

COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

OFFICIAL POLICY

12.1.7

POLICY FOR APPLICANTS FOR GRADUATE ADMISSION: Degree and Non-Degree

4.20.22

Policy Statement

Policy for Applicants for Graduate Admission: Degree and Non-Degree

The Graduate School of the University of Charleston, South Carolina (hereafter, "UCSC Graduate School") at the College of Charleston "seeks applicants capable of successfully completing degree requirements and pays particular attention to identifying and admitting students who excel academically." Every graduate program has its own admissions committee that reviews every application, utilizing commonly accepted practices in reviewing graduate applications. Each committee takes a holistic approach in considering not only test scores and grade point average (GPA) but also academic writing samples, personal statements and letters of recommendation in completing the decision process. "The College of Charleston serves a diverse student body from its geographical area and also attracts students from national and international communities." This excerpt from the College's mission statement embodies the overarching goals in graduate admissions processes and policies.

The UCSC Graduate School encourages applications from all academically qualified persons. Both quantitative and qualitative components guide each program in reaching their final decisions. The admissions committees for each program carefully weigh the applicant's academic preparation (which includes grades, undergraduate coursework, and rigor of courses taken), GRE/MAT/LSAT/GMAT/PRAXIS results, personal statements and essays, and academic writing samples. Special circumstances are considered and each application is reviewed and evaluated individually by admissions professionals within each program. There is no discrimination in the admission process based on the applicant's gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, race, color, religion, national origin, veterans' status, genetic information, or disability. Applicants who do not meet the individual program's admission requirements may be considered for admission when there is sufficient evidence to suggest the ability to do satisfactory work at the graduate level.

At the graduate level, "a candidate's acceptance into a graduate degree program is based primarily upon his or her previous academic record". There are specific admission criteria for each graduate program that specify the minimum undergraduate GPA standards and other testing requirements.

Specific policies for each program are listed within that program's section in the catalog. Each program will have in place the minimum standards for each requirement and is responsible for enforcing those standards when making decisions. All applicants for degree-seeking programs, certificate programs and non-degree programs (except those entering as non-degree education students) must provide official copies of undergraduate transcripts showing a posted degree. All applicants for degree-seeking programs, certificate programs and non-degree programs without exception must establish acceptable English skills based on their undergraduate coursework, or via a standardized examination such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Each program may also review an applicant's English skills based on the GRE/GMAT/PRAXIS/LSAT or other standardized test scores. Each program's admissions committee may choose to waive the TOEFL/IELTS scores based on their evaluation of the applicant's standardized test scores.

Graduate Non-degree Admission:

Non-degree students are those who desire registration with credit in graduate courses but are not candidates for a degree or certificate program. Applicants seeking acceptance as non-degree status need to submit the appropriate application for admission and submit the required application fee and official transcripts. Depending upon the program, between 6 and 12 credit hours of work taken in non-degree status may be applied toward degree requirements if the student is later admitted to a degree program. In order to accomplish reclassification as a degree-seeking student, the candidate must submit all materials prescribed by the appropriate admission criteria. For non-degree students reapplying for degree-seeking status within one calendar year of the original non-degree application, the fee for the degree-seeking application will be waived. Contact the Director of Graduate Admissions for more information.

Applications for non-degree status must be reviewed by the admissions committee for each program, except education.

Applications for non-degree status in education are reviewed by the Graduate School Office and must be accompanied by a copy of a teaching certificate.

All students who take courses via mixed modalities, including distance education courses, must meet all appropriate admission requirements. Admissions applications may be accessed online and submitted online. Supplemental materials may be submitted by mail, email, or fax.

Graduate International Admissions:

International applicants, being defined as anyone applying who is not a citizen of the United States, regardless of present residence, are required to provide documentation in addition to that required by each program. These documents include but are not limited to:

1. A copy of their current visa, when appropriate.
 - a. F-1, J-1, H-1, etc.
 - b. A permanent residency card
 - c. Documentation from the U.S. State Department regarding progress towards either a permanent residency card or naturalization proceedings.
2. An official copy of their transcripts.
3. A copy of their current, valid passport picture page.
4. An evaluation of all non-U.S. transcripts from an approved evaluation service. Regardless of the student's citizenship, applicants with course work from a college/university outside of the United States must also submit official transcripts (mark sheets, academic records), with English translations, to a recognized credential evaluation agency for verification and a course-by-course evaluation. Responsibility for the translation and evaluation of documents in order to meet deadlines, as well as all costs associated with these services, is the responsibility of the student applying for admission. Once the course-by-course evaluation from an outside agency and the English translations of course descriptions are received by UCSC, evaluation of the course work can begin for potential UCSC transfer credit. Complete information about international transcript evaluation, along with a list of recognized credential evaluation agencies, is located on the Graduate School's website. The list of approved services includes:
 - a. World Education Services, Inc.
 - b. Educational Perspectives
 - c. Educational Credential Evaluators
5. An official copy of the applicant's TOEFL or IELTS scores. This requirement may be waived under certain conditions:
 - a. Applicants from countries where English is the first language, such as the U.K. or Australia
 - b. Applicants who received their degree from or have attended a U.S. university for at least one year. Grades received at the U.S. institution will have an impact on the decision to waive the TOEFL or IELTS score.
 - c. Each program may also review an applicant's English skills based on the GRE/GMAT/PRAXIS/LSAT or other standardized test scores. Each program's admissions committee may choose to waive the TOEFL/IELTS scores based on their evaluation of the applicant's standardized test scores.
6. Those applicants requiring an F-1 visa must provide certificate of finances that gives specific information on their ability to meet the financial demands of tuition, fees, and cost of living at the College of Charleston. The documentation to be provide includes:
 - a. The certificate itself, completed and signed appropriately by all involved parties.

