

# UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC POLICIES

## ■ ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND CLASSROOM CONDUCT

Students are admitted to Bridgewater State University with the expectation that they will accept and abide by the standards of conduct and scholarship established by the faculty, administration and student governing boards. The university reserves the right to require students to withdraw who do not maintain acceptable academic standing. The university also reserves the right to dismiss, with due process, students who do not meet the requirements of conduct and order or whose behavior is inconsistent with the standards of the university. The *Bridgewater State University Student Handbook* outlines campus policies and may be viewed at <http://www.bridgew.edu/Handbook/>.

## ■ ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Institutions of higher education are dedicated to the pursuit of truth. In this pursuit, academic honesty is of fundamental importance. Faculty, students and administrators all have a responsibility to value, demonstrate and safeguard academic integrity as one of the university's most essential institutional values.

The university has an obligation to establish and promote standards of academic integrity, and each member of the university community has the responsibility to understand, support and practice them. When standards of academic integrity are followed, teaching and learning can proceed in an environment of trust. When such standards are violated, teaching and learning are in doubt. Therefore, the best interests of the university community require that cases of alleged academic dishonesty be addressed seriously but equitably.

At Bridgewater State University, academic honesty is expected of all students; plagiarism and cheating are not condoned and are subject to academic penalty, which may result in a failure for the course in which the violation took place. A violation may result in a reduced grade, suspension or dismissal from the university.

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating and dishonest practices. The procedure for implementing an academic penalty for academic misconduct is as follows:

- The instructor shall notify the student of the alleged violation, and they shall discuss the matter usually within seven days of the notice of the alleged infraction. The instructor and/or the student may request that the department chair, or other party from the university, be present at this meeting. The instructor shall notify the department chair and the associate provost for faculty affairs of the nature of the alleged violation, the outcome of the meeting held with the student, and the penalty, which may include a reduced grade on an assignment or in the course, including failure. The instructor reports the case to the academic review panel, and *may* refer the case for review. The instructor shall inform the student that further action may be taken by the associate provost for faculty affairs, in cases of repeat offenses. The associate provost for faculty affairs will refer cases of repeat offenses to the academic review panel.
- If the matter is not resolved, the student or instructor may request a hearing within five school days before the academic review panel, and the student and instructor, each with a representative serving in an advisory capacity, should either choose to have one, shall meet with the panel to discuss the alleged violation of university policy. The academic review panel shall conduct its investigations, usually within 15 days following notification, and shall follow the requirements of due process. Based upon the allegations or evidence received, the panel may recommend further sanctions, or no change in sanctions, or a reduction in sanctions, and will take into account any previous infractions only after it concludes its investigation of the present case. Further sanctions may include suspension or expulsion.

Requests by students for hearings by the academic review panel will be considered on the basis of inappropriate sanctions, violation of due process, procedural error that negatively impacted the outcome, or new evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the meeting with the instructor.

The academic review panel will consist of three faculty members and two student members of the academic policies committee, appointed annually by the chairperson of that committee; three members must be present, including at least two faculty members, to constitute a quorum. In addition, the associate provost for faculty affairs will serve in a nonvoting capacity as adviser to the panel and will maintain a record of reported violations by students. Multiple offenses by a student may have a bearing on the sanctions imposed by the panel. All evidence before the academic review panel is confidential.

Any decision of the academic review panel shall be forwarded in writing to the associate provost for faculty affairs, who shall inform both the student and the instructor of the decision in writing by hand delivery or by return-receipt-requested, addressee-only mail. An appeal by either party shall be made to the vice president for academic affairs.

## ■ CLASSROOM CONDUCT POLICY

Because all students and faculty at Bridgewater State University are entitled to a positive and constructive teaching and learning environment, Bridgewater State University students are prohibited from engaging in behavior or activity that causes the disruption of teaching, learning, research or other academic activities necessary for the fulfillment of the university mission.

If disruptive behavior occurs, whether in the classroom or another academic environment, a faculty member has the right to remove the student from the classroom setting. Examples of potentially disruptive behavior may include, but are not limited to, using derogatory, vulgar

and insulting language directed at an individual or group, unsolicited talking in class, sleeping in class, using or activating mobile technology, arriving at or leaving the classroom while class is in session, and/or failing to comply with the legitimate request of a university faculty member.

If a student exhibits disruptive behavior, the faculty member may ask the student to stop the behavior. If the student does not comply with the professor's request, he or she will be asked to leave and the professor will indicate the expected appropriate conduct to be able to return to class. If the student agrees to the faculty member's instructions and returns to class but subsequently continues to engage in disruptive behavior during future class sessions, the faculty member will forward written documentation of the student's behavior to the respective department chairperson, who will meet with the student to review the matter and determine an appropriate course of action. While the courses of action will vary, they may include referral to advising or counseling, reduction in grade, or withdrawal from the course.

If the student does not comply with the course of action and continues to engage in disruptive behavior, the student may be withdrawn from the course after a review conducted by the associate provost for faculty affairs. This action may have implications for the student's full-time status, financial aid, health insurance and resident status.

Students who exhibit behavior that immediately endangers or seriously disrupts the establishment or maintenance of an appropriate learning environment in the classroom are subject to an immediate review by the associate provost for faculty affairs. If, at any time, faculty or students feel threatened, they should call Campus Police at 1212.

In all cases involving an individual with a disability, including mental disabilities, this policy will operate to make determinations based upon an individual's behavior rather than upon the individual's status of having a disability. Students have a personal obligation to obtain medical care for conditions that may affect their conduct, and to take any related medications as prescribed by their physicians. Under applicable disability laws, students with disabilities are responsible for their disruptive conduct.

The vice president for academic affairs will act as the sole and final appeal for any decisions made by the associate provost for faculty affairs.

The student may also be subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

### Academic Standards

In order for a degree-seeking or non-degree student to avoid separation from Bridgewater State University, his/her cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) must remain above the probation level as indicated below:

Earned Credit Hours	Academic Warning	Probation GPA	Separation Below This GPA
0-16	2.0-2.19	Below 2.0	1.00
17-31	2.0-2.19	Below 2.0	1.50
32-46	2.0-2.19	Below 2.0	1.65
47-61	2.0-2.19	Below 2.0	1.75
62-89	2.0-2.19	Below 2.0	1.85
90 and above	must maintain 2.00 or better	-	2.00

In order for a first semester transfer student to avoid separation from the university, his/her cumulative GPA must remain at 1.5 or above. After the first semester, a transfer student follows the table above.

### Academic Probation

Students on academic probation are limited to 13 semester hours during the semester they are on probation. In addition, academic probation may involve 1) an adjustment in the student's academic load, 2) frequent interviews between the student and adviser for the analysis of difficulties and for checking the student's progress, 3) a stipulation that certain courses be taken to improve the student's academic performance, 4) restrictions on the student's extracurricular activities, and 5) other such precautions as are deemed advisable.

### Academic Separation

Students who have been academically separated from the university may not take courses at the university (day or evening) for at least one academic semester. After this time period, students may apply for readmission through the Office of Admission. Although not required, it is recommended that readmission applicants give evidence of at least one semester of academic work with a 2.5 GPA or better at some other institution of higher learning. Students who have previously completed courses at a college or university are reminded that a total of not more than 69 credit hours may be transferred from two-year institutions. However, course work taken elsewhere will not necessarily be accepted as transfer credit. An undergraduate degree-seeking student who is academically dismissed twice can only apply for readmission after a three-year period. If readmitted, the student is placed on academic probation and must achieve a minimum GPA of 2.0 in order to continue.

