

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the School of Graduate Studies is to provide high-quality education and create a stimulating environment for research, scholarship and civic engagement that prepares a diverse community of learners for success in an ever-changing global society.



### **Message from Dean Carol Glod**

The School of Graduate Studies at Salem State University provides a stimulating environment for graduate study in twelve disciplines, offering over 30 master's degrees and a variety of certificates. Graduate education at Salem State University is a transformative experience fostering intellectual curiosity, love of knowledge and the desire to excel. Our graduate programs offer students the skills to reach for new career opportunities or to pursue a path toward advanced research and study.

We recently renewed our mission in the School of Graduate Studies to further our focus on providing a high-quality education that empowers you to succeed in a global society. Our exceptional and experienced faculty are dedicated to your success as they mentor you while you concentrate on your area of interest.

Whether you are developing existing interests or pursuing a new path, you've taken the first step by choosing to go to graduate school.

I wish you the very best in your pursuits as you shape your future.

This document contains useful information that will help you proceed through your journey as you pursue a graduate education. First, suggestions are provided to help you connect with your program advisor and the support staff at the university who are here to help you. Second, the process for mapping out your academic plan, and the policies that serve as the “rules of the road” are provided to assist you in your process. Finally, information regarding available academic, professional, and personal resources is provided.

### **Section I: Six Action Steps for Accepted Students**

As an accepted student in the School of Graduate Studies there are six steps you can take to ensure your academic and personal success.

#### **Step One: Familiarize yourself with the graduate policies**

Read this Salem State University Graduate Student Online Handbook from beginning to end. Begin by clicking on each of the following links to review the policies governing your progress to degree.

[Responsibility Statement](#)

[Confidentiality, FERPA, Public Notice](#)

[Transfer Credit](#)

[Time Limits](#)

[Prerequisites](#)

[Satisfactory Academic Progress](#)

[Grading](#)

[Attendance](#)

[Student Absence for Religious Belief](#)

[Course Load](#)

[Repeat Courses](#)

[Audit Courses](#)

[Changes in Registration](#)

[Separation from Degree Program: Withdrawal, Dismissal, Leave of Absence](#)

[Readmission](#)

[Syllabus Policy](#)

[Directed Study](#)

[Comprehensive Examination](#)

[Academic Appeal Procedure](#)

[Practica /Clinical Experiences in Education](#)

[Academic Integrity](#)

[Student Judicial Process](#)

[Institutional Review Board](#)

[Commencement, Commencement Honors](#)

[Code of Student Conduct](#)

## **Step Two: Make an advising appointment**

You must take the initiative to make an appointment with your program advisor. In your acceptance letter, you were told the name of your advisor and how to make an appointment in order to complete a plan of study. If you have misplaced your acceptance letter, remember you can always make an appointment to talk or meet with your coordinator by calling the School of Graduate Studies customer service desk at 978.542.6323 or emailing [graduate@salemstate.edu](mailto:graduate@salemstate.edu)

This appointment should be made within one month of receiving your letter of acceptance. Your “program advisor” or “program coordinator” is a member of the graduate faculty teaching in your program, and he or she has been appointed to guide students in planning their coursework and follow students’ academic progression through the program. The primary instrument in creating this “road map” is the “plan of study,” described below. Throughout your program, you should make every effort to keep in close contact with your coordinator. We strongly encourage you to meet with your coordinator at least once a semester.

## **Step Three: Prepare for the advising appointment**

If you propose to transfer graduate courses taken at another institution, those courses, with the grades and credits received, will have to be approved and noted on your [plan of study](#) at the initial advising session. You will need to provide a transcript and course description for each course you wish to transfer. Only graduate-level courses, taken at an accredited university, that have NOT been part of another degree program, can be proposed for transfer credit. If you would like to propose courses for transfer credit, you should make sure this information is available for the plan of study meeting. Please review the section on [transfer credit](#) for the complete policies governing transfer credit. Please also note that the [time limits](#) policy applies to transfer credits; transfer courses cannot be more than seven years old at the time you complete your degree at Salem State University. Some programs will allow up to nine credits taken at Salem State University before matriculation to be considered for transfer towards the degree. These courses must meet all the criteria that apply to transfer credits from other institutions, including those stipulated in the time limits policy.

## **Step Four: Completing the Plan of Study**

The [plan of study](#) is a list of courses, prerequisites and other requirements needed to complete the program in which you have enrolled. This document lists the courses that are required for the degree, as well as providing a rough estimate of when you will take the courses.

It is imperative that you file the plan of study **within one month of your acceptance into your program**. During your initial advising session, you and your coordinator will agree on your course of study throughout your degree program. You will indicate the semesters in which you expect that each course will be taken and note when you expect to complete the comprehensive examination or thesis, if required. Planning ahead helps to ensure that you can complete the program within the mandated time limits. All courses, with the exception of transfer courses, must be completed within six years of the date of completion.

**Transfer courses must have been taken within the past seven years.** The maximum number of transfer credits that may be considered varies by program.

The plan of study is signed by you, the coordinator, the dean of the School of Graduate Studies, and the registrar. Plans may be updated as necessary and as circumstances arise, but all changes to the plan must be documented in writing and approved by all parties listed above. After developing your plan of study, you are not permitted to take courses at other institutions for academic credit towards the Salem State degree without the prior approval of your graduate program coordinator and the dean of the School of Graduate Studies. To request this permission, you must complete a prior approval form available in the School of Graduate Studies office.