- b. Bank statements, and/or letters from the bank confirming the ability of the applicant to pay.

Senior Citizens

South Carolina residents 60 years or older may apply to the UCSC Graduate School as non-degree or degree-seeking students. Applications and all required materials should adhere to program deadlines and are reviewed by individual programs. A resident wishing to be categorized as a senior citizen must do the following:

- Submit an online application to a graduate program as a degree or non-degree student and pay the \$50 fee
- Complete the Senior Citizen Tuition Addendum found on the Graduate School website
- Senior citizens must present a valid South Carolina driver's license or picture ID for age and residency verification. In order to verify South Carolina residency, the identification must have been issued at least one year prior to enrollment. A voter registration or vehicle registration document can be submitted if the driver's license does not meet the time requirement.

A successful applicant enrolling as a senior citizen must pay a \$25 registration fee each semester she or he enrolls in courses.

Graduate Transfer Credit:

A maximum of 12 credit hours may be transferred into the UCSC Graduate School. A maximum of six (6) credit hours transferred from another institution may be applied to a graduate certificate. Not all graduate programs accept transfer course credit. Students should check the individual programs for their specific transfer credit policies.

For those programs that do accept a limited number of transfer credits, the awarding of transfer credit for any course requires that the graduate student must have taken the course from a regionally accredited institution or a comparable international institution; earned at least a grade of "B" (3.000 on a 4.000 grade scale) or higher; and have taken the course within the time limit requirements announced for his or her graduate program, so that all coursework applied to degree requirements will be completed within the relevant time limit (i.e., four, five, or six years, depending on the program).

Consistent with the provisions of this Policy and the *Graduate Catalog*, the decision to accept transfer credit ultimately resides with the program director or program admissions committee. The suitability for transfer of any specific course credit earned at another university, once added to the College of Charleston transfer credit inventory, is subject to re-evaluation by the program director at least once every ten years.

Courses with grades of "S" or "P" (Satisfactory and Pass) are not transferable unless the institution where the course was completed indicates in their published grading scale information that a "Pass" or "Satisfactory" grade is the minimum equivalent of a "B" (3.000 on a 4.000 GPA scale). Not all graduate programs accept courses with grades of "S" or

“P” for transfer credit. Individual programs that do not accept courses with grades of “S” or “P” will be noted in their specific transfer credit policies. For universities that award “minus” grades in graduate courses, a graduate course in which a grade of “B-“ was earned is not eligible for graduate transfer credit at the College of Charleston.

Grades do not transfer, only credit hours. Therefore, students will not have their transfer credit grades calculated into their cumulative GPA.

Credits awarded at another institution as a result of placement testing are not acceptable. In addition, the College of Charleston does not award transfer credit for life experience, work experience gained prior to admission, military training, and/or non-credit bearing coursework completed toward a professional certificate. The College of Charleston does not give academic credit for noncredit course work and does not accept non-credit coursework, certificates or continuing education units for credit.

Credit earned at The Citadel, Charleston Southern University, or the Medical University of South Carolina using our former graduate cross-registration procedures, or any graduate cross-registration procedures that might be approved in the future, is considered transfer credit. Credit earned at The Citadel or Clemson University is not considered transfer credit when the course credit was earned as part of a joint graduate program.

The student assumes responsibility for initiating the request for transfer graduate credit on a program of study. An official transcript containing the requested transfer work must be on file in the Graduate School Office. If such work is shown on the transcripts provided in support of the original admissions decision to the Graduate School, a new record is not needed.

Regardless of the student’s citizenship, applicants who have completed graduate course work at a college/university outside of the United States must also submit official transcripts (mark sheets, academic records), with English translations as appropriate, to a recognized credential evaluation agency for verification and a course-by-course evaluation. The costs for the translation and evaluation of documents in order to meet deadlines, as well as all costs associated with these services, are the responsibility of the student applying for admission. Once the course-by-course evaluation from an outside agency and the English translations of course descriptions are received by the UCSC Graduate School, evaluation of the course work can begin for potential UCSC Graduate School transfer credit.