The grade point average of the student will be resumed after readmission. Students who have left the university for a minimum of three years may be given special consideration upon written appeal to the vice president for academic affairs.

Note(s) Academic readmission or reinstatement to the university does not guarantee renewed financial aid eligibility. The student must contact the Financial Aid Office to be considered for financial aid.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress

In addition to being in good academic standing (please see the preceding section), a student is defined as making satisfactory academic progress when the academic record shows successful completion of a specified number of credits per semester. Full-time students must earn a minimum of 10 semester credits each semester to achieve satisfactory academic progress.

Students should note that many financial assistance programs require participants to make satisfactory academic progress in order to remain eligible. The definition of satisfactory progress differs from that stated in the policy above.

See the "[Financial Aid](#)" section of this catalog for further information concerning satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes.

## ■ AWARDING OF UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

### Degree Application

Students who believe they are ready to receive their degree from Bridgewater State University are required to complete a formal degree application. These applications are available in the Registrar's Office. Each student is responsible for meeting all degree requirements and for ensuring that the Registrar's Office has received all credentials.

Recommended graduation application deadlines are listed below:

August 1: for winter/January graduation

December 20: for spring/May graduation

April 15: for summer/August graduation

### Graduation Requirements

Curricula leading to baccalaureate degrees are so planned that a student carrying 15 credit hours each semester will ordinarily be able to complete the requirements for graduation in four years or eight semesters. Degrees will be awarded to candidates who have fulfilled the following:

- Submission by the student of a Degree Application to the Registrar's Office prior to the end of the graduation review for that semester/term (see recommended deadlines listed above).
- A MINIMUM of 120 earned degree credits, distributed according to the core curriculum requirements, the requirements of the declared major and any free electives.
- Satisfactory completion of all requirements for a bachelor's degree must be under a catalog in effect within eight years of the date of graduation. The catalog used, however, may be no earlier than the catalog in effect at the time of matriculation or, in the case of a change of major, concentration or minor, no earlier than the catalog in effect when the major, concentration or minor was formally declared.

Note: This policy does not apply to students enrolled in programs governed by state and/or federal regulations where current academic requirements may need to be met. Students should check with their departments where applicable.

- A MINIMUM of 30 credit hours completed through Bridgewater State University, as a degree-seeking student, including at least one half of the required courses in the major and any minor field (excluding cognate requirements). Note: Of the 90 credits that may be accepted in transfer by Bridgewater State University and applied to the baccalaureate degree, only 69 credits will be accepted from two-year institutions.
- A MINIMUM of 15 credit hours of the final 30 credit hours of a student's degree program completed through Bridgewater State University.  
Note: Any course taken at another accredited institution after admission to Bridgewater State University must have departmental preapproval. A student must complete a Request for Transfer of Undergraduate Credit After Admission form for each course in advance.
- A MINIMUM cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 (or higher if required by the major at Bridgewater State University) and any other academic requirements of the student's major department as approved by university governance procedures;
- A MINIMUM major and minor grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 (or higher if required in the student's major(s) and minor(s) requirements taken through Bridgewater State University). The major GPA includes all courses completed in the major field (excluding cognate requirements). The minor GPA includes all courses required for completion of the minor, regardless of the department in which the courses are offered.

Note(s)

- a. The credit earned in an introductory college skills course (FRSK) may not be used to satisfy the Core Curriculum Requirements nor may it be applied toward the minimum number of credits required for graduation in any major.
- b. Students will not be allowed to receive their diplomas or transcripts until all financial debts to the university have been paid.

Conferral of a degree occurs when the registrar finalizes the student's academic record and confirms that all requirements have been satisfied. Participation in the commencement ceremony does not constitute conferral of the degree. Similarly, inclusion of a student's name in such publications as the commencement program does not confirm eligibility for the degree.

## Graduation Requirements – Second Degree Program

Upon admission to a second undergraduate degree program (see the [“Undergraduate Admission”](#) section of this catalog), the student will meet with an adviser from the major department to plan a course of study based on the current requirements of that major. That course of study must be approved by the chairperson of the department and forwarded to the Registrar's Office. Any changes in that course of study must also have the approval of the adviser and the chairperson and be forwarded to the Registrar's Office. If a student does not complete the course of study within four years of admission, the department may require the student to change the course of study to reflect changes in major requirements. (Note: This time period does not apply to students enrolled in programs governed by state and/or federal regulations where current academic requirements may need to be met. Students should check with their departments where applicable.)

The graduation requirements for a second degree are as follows:

1. The completion of a minimum of 30 semester hours through Bridgewater State University, as a degree-seeking student, beyond the first degree with a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 (or higher if required by the major department).
2. The completion of at least one half of the required courses in the second degree major (excluding cognate requirements) through Bridgewater State University. The remainder of the major requirements may be satisfied by the transfer of courses from another accredited institution.
3. A minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 (or higher if required by the major department) in the student's major requirements taken through Bridgewater State University. The major GPA includes all courses completed in the major field (excluding cognate requirements). The minor GPA includes all courses required for completion of the minor, regardless of the department in which the courses are offered.
4. The completion of all cognate requirements for the major as outlined on the adviser-approved course of study.

The Bridgewater State University Core Curriculum Requirements are satisfied by the student's first bachelor's degree, whether that degree was earned through Bridgewater State University or another accredited institution. Each student, however, must fulfill the state-mandated requirement in United States and Massachusetts Constitutions.

Both the cumulative grade point average (GPA) and the major grade point average (GPA) for the second degree will be based on all grades received through Bridgewater State University, and all undergraduate courses will appear on one continuous academic record. A student must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in order to remain in good academic standing at the college and continue in the program. Upon completion of the second degree, the student will be eligible to attend commencement and graduate with honors based on the cumulative GPA for all undergraduate-level work attempted through Bridgewater State University.

## Graduation With Honors

Academic excellence for the baccalaureate program is recognized by awarding degrees *summa cum laude* (cumulative GPA of 3.8 or higher), *magna cum laude* (cumulative GPA of 3.6 to 3.79), and *cum laude* (cumulative GPA of 3.3 to 3.59). The cumulative GPA determined for honors is based on all university-level work attempted through Bridgewater State University.

The *Commencement Program* is printed prior to grades being submitted for the student's final semester; therefore, the Registrar's Office must print the honors designation that a student has earned up to the time of publication. The student's diploma and finalized transcript, however, will reflect the official honors designation based upon the student's final grade point average.

## Grading System

The university uses the letter-grade system of marking to indicate the student's relative performance: A (Superior); B (Good); C (Satisfactory); D (Poor); F (Failure); IP (In Progress); W (Withdrawn). Grades in the A, B, C, and D ranges may include a designation of plus or minus. In computing averages, grades are assigned the following numerical values:

A	4.0	B-	2.7	D+	1.3
A-	3.7	C+	2.3	D	1.0
B+	3.3	C	2.0	D-	0.7
B	3.0	C-	1.7	F	0.0

Certain courses such as internships and practica may be offered on a Pass (P)/No Pass (N) basis. Courses whose credits cannot be used toward degree credits earned (ex. Freshman Skills (FRSK) courses) are assigned grades of Satisfactory (S)/ Unsatisfactory (U). No numeric value is assigned to grades P, N, S or U. A symbol of WA may be given to any student who ceases attending a course without withdrawing between the end of the drop/add period and the end of the withdrawal period.

*Grades for all courses (day and evening) at Bridgewater State University become a part of the student's record and are used in computing the GPA.*

## Audit

A student may audit (AU) a course to gain knowledge in a particular subject area without earning credit or a grade. Students auditing a course attend and participate in classes; however, they are exempt from examinations. The course is automatically designated AU and becomes part of the student's permanent academic record. Audited courses will not be used to fulfill degree or graduation requirements. Students must submit a completed Course Audit Request form before the close of the drop/add period. Forms are available at the Registrar's Office.

