies of the policy are available in the Office of the Associate Provost for Student Affairs, the Counseling Center, the Coordinator of Disabled Student Services and the Office of Student Life.

The student has the right to review and grieve a probation decision that may lead to dismissal. The steps are as follows. Note that each step must be followed by written summary minutes by those in attendance at each meeting.

1. The student is to meet with the faculty member(s) recommending the probation.
2. If the grievance is not resolved by meeting with the faculty member, the student will meet with the GPR Graduate Program Coordinator to review and grieve the probation.
3. If the grievance is not resolved with the GPR Graduate Program Coordinator, the student will meet with the GPR Department Chair to review and grieve the probation.
4. If the grievance is not resolved by meeting with the GPR Department Chair, the student may request a hearing with the GPR Graduate Committee to review and grieve the problem. The decision of the Graduate Committee is final.
5. If the student wishes to pursue the appeal further, the student may follow procedures described by the student Disciplinary Procedures Sections 5-403-A-4, 5-403-D-G, and the University Code of Conduct.

## V. AVAILABLE SERVICES

### V.A. GPR Department Resources

V.A.1. Office Space: Graduate office space is available on a priority basis. Funded students (those holding a graduate assistantship or the equivalent) have first priority for desks. Within this group, those who have been at NAU for longer periods have higher priority. All other students have lower priority, with those who have been at NAU the shortest time having the lowest. Desks are assigned at the beginning of each academic year by the GPR Department.

Graduate students also qualify for library carrels, again on a priority basis. Contact the Cline Library administration office to apply.

V.A.2. Office and Building Keys: All currently enrolled GPR graduate students can receive a building key and a graduate student office/mail room key, upon request from the GPR Administrative Assistant. A refundable cash deposit is required for each office or building key issued. ***Never prop open the door to a lab or the building after hours!***

V.A.3. Grad Student Photo Board & Other Bulletin Boards: See the GPR Dept Office to get a photo taken so it can be posted on the GPR graduate student photo board, located on the middle floor, south side of the building.

V.A.4. Graduate College Newsletter and Webpage, and Department Newsletter: The NAU Graduate College and the GPR Department encourages students to inform us of their accomplishments and interesting research and other activities. Both the Graduate College and the Department will highlight these in their newsletters and on their webpages. Contact the MA or MS program coordinator if you have something to contribute.

V.A.5. Your Department File: The Department maintains a file for every graduate student. It is strongly suggested that you place a copy of your vita in your file and that you keep this vita up-to-date. This file is open to faculty and to you. If you need to examine your file, ask the office staff to assist you. Items may be copied. However, the file should remain in the office. Note that recommendation letters for which you waived your right of access are sealed in an envelope in your file. It is the student's responsibility to add copies of awards/presentations to his/her file/or check to see if such has been added.

V.A.6. Departmental Mailboxes, Board, and NAU email accounts: As a graduate student, you are provided a mailbox. Information of relevance to graduate students is forwarded to you via e-mail. Please check your mail box and email on a

regular basis. All current NAU students are provided an NAU email account. All official email communications from the Department (Administrative Specialist Senior, Program Coordinator, Department Chair, etc...) will be sent to their NAU email address. Thus, if they plan on using a personal account, they should make sure their NAU account is set up to forward email to the account they will be using. The ITS address to enable forwarding is: <http://www.nau.edu/its/email/>. Please note that some emails that graduate students receive are part of a listserv. If you reply directly to those messages, your replied email is not confidential.

**V.A.7. GPR Department Office Assistance to Teaching Assistants (TA's) and Research Assistants (RA's):** The office staff will be happy to assist teaching assistants and research assistants with questions that arise. The TA for a class or lab is responsible for work necessary for that class or lab, according to the faculty member supervising the TA. The RA is responsible for work necessary for their position, according to the faculty member supervising the RA. Copy jobs specific to a class, lab, or research for which you are the TA or RA, are to be requested on the appropriate form provided by the Department Office 48 hours prior to due date.

**V.A.8. Supplies, Computers and Photocopying Facilities:** Departmental office supplies are to be used only for TA- and RA-related functions and not for personal use. The Department is not responsible for the costs associated with coursework, theses, or other student research. For example, if you use a GA office computer to write and print your thesis you must supply your own paper and ink cartridges. For assistance, please see the office staff. For personal copies, there is a coin-operated machine (10 cents per copy) available in du Bois. Computers are available for your use in the Graduate Assistant's (GAs) office. This workspace is provided to aid teaching assistants (TAs) and research assistants (RAs) in the implementation and completion of their assistantship duties.

## **V.B. NAU Resources for Graduate Students**

**The NAU Graduate College Website** (<http://home.nau.edu/gradcol/>) offers the following resources for students (in the upper right corner of their webpage)

- [Prospective Students](#) - [Current Students](#) - [Financial Resources](#) - [Faculty/Staff Information](#) - [Forms and Publications](#) - [Academic Catalog](#) - [Alumni & Friends](#) - [Graduate Life](#) - [Staff Directory](#) - [News and Events](#)

**The NAU Graduate Student Organization** (NAU GSO - <http://gso.org.nau.edu/>) also maintains a significant list of resources for graduate students, including tips on childcare, housing and transportation.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation**

#### **Optional Checklist for Thesis Track Master's Students (applies generally to non-thesis, as well)**

This checklist describes steps you must complete before finishing your master's program. These steps normally occur sequentially, but some may occur concurrently. Check off and date each step as you complete it.