Undergraduate students who took graduate coursework that met a degree requirement for their undergraduate degree at the College of Charleston are not allowed to also apply those credits towards a graduate degree at the College of Charleston. The exception of this policy is if a student is enrolled in a combined Bachelor’s and Master’s degree program at the College of Charleston.

The College of Charleston will not release copies of education records/transcripts received from previous institutions and/or copies of test scores submitted from testing agencies.

Re-admission Process:

Any student at the College of Charleston who voluntarily withdraws from the institution or is dismissed for any reason must apply for readmission in order to re-enroll.

Students who have been academically dismissed may apply for readmission after one calendar year, with the following conditions:

1. The student will provide updated application information and a new statement of goals, which will address the student's plan for success in the future.
2. If the application for readmission is successful, the program director and admissions committee will provide the student with an acceptance letter that lists specific parameters that must be met for completion of the student's program which include, but are not limited to:
 - a. The remaining required courses
 - b. The specific grades that must be achieved in order to maintain a 3.000 GPA
 - c. A timeline for completion of the program
3. If the student is readmitted to the program, he/she must meet with the program director and the associate dean of the Graduate School to review their acceptance letter. A signed copy will be placed in the student's file.

Students may apply for readmission when their matriculation has been closed due to inactivity, when they have failed to enroll at the conclusion of an approved Leave of Absence, when they have exceeded the program completion time limit, or following withdrawal from their program. Readmission is subject to the following conditions:

1. The student will provide updated application information and a new statement of goals, which may address the student's previous performance and will describe the student's plan for future success.
2. If the application for readmission is successful, the program director and admissions committee will provide the student with an acceptance letter that lists specific parameters that must be met for completion of the student's program. Parameters for completion typically include, but are not limited to:
 - a. The remaining program requirements
 - b. A timeline for completion of the program

The UCSC Graduate Dean must approve all applications for readmission. If a readmitted student fails to meet the parameters of his or her readmission, it is at the discretion of the program and/or the UCSC Graduate School to permanently remove the student.

Financial Aid

Federal financial aid is only available to students in a degree-seeking status.

Distance Education

Students, who take courses via mixed modalities, including distance education and online courses, must meet all appropriate admission requirements. Admissions applications may be accessed and filed online or by mail, email or fax.

Risk Management Assessment

All applicants are required to answer questions relating to their criminal and disciplinary history, as outlined in College of Charleston Policy 8.1.5.

Privacy and Security Policies

Information on the privacy and security policies governing applicants' personal information can be found online at the College's policy website at policy.cofc.edu.

Legal Presence Verification

Section 17 of the South Carolina Illegal Immigration Reform Act (codified at S.C. Code Ann.59-101-430) requires South Carolina public Colleges and universities to verify the lawful presence in the United States of their students prior to registration for classes.

The College of Charleston will attempt to verify student citizenship via legally authorized federal or state data bases before asking students to submit proof of citizenship. If a student's status cannot be verified through one of these data bases, then during new student orientation and/or prior to registration of classes the student will need to do one of the following:

1. File a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to College of Charleston-our code number is 003428;
2. Present a valid South Carolina driver's license issued after January 1, 2002;
3. Present a current U.S. Passport;
4. Present an original U.S. or U.S. Territory Birth Certificate (not hospital certificate), Certification of Naturalization, U.S. Government-issued Consular Report of Birth Abroad of Certificate of Citizenship.

Please note that original documents must be presented for verification and that no photo copies are acceptable. However, we only need to view the original documents, and they will not be retained by the College of Charleston.

Questions about the College's policy and procedures regarding this matter to the Office of the Registrar, 160 Calhoun Street, Lightsey Center, Room 281, by phone at 843.953.5668 or send email inquiries to lawfulpresence@cofc.edu.

Policy Manager and Responsible Department or Office

UCSC Graduate Dean, Graduate School of the University of Charleston, South Carolina, at the College of Charleston

Purpose/Reason for the Policy

To codify the graduate admissions policy of the UCSC Graduate School. The major features of this policy are described separately in the College of Charleston *Graduate Catalog*.

Departments/Offices Affected by the Policy

Graduate School of the University of Charleston, South Carolina, at the College of Charleston
All Academic Schools
Office of the Provost
Office of the Registrar
Office of Legal Residency
Office of Financial Assistance and Veterans Affairs

Procedures Related to the Policy

These policies relate to the procedures for admitting graduate students to the College of Charleston.

Related Policies, Documents or Forms

Faculty/Administration Manual
College of Charleston Graduate Catalog
Policy 8.1.5 Admitting Applicants for Enrollment with a Criminal or Disciplinary History
Policy 11.1 Privacy Policy and Procedure
Policy 12.1.8 Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status

Review Schedule

Issue Date: 3/06/2013
Revised: 7/26/2016
Revised: 8/23/2016
Revised: 4/20/2022

Next Review: 10/1/2027

POLICY APPROVAL

(For use by the Office of the Board of Trustees or the Office of the President)

Policy no: 12.1.7

President or

Chairman, Board of Trustees: _____



Date: 4.20.22