## Change of Grade

If a student believes that a mistake was made in the original grade recorded for a course, the student may petition the instructor for a change of grade no later than the last day of final exams in the academic semester following that in which the grade was recorded. A change of grade will not be considered after this time.

## Dean's List

The dean's list is published at the end of each semester to honor the academic achievement of full-time, degree-seeking undergraduate students. A 3.3 average for the semester is required with a minimum of 12 credits completed and no grades of "incomplete" (IN).

## Grade Point Average (GPA)

The Grade Point Average indicates the student's overall academic average. It is calculated on both a semester and a cumulative basis. The GPA is computed by multiplying the grade numerical value received in each course by the number of credit hours per course. These totals are combined, and the result is divided by the total number of semester hours carried.

Example Course	No. Of Hours	Grade	Total
Biology	3	x (A)	4.0 12.0
French	3	x (C+)	2.3 6.9
English	3	x (B)	3.0 9.0
History	3	x (B+)	3.3 9.9
Math	3	x (B-)	2.7 8.1

$$45.9 \div 15 = 3.06 \text{ GPA}$$

### Projecting an Anticipated Grade Point Average

If a student hopes to earn an overall 3.3 GPA, he or she can project the semester GPA needed to achieve this goal by following the steps listed below:

1) 3.3	x 30	=99.0
desired GPA	total credit hours at the end of next semester	necessary grade points
2) 99.0	- 45.9	=53.1
necessary grade points for desired GPA	grade points already earned	grade points needed next semester
3) 53.1	$\div 15$	=3.54
grade points needed	credit hours for next semester	semester GPA needed for an overall 3.3 GPA

## Incomplete

An incomplete (IN) may be given at the discretion of the instructor. The time by which missing work must be made up, both in graduate and undergraduate courses, is also at the discretion of the instructor; however, this time period may not extend beyond the last day of classes of the academic semester following that in which the incomplete was earned. If a course is not successfully completed by this deadline, the incomplete will automatically be changed to a grade of "F" (Failure), "N" (No Pass), or "U" (Unsatisfactory).

All work must be completed prior to graduation, including resolution of any grades of incomplete. The record is finalized as of the date the degree is conferred.

## Mid-Semester Warning Notices

Faculty may elect to send mid-semester warning notices to undergraduate students who are receiving less than a "C-" (1.7) average in any course at that time. It is the student's responsibility to meet with his/her adviser and the instructor of any course in which a warning is received. Since mid-semester warning notices are not issued by all instructors, students who do not receive notification are cautioned not to presume that they are maintaining a grade of "C-" or better.

## Repeat Courses

Credit cannot be awarded more than once for the same course, whether earned through BSU or in transfer. Credit also may not be awarded more than once for courses which are seen as equivalents to each other, in content or in outcomes. Ex: Credit may not be



awarded for more than one first year seminar (\_\_\_\_199) or more than one second year seminar (\_\_\_\_298 or \_\_\_\_299) regardless of topic. All exceptions (ex. Internships) are marked in the catalog as "repeatable for credit".

An undergraduate student may choose to repeat the course through BSU for which he or she received a grade of "C-" or less and, in this case, the grade will replace the first in the student's GPA. Although both courses including grades will appear on the student's transcript, credit for the course will be awarded only once. For the first three times that a course is taken, only the most recent grade will be used to calculate the GPA, regardless of which grade is higher. All grades for courses taken the third and subsequent times will be used in the calculation of the student's GPA. (Only courses taken through Bridgewater State University and repeated through Bridgewater State University will be eligible for use under this policy.)

This policy does not apply to courses taken after a student has been awarded a bachelor's degree from Bridgewater State University. It also does not apply to courses for which a student earned a grade of "C" or above. If a student in either of these situations repeats a course, that course and grade will appear on his or her transcript, but the student will receive no credit and the grade will not be included in the calculation of the student's GPA.

#### Note(s)

Repeating courses taken in a previous semester may affect certain federal and state benefits, various financial aid programs, loans, scholarships and social security benefits, in addition to athletic eligibility and veteran's benefits. The Veterans Administration will not pay for a repeated course in which a passing grade has been previously earned. Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements must be met for continued financial aid eligibility.

## ■ REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT POLICIES

### Attendance Policy

Students are responsible for satisfactory attendance in each course for which they are registered. Satisfactory attendance shall be determined by the instructor within the context of this policy statement. The approval of excused absences and the assignment of make-up work are the prerogative of the course instructor. The university's health service does not make judgments about whether a student can attend class except in rare cases when attendance would be harmful to the student's health or the health of others. In general, students will be excused without penalty for reasons such as illness, participation in official university events, personal emergencies and religious holidays. Students should consult with faculty members in advance of any absence whenever feasible.

NOTE: If a student fails to attend the first three class hours of a course, the instructor has the option of deleting the student from the class roster.

If a student has a concern with regard to the attendance policies or a faculty member has a concern about a student's excessive absence, he or she should confer with the chairperson of the department.

### Change/Declaration of Concentration

To elect a concentration, students must complete a Concentration Declaration Form in the Academic Achievement Center. Students may change their concentration at anytime by obtaining the necessary form from the Academic Achievement Center.

### Change/Declaration of Major for Freshmen

All students who enter as freshmen must formally declare a major or choose the status of an undeclared major. The undeclared student should select a major by the end of the sophomore year. Freshmen may change their area of interest by obtaining the necessary forms from the Academic Achievement Center. Although early childhood, elementary education and special education majors may not be formally admitted into the teacher education program until the second semester of the sophomore year, they must confirm their continued interest in these majors by the same process used by the other freshmen for declaration of majors. In addition to their education program, students must also elect a major in the liberal arts.

### Change of Major for Upperclassmen

Students may change majors at any time by obtaining the necessary forms from the Academic Achievement Center, securing the signatures of the department chairpersons involved, and filing the completed form with the Registrar's office.

### Change/Declaration of Minor

In order to be enrolled in any minor offered by the university, a student must declare the intended minor on forms available from the Academic Achievement Center. Students may change their minor at anytime by obtaining the necessary form from the Academic Achievement Center.

Degree-seeking students who plan on being licensed as secondary or middle school teachers should declare their minor in secondary education during their freshman or sophomore year.

Certification that the requirements of the minor have been met is made on the Degree Application card by the department offering the minor. Students must achieve a minimum 2.0 cumulative average in declared minors for graduation.

## Classification Designation

Degree-seeking students are designated as being in a given classification on the basis of the number of credits they have earned for courses completed successfully. The list below shows the number of credits that must be recorded in order for a student to be designated as a member of a particular classification.

Students should understand that these are *minimum* totals of credits accrued. The normal course load is 15 credits per semester, and it is this total which, maintained over eight semesters, yields the 120 credits required as a minimum for the baccalaureate degree.

*For registration purposes, degree-seeking students will be classified based upon the total number of credit hours earned prior to the semester in which the registration is held.*

### Classification Credit Hours Completed

Senior	84
Junior	54
Sophomore	24
Freshman	–

## Course Audit

Students may audit courses under the guidelines noted below. The student will receive no academic credit for the courses nor will a grade be reflected in his or her cumulative grade point average.

