



Emergency Educational Continuity Policy

Summary:	To afford graduate groups flexibility in facilitating students' continued timely progress towards their degrees, Graduate Council issues the Emergency Educational Continuity Policy, which grants automatic approval for Graduate Groups to modify their Program requirements, provided they meet the minimum requirements set forth in Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook (GPPH). The policy text can be found in Section III below.
Scope:	Graduate Education during any emergency period declared jointly by the Chancellor or EVC/Provost and the Divisional Council, and one semester afterwards.

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I. Context

The purpose of this policy is to provide **flexibility to graduate groups** during any period of emergency declared as defined in the Emergency Course Continuity Policy, and one semester afterwards. It is noteworthy, however, that there are policy areas beyond GC's purview. The following is the summary of authority to change policies that affect graduate education and research.¹

1. Systemwide Policies that require UCOP Action to change:

¹ These policy areas are presented in order of appearance in the AY 19-20 Graduate P&P Handbook (GPPH). Therefore, their order does not indicate in any manner the ranking by importance.

I.1. Teaching Appointment Periods and Limitations (GPPH p.25): a total of **12 academic semesters**

I.2. Advancement to Candidacy (Masters) (GPPH p.54): candidates must advance **30 days before the final semester** in which conferral is expected.

I.3. Continuous Registration (GPPH p36 and 59): the systemwide requirement for continuous registration applies to all pre-candidacy graduate students; at UCM, as per UCM GPPH (p.36, section C1), “a graduate student is expected to register” continuously until all degree requirements are met.

2. Policies that may be altered at the campus level by Administrators:

2.1. NRST Award eligibility (GPPH p.18, and elsewhere): currently awarded to students for up to **6 semesters after advancing to candidacy**. **Graduate Dean** may award exceptions under extraordinary circumstances (such as the current emergency period due to COVID-19).

2.2. TA Appointments: qualification criteria including GPAs (GPPH p. 20): **Graduate Dean** can make exceptions.

2.3. TF Appointments: qualification criteria including Normative Time to Degree (GPPH p. 21): UCOP regulations say **Chancellor** can make exceptions, on the recommendations of the **Department Chair and Dean of School/College**.

2.4. GSR Appointments: qualification criteria including GPAs (p.28): **Graduate Dean** can make exceptions.

2.5. Dissertation Filing Deadline (GPPH p. 61): The end of the semester.

3. Policies that may be altered at the campus level with approval by Graduate Council:

Normally, revisions to Graduate Group P&Ps require a thorough review by the Graduate Council, often followed by another round of revision before GC approval. An efficient way to make temporary changes would be for GC to create another ECC policy, wherein it declares that it would automatically approve the temporary modifications/suspensions of Graduate Group P&P requirements that exceed GPPH’s minimum requirements, including:

3.1. Admissions Requirements

- 3.2. Course Requirements
- 3.3. Normative Time to Degree
- 3.4. Criteria for determining unsatisfactory progress
- 3.5. Ph.D. Candidacy requirements
- 3.6. Change of exam date and format

II. Potential Consequences of Policy Change

Graduate Groups are recommended to discuss the potential financial consequences of postponing examinations beyond the established deadline, as well as other considerations specific to each student's situation.

III. Policy text: Emergency Educational Continuity Policy (EEC Policy)

For the duration of any joint declaration of emergency by the EVC-Provost and Divisional Council, and for one semester afterwards, any graduate group may elect to relax any provision in their policies and procedures down to those prescribed by the campus Graduate Policy and Procedures Handbook. Any changes made under this provision may not adversely affect assessment of student's performance towards their degree.

IV. Examples of Graduate Group Policies that may be modified by this (EEC) Policy

Below are examples of Graduate Group policies that may be modified by the Emergency Educational Continuity Policy. The list of modifications is by no means exhaustive, and Graduate Groups are by no means obligated to follow them. Graduate Groups are welcome to consult the Graduate Council and the Graduate Division for further discussion.

- **Admissions Requirements:** Some Graduate Groups (GGs) require course deficiencies (for prerequisites) be made up by the end of the first year with a letter grade of B or better. The EEC Policy enables GGs to accept "S" for students who are admitted during an emergency period.
- **Course Requirements:** Graduate Groups typically require letter grades for most, if not all, of their required courses. The EEC Policy enables GGs to accept "S" instead of letter grade during emergency, and one semester afterwards.

- Normative Time to Degree (GPPH p.42): Graduate Groups typically set the normative time of 2-3 years to advance to candidacy, as well as normative time in candidacy of 2-3 years. Under EEC Policy, GGs may discount semesters during emergency (and possibly one semester afterwards, on a case-by-case basis).
- Criteria for determining unsatisfactory progress (GPPH p.42): EEC Policy allows relaxation of these criteria to the minimum set forth in GPPH.
- Ph.D. Candidacy requirements (GPPH p.56, 58): some Graduate Groups require that a dissertation proposal be successfully defended before a student may advance to candidacy, while the GPPH (p.58) states the Candidacy Committee “*ordinarily* will review an outline of the proposed dissertation project [italic added]” and evaluate the student’s competence in the specific area. EEC Policy enables GGs to relax program requirements accordingly, and requests GGs to carefully evaluate the course requirements during the emergency period (and one semester afterwards).
- Change of exam date, by the Exam Committee (GPPH p.48): per GPPH, exam may be postponed till “the beginning of the next semester” without financial consequences. If a graduate group P&P mandates that an exam be completed by the end of the semester, this policy enables GGs to extend the deadline.
- Change of exam format: Some graduate groups specify a specific exam format that may be impacted by the emergency. As the GPPH does not address the exam format, the EEC policy allows graduate groups to relax exam requirements over and above what is outlined in the GPPH.