### **Step Five: Keep good records**

Keep a copy of your signed plan of study and check it each time you register for classes. You are responsible for making sure that you observe all university policies such as **satisfactory academic progress, time limits, changes in registration, or leave of absence**. In some programs, a comprehensive examination is required. It is your responsibility to register for the **comprehensive examination** the semester BEFORE you intend to graduate. You will need to apply for graduation within the stipulated timeline as well. The registrar's office will contact you as you approach completion, and it is your responsibility to follow the instructions and timelines provided.

Please note, if you are in a program that involves licensure or certification in addition to receiving an academic degree, you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the licensure requirements and timelines.

### **Step Six: Make the most of your graduate experience**

While you are a graduate student, take advantage of the full range of professional development opportunities as well as academic and student support services available to you! See the section on student services below to discover opportunities and make a habit of checking the School of Graduate Studies [Events and Dates Calendar](#) for important deadlines and new opportunities.

## **Section II: Making Progress to Degree Completion**

### **II.A. Get Connected: Getting the most out of your graduate experience**

1. To maximize your graduate experience, it is essential that you get connected to the resources that will help you manage your academic progress to degree—registration, student records, financial aid, and your student account. All official communications will be sent to you through your Salem State University email account and all of your academic records are available to you on-line.
2. Graduate students are required to sign up for a Salem State University email account. All important graduate school and university announcements will be sent to your salemstate.edu account. It's simple! Just log onto: [salemstate.edu/7796.php](http://salemstate.edu/7796.php) to set up your email address today! If you have any questions, check the website [salemstate.edu/email.php](http://salemstate.edu/email.php) or contact the ITS Help Desk – [it-helpdesk@salemstate.edu](mailto:it-helpdesk@salemstate.edu)
3. Get your student ID—the “**Clipper Card**.” Your ClipperCard will allow you to connect to the many free support services and cultural events available to you as a Salem State graduate student. You can use it for access to campus computing centers, the Center for Creative and Performing Arts, the Wellness Center, Counseling and Health Services, the Career Counseling Center, and to get free museum passes from the Salem State library.

### **II.B. Monitor Your Academic Progress**

Circumstances may arise that require some adjustments in the plan of study that you decided upon with your program coordinator. These circumstances can be related to external factors; for example, a licensure program may be affected by changes in state or federal licensing regulations and the required courses may change to prepare you appropriately. Other circumstances may be the result of changes in your personal life. It is very important that you meet periodically with your program coordinator to make that sure you stay on “on track,” and that changes to your original plan of study are approved.

As you work towards completion of your program, remember the time limits policy. It is expected that you will register continuously (in consecutive semesters), whether your course load is full-time or part-time. If you are unable to register for a given semester, you must take a leave of absence for the period during which you are unable to take classes. Please note that the “clock does not stop” during a leave of absence: you must still complete your program within six years of the date of acceptance.

To complete your program, you will need to make satisfactory academic progress. Grading guidelines are clearly stated in the catalogue and in this handbook, as are the grades administered in graduate classes. Graduate students are expected to perform at a higher level than undergraduate students. Regular attendance at class is required at the graduate level, although student absence for religious beliefs is a prerogative. You may not repeat courses at the graduate level. It is important that you familiarize yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy and the Student Code of Conduct.

Students who do not make satisfactory academic progress risk **dismissal** from the program. The **Academic Appeals Process** provides students with methods to resolve academic issues.

### **Section III. General Information for Graduate Students**

#### **School of Graduate Studies Definitions and Policies**

A full record of School of Graduate Studies definitions and policies is available in the online catalogue.

#### **Academic Resources and Support Services**

[Academic Calendar](#)

["Ask a Librarian"](#) for Research Support

[Center for International Students](#)

[Comprehensive Examinations](#)

[Computing Resources](#)

[Course schedule and Registration](#)

[Graduate Catalogue](#) – toggle to School of Graduate Studies Catalogue and hit "GO"

[Honors Societies](#)

[Library](#)

[Math lab](#)

[MTEL Prep Center](#)

[Office for Licensure and Field Placement](#)

[Office for Students with Disabilities](#)

[Registrar's Office](#)

[Transcript Request](#)

[Writing Center](#)

#### **Financial Matters**

[Financial Aid](#)

[Funding your graduate education](#)

[Graduate Assistantships](#)

#### **Computing Services**

[Computing Help Desk](#)

[Computer Labs](#)

[Navigator](#) (your student accounts on-line management tool)

[Email](#)

#### **University Regulations**

[Address](#)

[Campus Policies and Procedures](#)

[Cancellation of Classes Due to Storm](#)

[Snow Guide](#)

[Standards and Procedures for Involuntary Administrative Action or Withdrawal of Students for Medical or Psychiatric Reasons](#)

**University Resources**

[Alumni Association](#)

[Bookstore](#)

[Campus Shuttle](#)

[Career Center](#)

[Counseling Center](#)

[Fitness Center](#)

[Lost and Found](#)

[Parking](#)

[Public Safety](#)

[Campus Map](#)