- A student may audit a course subject to the approval of his or her adviser or department chairperson and consent of the instructor.
- A student is subject to conditions established by the department and/or instructor for the audited course.
- A student registering for credit has course enrollment preference over an auditing student. Therefore, a student must register for audit only during the drop/add period by submitting forms provided by the Registrar's Office. A student's status as an auditor in a course cannot be changed.
- A student may register for one audit course per semester. Exception may be granted by petition to the appropriate school dean.
- A student receives no credit for an audited course. The student's academic record will reflect the course enrollment with the notation AU.
- A student will be charged the same tuition and fees for an audited course as for a course taken for credit.

## Course Drops and Adds

The Drop/Add Schedule is as follows:

- The Drop/Add period for 15-week semester courses ends after the 6<sup>th</sup> weekday of the semester.
- The Drop/Add period for seven-week quarter courses ends after the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekday of the quarter.
- The Drop/Add period for five-week summer courses ends after the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekday of the session.
- The Drop/Add period for 10-week summer courses ends after the 5<sup>th</sup> weekday of the session.
- The Drop/Add period for nonregular courses ends one weekday after the first class meeting. However, students cannot add intensive – e.g., weekend or one-week – courses after the first class meeting.

No adds or drops will be permitted after these deadlines. Drop/Add forms are available at the Registrar's Office during the drop/add period. It is advisable that students discuss changes in their schedule with their adviser.

If students fail to drop courses appropriately, a grade of "F" may be entered on their academic record. This grade will be used in computing the GPA.

## Course Load

Full-time undergraduate students must carry a course load of 12 to 18 credit hours or the equivalent each semester. The typical course load is 15 credit hours. Students wishing to carry more than 18 credit hours must receive permission from the appropriate school dean prior to registration. Failure to carry at least 12 credit hours may jeopardize housing, financial aid status, athletic eligibility and health insurance.

Undergraduate students wishing to carry a course load of more than 14 credit hours during the summer must obtain permission from the appropriate school dean prior to registration.

It is recommended that students not carry semester courses during the semester in which they enroll in student teaching.

Note: Intersession credits are included in the spring semester in determining the student's time status.

## Credit by Examination

The university encourages qualified students to meet certain graduation requirements through "Credit by Examination." Currently the university will award credit for successful completion of the College Level Examination Program's (CLEP) general or subject area examinations. In addition, certain departments offer their own examinations for which credit can be awarded. Additional information can be obtained from the Office of Testing Services in the Academic Achievement Center, 508.531.1780.

See the "[Undergraduate Admission](#)" section of this catalog for further information concerning credit by examination.

### Intercollegiate Athletics Eligibility

The following five rules govern intercollegiate athletics eligibility for most students attending Bridgewater.

1. A student athlete must be a full-time, degree-seeking undergraduate student.
2. A student athlete must maintain a minimum of 12 credit hours or the equivalent each semester.
3. A student athlete must maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0.
4. A student-athlete must pass 24 credit hours (normal progress rule) or the equivalent in an academic year as a full-time student.
5. A student athlete must sign the NCAA student athlete statement concerning eligibility, a Buckley Amendment consent and a drug testing consent.

Student athletes are required to undergo both physical and orthopedic examinations prior to competing on intercollegiate teams. Specific information on these exams can be obtained either from the director of athletics or from the head athletic trainer.

In addition, there are very specific requirements which must be met by transfer students from other four-year institutions, transfer students from two-year or junior colleges and students who have been involved in multiple transfers. For information, please confer with the director of athletics.

On a case-by-case basis, a student enrolled in a part-time academic course load, as an accommodation to a documented disability, will not be excluded from participating in athletic programs. The student shall follow the normal petition and appeal processes through the director of athletics and recreation.

### Make-up Tests and Examinations

The procedure for making up an examination held during the semester is determined by the individual instructor or the department. If a student misses an examination, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor immediately so that alternative arrangements may be made.

The privilege of making up a final examination will be granted only when the cause has been the serious illness of the student or a member of his or her immediate family. All such excuses must be documented by a medical doctor and submitted to the instructor of the course.

### Prerequisites

Students must have the necessary prerequisite for each course. Prerequisites, if any, are indicated with the individual course listing and are enforced at the time of registration. Prerequisite courses taken at institutions other than Bridgewater State University must be documented (transcript or grade report, and in some cases, course description) prior to registration.

Students who wish to enroll in a course without the prerequisite(s) must obtain a Prerequisite Override Form prior to registering for the course. The form must be signed by the chairperson of the department through which the course is offered and, in some cases, the instructor of the course. Students seeking an override of professional education prerequisites for courses taught through the School of Education and Allied Studies must complete a Request for a Student to Take an Upper Level Professional Education Course Without Formal Program Admission to a Professional Education form and obtain all required signatures.

### Registration

Preregistration is held for returning, degree-seeking undergraduate, graduate and joint admission students in November for the spring semester and in April for the fall semester. During the advising period held two weeks prior to registration, a student meets with his/her adviser to review the student's progress toward meeting core curriculum requirements and specific degree requirements. A class schedule is developed, and the student's registration form is signed by the adviser. In the case of double majors, the form must be signed by both advisers.

Preregistration is available via the Web and in person. Students who wish to register via the Web must secure electronic permission to register from their adviser at their advising session. Preregistration time is based on the student's classification (senior, junior, sophomore, etc.) at the close of the previous semester. An undergraduate non-degree student may register for courses after the registration sessions for new degree-seeking students have been held in August and January. For more information about non-degree status, see the "[Undergraduate Admission](#)" section of this catalog. Students will not be allowed to register for courses until all financial debts to the university are paid and health records are up to date.

Prior to each registration period, course listings, specific registration dates and registration instructions as well as up-to-date information concerning course openings and prerequisites are online through InfoBear under QuickLinks at the Bridgewater State University Web site [www.bridgew.edu/infobear](http://www.bridgew.edu/infobear).

### Transfer of Credit After Admission

In order to receive credit for courses taken at other accredited institutions, degree-seeking undergraduate students must obtain approval in advance. Failure to obtain this approval could result in denial of the course credit.

Request forms are available on the Registrar's Web site at [www.bridgew.edu/registrar](http://www.bridgew.edu/registrar) and in the Registrar's Office. Requests for approval of a course from another institution should be accompanied by the course description from that institution's catalog. Approval



must be obtained prior to registering for the course at the other institution. It is the student's responsibility to have official transcripts sent directly by the institution to the Registrar's Office upon completion of the course.

NOTE: A minimum grade of "C-" is required for credit transfer. Of the 90 credits that may be accepted in transfer by Bridgewater State University and applied to the baccalaureate degree, only 69 credits will be accepted from two-year institutions. Grades for courses taken at an institution other than Bridgewater State University are not used in computing the student's GPA.

### Withdrawal From the College

Forms for official withdrawal from the university may be obtained from the Academic Achievement Center located in the Maxwell Library. Professional staff from the Academic Achievement Center will assist in completing the process, including the review of alternatives available to the student. Should the student leave the university without giving official notification, failing grades will be recorded for all courses. After the 10th week of classes, grades will be recorded for all classes and the withdrawal will not be effective until the last day of the semester.

### Withdrawal From Courses Following the Drop/Add Period

Students may withdraw from courses following the drop/add period if they submit a Course Withdrawal Form to the Registrar's Office by the appropriate semester deadline date, which is posted at [www.bridgew.edu/registrar/dropaddwithdraw.cfm](http://www.bridgew.edu/registrar/dropaddwithdraw.cfm). If a student falls below full-time status after withdrawing from a course, he or she should be aware that eligibility for some sources of financial aid and health insurance and participation in extra curricular activities and on-campus housing may be affected.