- \_\_\_ 1. Be admitted to regular status.
- \_\_\_ 2. Meet with your academic advisor and identify program/requirements and possible transfer credits. Find out exactly what you are required to take and identify any previous graduate work that may transfer into your program. Requests for transfer of credits should be in writing and addressed to your program coordinator.
- \_\_\_ 3. Submit the Petition for Transfer Credit form to the Graduate College, if applicable. If you have been approved by the Program Committee to transfer credit for graduate courses already completed at another university, submit a Petition for Transfer (signed by your adviser) to the Graduate College. You must attach an official transcript showing the courses to be transferred if one is not already on file in the Graduate College. The regulations pertaining to transfer credit can be found in the current Graduate Catalog and on the Petition for Transfer Credit.
- \_\_\_ 4. You may want to complete a tentative version of your program of studies. The GPR Department of has a Two-Year Advising Plan outlined on the Program of Study form, which also serves as an Advising Form. You must complete at least 24 units of formal coursework, which means courses other than individualized study courses as

independent studies, directed readings, and research. 400-Level Courses—You may include up to 8 units of 400-level courses (no more than two 400-level courses) in your master’s program with prior approval by your program committee or adviser.

- \_\_\_ 5. Select members of your thesis committee. **Deadline:** Middle of Spring semester of your first year of full time study as a graduate student at NAU. Select your thesis committee in consultation with your research adviser and potential faculty members.
- \_\_\_ 6. In consultation with your thesis chair, prepare your proposal.
- \_\_\_ 7. Present your proposal to your committee. The GPR Department requires a proposal meeting before you can begin work on your thesis. **Deadline:** end of second semester of full time study as a graduate student at NAU.
- \_\_\_ 8. If applicable, complete the IRB tutorial, and obtain approval from the IRB. You must have received written approval from the IRB (see previous section in handbook) before you can work with human subjects. Please have a copy of this approval placed in your file.
- \_\_\_ 9. Begin and complete your thesis research.
- \_\_\_ 10. Analyze your data.
- \_\_\_ 11. Write the remaining sections of your thesis (results and discussion), update the literature review from your proposal, and change tense in your methods section.
- \_\_\_ 12. Complete your Formal Coursework--You must complete at least 24 units of formal coursework, which means courses other than individualized study courses as independent studies, directed readings, and research. **Time Limit**--You must complete all requirements for your master’s degree within a six-year period, starting with the oldest course applied to your degree.
- \_\_\_ 13. Apply for Graduation. You should submit the Application for Graduation form to the Graduate College during the semester before you plan to complete your degree requirements, or no later than the deadline published by the Registrar’s Office in the Class Schedule. Instructions for the application for graduation and the application itself are available at the following website: <http://www.nau.edu/gradcol/gradreqs.html>.
- \_\_\_ 14. Submit Your Thesis for Graduate College Review. Submit an unbound copy early in the semester you expect to graduate. This must be done before your oral defense. (See the Checklist for Bindery and Microfilming Requirements in this appendix for specific information about these Graduate requirements.) Expect this review to take at least a week. Be aware that the Graduate College does not generally review theses during the last two weeks of each semester or between semesters. For more information, contact the Graduate College.
- \_\_\_ 15. Schedule your oral thesis defense. This must be prior to Final Exams week. Be aware that it is helpful to have the defense copy of your thesis in essentially final form when you submit it to your committee. However, you may need to change this “draft” as required by the committee. At the defense, be sure your committee signs the form titled Report on Final Oral Examination for Master’s Degree. Your committee chair will turn in original form to the Graduate College. A copy of the form will be placed in your file.
- \_\_\_ 16. If you are required to revise your thesis, you must submit your thesis for second review, following the guidelines given to you by your Committee. This second review should happen right after your defense. (All corrections requested by the Committee should be included.)
- \_\_\_ 18. Turn in final copies of your thesis. After making any revisions required by your committee and the Graduate College, turn in your final copies to the Graduate College by the last day of the semester. (See the Checklist for Binding and Microfilming Requirements for more information about turning in your final copies.) This information can be found at: <http://www.nau.edu/gradcol/infocurrent.htm>.

**GPR GRADUATE PROGRAMS STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**ALL M.S. STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE THIS PAGE.**

This page is not required for GIS Certificate Students.

**I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name), have read and understand the policies and procedures outlined in the *GPR Graduate Programs Student Handbook*. (version 09.6c, updated 10 November 09)**

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**Signature**

**Date**

Please submit this form to the GPR Graduate Programs Coordinator within one month of your first semester of classes in one of the GPR graduate programs. A copy will be placed in your graduate student file.