The Course Withdrawal Schedule is as follows:

- The withdrawal period for 15-week semester courses ends the weekday following the completion of the tenth week of the semester.
- The withdrawal period for seven-week quarter courses ends the weekday following the completion of the fifth week of the quarter.
- The withdrawal period for five-week summer courses ends the weekday following the completion of the third week of the session.
- The withdrawal period for 10-week summer courses ends the weekday following the completion of the seventh week of the session.
- The withdrawal period for nonregular courses typically ends one weekday following the point when approximately 70 percent of the course has been completed. Students should consult the Registrar's Office for exact deadlines for withdrawal from these courses.
- Students who are taking a course online or off-campus or who are non-degree seeking must meet established deadlines and procedures.

No withdrawals will be permitted after these deadlines unless the student can demonstrate that extraordinary circumstances (e.g., sudden illness, a death in the family) have prevented the student from withdrawing by the published deadline. Consult the Academic Achievement Center for more information about withdrawals after the deadline.

Course withdrawals will be indicated on the student's transcript with a "W" and will not affect the calculation of the student's grade point average.

# GRADUATE ACADEMIC POLICIES

## ■ GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Students are responsible for all information given in the latest edition of the catalog. Students who have questions regarding the graduate regulations presented in this catalog should contact the School of Graduate Studies.

### Academic Integrity Policy

The School of Graduate Studies at Bridgewater State University, like all institutions of higher learning, considers academic integrity to be an important hallmark for graduate students and scholars. The importance of academic integrity and honesty, which is taught at the undergraduate level, continues to be even more vital for scholars and researchers at the graduate level, who find themselves writing seminar papers, research papers and theses. All graduate degree programs at Bridgewater State University require courses in research where conventions of documentation are taught. Graduate students, who are acquiring scholarly habits and skills in degree programs, must rely on the scholarship that has preceded them, and they must acknowledge the scholarship in their own academic work by adhering to the time-honored conventions of their discipline. In short, graduate students are entering a community of scholars and must respect the rules and traditions of that community. Sometimes, however, graduate students violate the accepted principles and policies of academic integrity and honesty. The dean of the School of Graduate Studies reviews any infractions of academic integrity. The following examples represent a partial list of serious breaches of academic integrity:

- Plagiarizing any published or online source, including “Blackboard” and other online discussions, and claiming them as one’s own;
- Not properly documenting quotations and paraphrases in one’s texts, i.e., not using footnotes, endnotes, parenthetical citations or other conventional methods of documentation;
- Inadequate paraphrasing, with or without proper documentation;
- Copying portions of Internet sources without proper documentation and citations;
- Creating false documentation, i.e., purposely fabricating information used in references, endnotes and footnotes;
- Using or copying from another student’s written work with or without the student’s permission;
- Taking an examination for another student;
- Cheating on an examination;
- Purchasing a paper or assignment from an online source or another student and claiming it as one’s own;
- Writing a paper or report for another student;
- Altering or falsifying data.

Serious violations of academic integrity are not limited to this list. Penalties for academic misconduct may include the following:

- A grade of “F,” “N,” or “U” (as appropriate) in the course;
- A grade of “F” for the assignment being evaluated;
- The assigning of additional course work;
- Suspension from graduate programs;
- Dismissal from graduate programs.

The procedure for implementing a penalty for academic dishonesty or misconduct, which includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism and cheating, is as follows:

- The professor will notify graduate students of any alleged violations of the Graduate School’s Academic Integrity Policy, and they shall discuss the matter in person, via e-mail or by phone within seven business days of the discovery of the alleged misconduct. (The professor may invite a third party to the meeting, if warranted.) If it is determined that academic dishonesty or misconduct has occurred, the students’ advisers, the graduate program coordinators, department chairpersons, the appropriate school deans and the dean of the Graduate School will be notified by the professor in writing of the misconduct, the proposed penalty, and the outcome of the discussion with the students. A record of the case, including the letter from the professor, along with any supporting documentation, will be kept in students’ files at the School of Graduate Studies.
- If the matter is not resolved through the initial process described above, students may file letters of appeal within five business days to the dean of the School of Graduate Studies, attaching any relevant documents. The dean will submit appeals to the Graduate Education Council (GEC). The professors and the students will be notified of the meeting times and dates and invited to attend a meeting of the Graduate Education Council, at which time matters will be reviewed. In conducting its reviews, the Graduate Education Council will follow the requirements of due process. Both students and professors can attend the meetings with representatives, who may serve as advisers or advocates.

Under the direction of the chair of the Graduate Education Council, the GEC will review student appeals and make its decision, which shall be forwarded in writing to the dean of the School of Graduate Studies. Based upon the allegations or evidence received, the Graduate Education Council may recommend further sanctions, no change in sanctions or a reduction in sanctions. The Graduate Education Council will take into account any previous infractions only after it concludes its investigation of the present case. Further sanctions may include suspension or dismissal.

Students and professors involved will receive copies of the decision letter from the Graduate Education Council, and copies will be provided to the students' advisers, graduate coordinators, department chairs and appropriate school dean. A copy of this letter will also be placed in students' official files in the School of Graduate Studies.

### Academic Dismissal

If students' grade point averages (GPAs) remain below a 3.0 for two consecutive semesters, their academic progress is in jeopardy. The School of Graduate Studies makes every attempt not to dismiss students from academic programs, though prolonged GPAs below 3.0 may result in academic dismissal.

### Academic Probation

Any degree-seeking or non-degree graduate students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 will be notified that they are on academic probation. When graduate students are placed on academic probation, they will receive a letter from the School of Graduate Studies. This letter informs students that they should be mindful that their GPA has fallen below a 3.0. Students should discuss the matter with their advisers.

### Academic Standing for Graduate Students

In the courses used to satisfy degree requirements, the minimum standard for satisfactory work is a 3.0 average.

### Appeals

Graduate students who experience problems pertaining to graduate policies, including academic performance, program requirements or other academic issues, may petition to have the matter considered through the established review process of the School of Graduate Studies:

- Submit a written appeal to the course instructor if the issue is course-related or to the academic adviser if the matter is program-related.
- If unresolved, submit a written appeal to the department graduate program coordinator.
- If unresolved, submit a written appeal to the appropriate school dean.
- If unresolved, submit a written appeal to the dean of the School of Graduate Studies.
- The dean of the School of Graduate Studies will submit graduate student petitions to the Graduate Education Council for review. (The Graduate Education Council consists of representatives from the university's graduate faculty, administrators and graduate student body.)

### Change of Grade

If students believe that a mistake was made in the original grade recorded for a course, they may petition instructors for a change of grade no later than the last day of final exams in the academic semester following that in which the grade was recorded. A change of grade will not be considered after this time.

### Change of Name and/or Address

Students must promptly notify the Registrar's Office of any change in name or address by using the appropriate form. Official legal documentation (i.e., marriage certificate) must be presented. Forms may be printed from the university Web site, [www.bridgew.edu/registrar/forms.cfm](http://www.bridgew.edu/registrar/forms.cfm).

### Comprehensive Examination

In most graduate programs, graduate students must take comprehensive examinations that reflect the full ranges of their programs. The comprehensive examination is based upon the students' major areas of study, as well as related areas, and may include work done on a thesis. Students must give evidence that they can integrate information and ideas from the various areas in which they have studied. The comprehensive examination may be written, oral and/or Web-based, as determined by the students' departments. The academic departments determine the format of their comprehensive examinations.

To be eligible for a comprehensive examination, students should be near completion of the course work specified by their major academic departments. Students who plan to take the comprehensive examination must file a Comprehensive Examination Request form in the School of Graduate Studies. There is a nonrefundable comprehensive examination fee of \$60 for master's degree candidates and \$75 for CAGS candidates.

The comprehensive examination fee will be charged to the student's account. The completed forms with necessary signatures and fees must be filed in the School of Graduate Studies on or before the appropriate application deadlines:

Oct. 1 for November comprehensive examinations

Feb. 1 for March/April comprehensive examinations

Ordinarily, comprehensive examinations are given during the months of November and March/April. The academic departments set the specific date of the comprehensive examination.

All students who take the comprehensive examination will receive their results by mail in a timely fashion.

Students who fail the comprehensive examination shall be given one additional opportunity to pass. Students should meet immediately with their faculty advisers or designated personnel to review weaknesses of their performances, and prescribed programs of study should be designed to help students prepare for the second examination. After students have made substantial progress in the additional work prescribed by the department, students will be allowed to retake the comprehensive examinations. Students will be required to notify the School of Graduate Studies of the exam date and repay the comprehensive examination fee. Students who fail a second comprehensive examination are subject to academic dismissal.

### Continuation or Interruption of Course Registration

Graduate students have six years to complete their degree programs. Should graduate students not enroll in courses during the fall or spring semesters, students will be considered inactive. If students are deemed inactive and wish to register for courses, they must complete a reinstatement form available at [www.bridgew.edu/SOGS/forms.cfm](http://www.bridgew.edu/SOGS/forms.cfm) or by calling 508.531.6162. This policy is designed to ensure appropriate academic advising and counseling for all graduate students enrolled in degree programs as well as nondegree students.

### Course Drops and Adds

The Drop/Add schedule is as follows:

- The Drop/Add period for 15-week semester courses ends after the sixth weekday of the semester.
- The Drop/Add period for seven-week quarter courses ends after the third weekday of the quarter.
- The Drop/Add period for five-week summer courses ends after the third weekday of the session.
- The Drop/Add period for 10-week summer courses ends after the fifth weekday of the session.
- The Drop/Add period for non-regular courses ends one weekday after the first class meeting. However, students cannot add intensive – e.g., weekend or one-week – courses after the first class meeting.

No adds or drops will be permitted after these deadlines. Drop/Add forms are available at the Registrar's Office during the drop/add period. It is advisable that students discuss changes in their schedule with their adviser.

If students fail to drop courses appropriately, a grade of "F" will be entered on their academic record. This grade will be used in computing the GPA.

### Course Load

Full-time graduate study for master's degree and CAGS students is defined, for academic purposes only, as being enrolled in nine or more graduate credits in a given semester. To be considered full-time, postbaccalaureate program students must carry a course load of at least 12 credits each semester, as defined under "Course Loads" in the "[Undergraduate Academic Policies](#)" section of this catalog. (The Accelerated Postbaccalaureate program does not fall into this category.)

Full-time graduate students may register for up to 15 credits during the fall and spring semesters and up to six credits during each of the two summer sessions. Students wishing to register for more than the maximum credit load must receive permission in writing from their graduate advisers and graduate program coordinators.

Full-time graduate students enrolled in nine credits or more: see Immunization Requirements for Graduate Students section.

Note: Intersession credits are included in the spring semester in determining the student's time status.

### Course Registration

Prior to the registration period for the fall and spring semesters and summer sessions, a course schedule is available online through InfoBear at [www.bridgew.edu](http://www.bridgew.edu). Graduate students are not required to have registration forms signed by their advisers; however, graduate students should consult their advisers on a regular basis regarding their course schedules.

Graduate course work is offered on either a full- or part-time basis. Students should realize that it is not possible to set an absolute deadline for completing a graduate program due to such factors as the university's need to reserve the right to cancel any course for which there is insufficient enrollment and the need of the departments to offer courses on a rotating basis.

### Deadlines

Graduate students are reminded of their responsibility to consult the School of Graduate Studies Web site at [www.bridgew.edu/sogs](http://www.bridgew.edu/sogs) for deadlines and dates for admission, comprehensive examination requests and applications to graduate.

### Directed or Independent Study

Graduate students are allowed to undertake a directed or independent study under the supervision of a faculty member. The course Directed Study XXXX 503 (1-3 credits) is designed for graduate students who desire to study selected topics in their fields. Directed study may not be used to substitute for courses that are required in the program or to study topics that are covered in required or elective courses in the program.

Directed study follows the same registration procedures as all academic course work on campus; that is, arrangement for directed study must take place prior to the time of registration with all forms completed and on file at the appropriate departmental office. Enrollment in

directed study is limited to students who have been accepted to a graduate program at Bridgewater State University and who have completed a minimum of 15 approved graduate credits.

## Grading System

The School of Graduate Studies requires that degree-seeking graduate students maintain a high level of academic standing as they advance in their degree programs. The grading system for graduate students at BSU is different from that of the undergraduate programs. Graduate course achievement will be rated A (4.0), A- (3.7), B+ (3.3), B (3.0), B- (2.7), C+ (2.3), C (2.0), C- (1.7), F (0), W (Withdrawn), IN (Incomplete), or AU (Audit). Some courses are graded on a P (Pass)/N (No Pass) or S (Satisfactory)/U (Unsatisfactory) basis. Refer to the ["Course Descriptions"](#) section in this catalog.

This grading system puts more pressure on graduate students to perform at a higher level than undergraduate students. Though graduate students may earn less than a B in a course, the overall GPA must be a 3.0 at the time of graduation.

## Graduate and Undergraduate Credit

Courses at Bridgewater State University with 500- and 600-level numbers carry graduate credit and are open only to graduate students.

Undergraduate students may request to enroll in a 500-level course for graduate credit, or they may request that the course be applied to their undergraduate program. Approval is based upon the following criteria:

- Students must be seniors in their last semester of course work.
- Students' GPAs must be a 3.5 or higher.
- Students' written requests must be approved by the chair of the students' major departments, academic school dean and the dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

Certain designated 400-level courses may be taken for either graduate or undergraduate credit. The School of Graduate Studies guidelines for faculty teaching these courses indicate that advanced work must be required of graduate students taking 400-level courses. The guidelines recommend more rigorous examinations and preparation of longer, more sophisticated research papers, so that graduate students may take into account the different quantitative and qualitative standards associated with graduate study. It is the responsibility of graduate students to register for the graduate-level section of 400-level courses.

## Graduate Assistantship

Graduate assistantships are available to full-time students who are admitted to a graduate program and who maintain good academic standing during the time of the assistantship. The total assistantship equals more than \$13,500 per academic year. Graduate assistants receive full tuition and fees remission, for up to 24 credits total, during the fall, spring and summer sessions and a stipend earning between \$6,000 and \$6,500 paid out during the fall and spring semesters. Graduate assistantships are competitive and are determined on the basis of undergraduate and/or graduate grade point averages, experience, educational preparation and interviews, or a combination of these factors. Graduate assistants work in an academic department or administrative office of the university for 20 hours per week. Assistantships are intended to encourage and assist superior students in pursuing graduate study and in completing the requirements for graduate degrees in the minimum possible time.

## Graduate Research Assistantship

Admitted full- and part-time graduate students may apply to the Graduate Research Assistantship program. The total research assistantship equals more than \$7,000 per academic year. Graduate Research Assistantships are designed to link a graduate student together with a professor in a meaningful research project, which will be one semester or one academic year in duration. During the assistantship period, a graduate research assistant will work directly with a professor on a joint project, which will lead to a presentation at a professional conference and/or a joint publication. The research assistant will have the equivalent of a "half" assistantship, in that the student will work ten hours per week with a professor. Graduate research assistants also receive full tuition and fees remission, for up to 15 credits total, during the fall, spring and summer sessions and a stipend earning more than \$2,500 paid out during the fall and spring semesters.

## Immunization Requirements for Graduate Students

Immunization requirements apply to all full-time graduate students, regardless of age. To achieve full-time graduate student status, according to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Immunization Laws, students must be enrolled in nine or more credits from one institution in any one semester, regardless of the location of the course or the actual dates that the course or internship is held.

Proof of immunizations must be provided by a physician or a prior school and must include the dates of:

- two doses of measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) after the patient's first birthday and after 1967
- one dose of tetanus diphtheria (TD) within the last 10 years
- three doses of hepatitis B

Note: All new residential students must provide proof of meningitis immunization or waiver. Proof must be:

- documentation of one dose of meningitis immunization within five years or
- sign the meningitis waiver at [www.bridgew.edu/HealthServices/Health%20Form%20and%20Meningitis%20Waiver.doc](http://www.bridgew.edu/HealthServices/Health%20Form%20and%20Meningitis%20Waiver.doc).



The Health Services staff can assist you in meeting the requirements by offering immunizations and advice on how to be compliant with the law. Failure to comply places future registration for classes on hold until all requirements are met. Please call Health Services at 508.531.1252 to arrange an appointment.

### Incomplete

An incomplete (IN) may be given at the discretion of the instructor. The time by which missing work must be made up, in graduate and undergraduate courses, is also at the discretion of the instructor; however, this time period may not extend beyond the last day of classes of the academic semester following that in which the incomplete was earned. Courses that are not successfully completed by this deadline will automatically be changed to a grade of "F" (Failure) or "N" (No Pass). Candidates for graduation should note, however, that all work must be completed prior to graduation, including resolution of any grades of incomplete, since as of the date the degree is conferred the record is finalized.

### Program and Course Prerequisites

Program and course prerequisites may be required to ensure adequate preparation for graduate work in the area of study. In certain cases, program prerequisites may be fulfilled after the applicant's acceptance by the School of Graduate Studies. Certain advanced courses may require that students have completed specific prerequisite courses.

### Repeat Course Policy

The School of Graduate Studies will allow graduate students to repeat only one graduate course for which they have received a grade of B- or less. Although all courses and grades will appear on the student's transcript, credit for the course will be awarded only once unless otherwise stated in the university catalog. The higher grade will be used to calculate the GPA. Only courses taken at Bridgewater State University and repeated at Bridgewater will be eligible for use under this policy.

Note: Repeating courses taken in a previous semester may affect certain federal and state benefits, various financial-aid programs, loans, scholarships and social security benefits, in addition to athletic eligibility and veteran's benefits. The Veterans Administration will not pay for a repeated course in which a passing grade has been previously earned. Satisfactory academic progress requirements must be met for continued financial-aid eligibility.

### Research

A graduate program may require enrollment in the course Research XXXX 502 (credit to be arranged) or PSYC 504 for Psychology for completion of original research undertaken by graduate students in their field. The students' investigations ordinarily culminate in theses. The number of credits awarded for the research may vary and students may repeat the course until a maximum of nine credits in a MA program and six credits in a MAT, MEd, MPA, MS or CAGS program is earned toward the minimum credit requirements for the degree or certificate. Consent of department and formal application required.

### Satisfactory or Reasonable Progress

Graduate students must make satisfactory or reasonable progress toward completion of their degree programs within the college's statute of limitations. Students who are not making such progress are subject to separation from their programs.

### Statute of Limitations – Program and Courses

All graduate program requirements, including the comprehensive examination, must be completed within six years of the date of the student's acceptance. In addition, no graduate course offered for master's degree or CAGS credit may be more than six years old at the time program requirements are completed.

If graduate students cannot complete degree requirements within the six-year limit because of extraordinary circumstances, they may file written appeals, requesting a reasonable extension from the School of Graduate Studies.

### Thesis

A number of departments require or recommend theses in master's degree programs. Theses, which represent original research in disciplines, are especially recommended if students have future doctoral plans. At the same time, theses allow graduate students, working closely with theses committees, to spend serious academic time researching a narrowly focused topic in depth and produce an original text of publishable quality. The culmination is often a text that gives students great academic pride and satisfaction.

Students writing master's theses must adhere to the following policies:

1. All graduate students writing master's theses must have theses committees, consisting of a thesis committee chairperson and two faculty readers. The thesis committee must be approved by the graduate program coordinator.
2. Students writing a thesis must submit a Thesis Proposal Form, with a detailed proposal and signatures of the thesis chairperson, the two faculty readers, the graduate program coordinator and the dean of the School of Graduate Studies. (The Thesis Proposal Form is available for download on the School of Graduate Studies Web page.) This form must be completed and signed in order for students to register for the appropriate research course, which is always the departmental XXXX 502 or PSYC 504 - Research course. Students must register for at least six credits of XXXX 502, but the credits can be broken into smaller credit

segments and taken over multiple semesters, particularly if students need a full academic year to write their theses. Otherwise, students can register for the full six credits during one semester.

3. After students obtain the necessary signatures, they then take the theses proposal forms to the Registrar's Office to register for the XXXX 502 or PSYC 504 - Research course.
4. Students who have registered for the XXXX 502 or PSYC 504 - Research course and do not complete their theses in a semester will receive an Incomplete, which will be changed to a letter grade by the theses committee chairpersons once the theses are completed.
5. When the theses are written and *fully* approved by the three members of the theses committees, the chairpersons and readers sign the "approval page" of the thesis, which are placed in the text of the manuscripts.
6. The theses committee chairpersons will acquaint graduate students with the manuscript form and style used in their respective disciplines; graduate students writing theses should examine recent theses in their academic departments.
7. Students must provide the School of Graduate Studies with a minimum of four copies of the theses to be bound: one for the Maxwell Library, one for the School of Graduate Studies, one for the students' academic department and one for the student. (Sometimes departments request an additional bound copy.) Students may also request additional bound copies of their theses.
8. Copies of completed manuscripts must be brought to the School of Graduate Studies, which will arrange for the binding of the copies. A charge of \$12 for each copy will be paid by the graduate students. Students pick up their bound copies in the School of Graduate Studies.
9. Theses must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies before students are approved for graduation.
10. The Maxwell Library, which will catalog all theses, acts as the official archive for all theses written as part of graduate-degree programs at Bridgewater State University.

## Transfer Credit

Transfer credit at the graduate level is defined by the School of Graduate Studies at Bridgewater State University as appropriate graduate credit taken at an accredited institution other than Bridgewater State University prior to or after acceptance into a Bridgewater State University graduate program.

Students can transfer up to six credits in programs with 39 or less credits. In programs requiring 40 or more graduate credits, students may request to transfer up to nine graduate credits. Not more than six graduate credits, taken both prior to and after acceptance, can be transferred from other graduate schools (students should make every attempt to enroll in Bridgewater State University graduate courses). These credits include any credits earned in courses in which students are enrolled at the time of acceptance. It does not include prerequisites. Program exceptions are noted in the appropriate department sections of this catalog.

Approval of transfer credit is subject to the following conditions: 1) that not more than six credits being transferred are from an accredited institution other than Bridgewater State University; 2) that a grade of B or better has been earned in all courses being transferred; 3) that courses being transferred have not been used to fulfill the requirements of another degree or certificate; and 4) that graduate transfer credits may not be more than six years old at the time program requirements are completed.

All courses to be used as transfer credit in a graduate program must have the approval of the students' advisers and graduate program coordinators prior to submitting for final approval to the School of Graduate Studies. Transfer credit should also be properly recorded on the students' Graduate Program Proposal forms. An official transcript of courses taken at another accredited institution must be on file in the School of Graduate Studies.

The Graduate Transfer Credit Approval form is used for courses being requested to transfer from an accredited institution other than Bridgewater State University. A blank copy of the form is sent to students in their acceptance packages by the School of Graduate Studies. Students are strongly urged to process their form for transfer credit *early* in their graduate program.

## Withdrawal from Courses

Students may withdraw from courses following the drop/add period if they submit a Course Withdrawal Form to the Registrar's Office by the appropriate semester deadline date, which is posted at [www.bridgew.edu/Registrar/dropaddindex.cfm](http://www.bridgew.edu/Registrar/dropaddindex.cfm). If graduate students fall below full-time status after withdrawing from a course, they should be aware that eligibility for some sources of financial aid and health insurance may be affected.

The course withdrawal schedule is as follows:

- The withdrawal period for 15-week semester courses ends the weekday following the completion of the tenth week of the semester.
- The withdrawal period for seven-week courses ends the weekday following the completion of the fifth week of the quarter.
- The withdrawal period for five-week courses ends the weekday following the completion of the third week of the session.
- The withdrawal period for 10-week summer courses ends the weekday following the completion of the seventh week of the session.
- The withdrawal period for nonregular courses typically ends one weekday following the point when approximately 70 percent of the course has been completed. Students should consult the Registrar's Office for exact deadlines for withdrawal from these courses.
- Students who are taking a course online or off campus must meet established deadlines and procedures.

No withdrawals will be permitted after these deadlines unless students can demonstrate that extraordinary circumstances have prevented them from withdrawing from the course by the published deadline. Course withdrawals will be indicated on students' transcripts with a "W" and will not affect the calculation of students' grade point averages.

### Withdrawal from the College

Students who decide to withdraw from a graduate program must notify the School of Graduate Studies of their intentions in writing as soon as possible. Students should also consult course withdrawal procedures and refund policies indicated elsewhere in the catalog. Withdrawal forms are available at [www.bridgew.edu/SOGS/forms.cfm](http://www.bridgew.edu/SOGS/forms.cfm).

## ■ GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

### Graduation Application

Students who are nearing the completion of their graduate program requirements and who plan to receive a master's degree or CAGS in January, May or August should complete an Application to Graduate form. These forms must be completed by students, approved by the students' advisers and graduate program coordinators, and submitted with the candidates' Graduate Program Proposal forms to the School of Graduate Studies on or before the appropriate application deadline. Students should check with their advisers regarding exit requirements for their academic program, as requirements vary for each program.

Feb. 1	for May graduation
June 1	for August graduation
Oct. 1	for January graduation

Failure to file an application before the deadline may postpone degree conferral. Any questions regarding graduate commencement and requirements should be directed to the School of Graduate Studies at 508.531.1300.

### Graduation Dates

Though graduate students have a separate annual commencement ceremony in May, the university has three graduation dates (January, May and August). Students graduating in January and August are encouraged to attend the May commencement ceremony. In order to participate in a commencement ceremony, all required course work and exit requirements must be completed. No degree or certificate will be conferred, and no graduate transcripts will be issued unless all outstanding financial balances have been paid in full.

### Graduation Requirements

In order for students to exit from a graduate program, they must satisfactorily complete all credit requirements (with a minimum GPA of 3.0), and, in most programs, pass a comprehensive examination.

### Master of Arts

**General Requirements** – A minimum of 30 approved graduate credits and a minimum GPA of 3.0 are required for the Master of Arts (MA) degree. All credits must have the adviser's endorsement. A thesis is optional in Master of Arts programs. For additional details, students should consult appropriate departmental sections of the catalog for specific program requirements for the degree.

### Master of Arts in Teaching

The Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree was developed for high school and middle school subject area teachers who have an initial license and are seeking a professional license in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Most MAT programs are designed to meet the "appropriate master's degree" requirement, which is part of the criteria for professional-stage licensure, as set forth in the most recent MA-DESE licensure regulations. This degree program will also appeal to secondary school teachers who already hold a standard level or professional license and want to acquire additional knowledge and a master's degree in the discipline.

Students needing initial licensure should refer to the section of this catalog titled "Accelerated Postbaccalaureate Program (APB): Initial Licensure for Secondary (Subject Areas: 8-12) and Middle Level (Subject Areas: 5-8) Teachers." Students seeking licensure should also consult the section of this catalog titled "[School of Education and Allied Studies](#)" for information pertaining to licensure, admission to and retention in professional education, as well as important institutional deadlines.

**General Requirements** – A minimum of 33 approved graduate credits and a minimum GPA of 3.0 are required for the MAT degree, which is offered through the Department of Secondary Education and Professional Programs and the academic departments of the university. For program and course details, students should consult the MAT information listed in this catalog under the "[Department of Secondary Education and Professional Programs](#)" and under the appropriate academic department.

### Master of Education

The Master of Education (MEd) degree is designed for persons with a wide variety of academic and professional objectives. Students are encouraged to consult specific MEd program descriptions in this catalog.

**General Requirements** – A minimum of 30 approved graduate credits, depending upon the program, and a minimum GPA of 3.0 are required for the Master of Education degree. For program and course details, students should consult the appropriate departmental section of this catalog. Degree credits must have the endorsement of the adviser.

**Licensure Information** – A number of Bridgewater State University's Master of Education programs have been approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the licensure of educational personnel. Specific information regarding such programs is provided in this catalog under the "[School of Education and Allied Studies](#)" and under the appropriate departmental program descriptions. For additional details regarding licensure program procedures and requirements, students should contact the appropriate graduate program coordinator.

### **Master of Public Administration**

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree provides professional education to prepare persons for leadership roles in public administration and public affairs. Program details are provided in the graduate program section under "[Political Science](#)" in this catalog.

**General Requirements** – A minimum of 39 to 45 approved graduate credits and a minimum GPA of 3.0 are required for the Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree. The MPA program accommodates the needs of both precareer students and in-career professionals by offering alternative program requirements that take into account students' academic and professional backgrounds.

### **Master of Science**

**General Requirements** – A minimum of 30 approved graduate credits and a minimum GPA of 3.0 are required for the Master of Science (MS) degree. All credits must have the adviser's endorsement. A thesis is optional in certain Master of Science programs. For additional details, students should consult appropriate departmental sections of the catalog for specific program and course requirements for the degree.

### **Master of Social Work**

The mission of the Master of Social Work (MSW) program is to prepare advanced professional practitioners to address regional needs, promote social justice, and enhance the strength and resilience of communities, families and individuals. Program details are provided in the "Social Work" section of this catalog.

**General Requirements** – A minimum of 62 approved graduate credits and a minimum GPA of 3.0 are required for the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. Students enrolled in the MSW program for advanced standing are required to complete a minimum of 35 approved graduate credits.

### **Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study**

**General Requirements** – A minimum of 30 approved graduate credits and a minimum GPA of 3.0 are required for the Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study program. Courses taken for the CAGS may not repeat work previously accomplished by students in either their undergraduate or graduate degree work. At least one-half of the CAGS credits must be earned in courses limited to postmaster's students (600-level).

Currently, the university offers a program leading to a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) in Education with concentrations in counseling, educational leadership and reading. For details, students should consult the counselor education, educational leadership and reading program sections of this catalog.

## **Collaborative CAGS/EdD Program**

There is a transfer agreement between Bridgewater State University, which offers the Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) (see above), and the University of Massachusetts-Lowell, which offers the Doctor of Education (EdD) degree. Further program information is provided in the "[School of Education and Allied Studies](#)" section of this catalog.