

**Admissions, Graduate Assistantships and Degrees Committee**  
**Statement of Criteria and Policies**  
**As approved by the Graduate Council**  
**on 04/20/2011**

**SECTION I: ADMISSIONS**

**A. Admissions Policies**

It is the policy of Christopher Newport University to admit graduate students whose ability and preparation indicate potential for success in the programs offered. Admission to graduate study is competitive and based upon a careful review of each applicant's academic and professional qualifications. Students may be admitted to the University for full or part-time study beginning the fall or spring semesters or prior to any summer session. Christopher Newport University does not discriminate in admission, employment or any other activity, on the basis of race, gender, color, age, religion, veteran status, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or political affiliation.

The decision to admit an applicant to graduate studies at Christopher Newport University is determined by the graduate faculty members in the appropriate academic department or departments. Graduate Admissions collects the application materials and submits the complete application packet with all required documentation to the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) for distribution to the appropriate Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC). The decision is made by the GPC and the graduate faculty members in his/her department and returned to the OGS. A letter is sent to the applicant.

Applicants must read the information regarding the master's degree program to which they are applying for specific admission and academic requirements. Applicants are encouraged to apply and submit all documents well in advance of the term in which they wish to attend.

Degree-seeking Status

Applicants approved to participate in a graduate program leading to a master's degree will be admitted as degree-seeking students. Students planning to use financial aid must be admitted under this status. A degree-seeking student will, upon acceptance, be assigned a graduate faculty advisor to assist the student to formulate a plan of study.

Non-degree Status

Applicants approved to take graduate courses apart from any program leading to a graduate degree may be admitted as non-degree students to a program. Such students earn academic credit in the same way as degree-seeking students, and prerequisites for individual courses must be met unless excused by the Program Coordinator. Credit received as a non-degree graduate student may be applied to a graduate degree if and when the student becomes a degree-seeking graduate student. A non-degree student may enroll in and receive credit for only the approved number of credits by the specific program. Non-degree students are not eligible for financial aid. A maximum of twelve credits may be earned while in non-degree-status with the exception of those earning certificates within in one of the graduate programs.

Changing From Non-degree to Degree-seeking Status

In order to petition for the change in status a non-degree student must submit to Graduate Admissions the *Request for Status Change to Degree-seeking Status* form, and all required documentation for degree-seeking status within a specific master's degree program. In addition, the non-degree student must present his/her CNU transcript and meet the following criteria for the specific master's degree program:

- MAT completion of 12 hours of MAT graduate courses with a cumulative 3.5 GPA or above
- M.S. completion of 12 hours of CNU graduate credits with a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA, a status of Good Academic Standing, and submission of passing scores from the Graduate Record Exam

The amount of credit received as a non-degree student that is applicable toward a graduate degree will be determined by the Program Coordinator at the time the student changes to degree-seeking status.

Application Deadlines

Each program may set its own application deadlines in consultation with the Office of Graduate Studies. The application deadlines are available in the Graduate Catalog and on the CNU Graduate Studies web site.

## DEGREE-SEEKING ADMISSION

Applicants approved to participate in a graduate program leading to a master's degree will be admitted as degree-seeking students. Upon acceptance, a degree-seeking student will be assigned a graduate faculty advisor to assist the student in formulating his/her academic plan of study. Students planning to use financial aid must be admitted in degree-seeking status.

An applicant pursuing degree-seeking status must present the following credentials:

1. An official transcript indicating the successful completion of all requirements for a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university and a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale).
2. Official transcripts for all graduate work taken at other institutions.
3. Three letters of recommendation from persons able to judge the applicant's potential to complete the graduate program successfully.
4. Examination Scores. Refer to the master's degree program section for specific examination requirements.
5. Individual master's degree programs may impose additional requirements for admission.
6. Any other material which the applicant thinks is relevant to the admission decision is welcome.

### Documentation Requirements

Refer to the master's degree program to which you are applying for specific admission requirements and academic prerequisites.

### Admission for International Students

Students from other countries with adequate preparation for graduate study are invited to apply for admission at Christopher Newport University. The University is authorized under federal law to enroll non-immigrant alien students. The admission application deadlines for international students are given in the Graduate Catalog and on the CNU web site. An international student must apply to enter the University as a degree-seeking student and must submit the specific master's degree program admissions documents.

For admission requirements into a master's degree program refer to the "Admission for International Students" section in the current CNU Graduate Catalog or the CNU website. For a list of the academic prerequisites refer to the specific master's program section in the CNU Graduate Catalog.

### Evaluation of International Credits

International students must seek the assistance of World Education Services (WES) to have their education credentials evaluated. WES will prepare an objective, analytical report that describes the credentials and interprets them in terms of their U.S. equivalents. The WES web site is located at <http://www.wes.org>, contact WES at [info@wes.org](mailto:info@wes.org), or call 1-800-937-3895.

## NON-DEGREE ADMISSION

Students whose interests may not necessarily be served through immediate participation in the University's graduate degree programs may apply to enroll in a non-degree status.

For admission requirements for non-degree status refer to the "Admission to Graduate Studies" section in the current CNU Graduate Catalog or the "Admission Non-Degree" on the CNU website.

Non-degree students earn academic credit in the same manner as degree-seeking students, and they must meet prerequisites for individual courses unless excused by the Program Coordinator.

Applicants seeking non-degree status must present the following credentials:

1. An official transcript indicating the successful completion of all requirements for a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university and a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale).
2. Official transcripts for all graduate work taken at other institutions.
3. Any licensed Virginia teacher who desires to enroll in a course for re-licensure or continued professional development may do so in a non-degree status and, as such, does not need to furnish an official baccalaureate transcript.

A non-degree student may not enroll in and receive credit for more than 12 graduate credits. Credit received as non-degree graduate student may be applied to a graduate degree if and when the student becomes a degree-seeking graduate student. The amount of credit received by non-degree student that is applicable

toward a graduate degree will be determined by the Program Coordinator at the time the student changes to degree-seeking status.

## **B. Program Admission Requirements**

1. Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT)  
For program admission requirements into the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), Five Year Master of Arts in Teaching program, or Initial Licensure program refer to the master's degree program section in the current CNU Graduate Catalog or the CNU website. For a list of the academic prerequisites refer to Master of Arts in Teaching program section in the CNU Graduate Catalog.
2. Master of Science in Applied Physics and Computer Science  
For program admission requirements into the Master of Science in Applied Physics and Computer Science program refer to the master's degree program section in the current CNU Graduate Catalog or on the CNU website. For a list of the academic prerequisites refer to Master of Science in Applied Physics and Computer Science program section in the CNU Graduate Catalog.
3. Master of Science in Environmental Science  
For program admission requirements into the Master of Science in Environmental Science program refer to the master's degree program section in the current CNU Graduate Catalog or on the CNU website. For a list of the academic prerequisites refer to Master of Science in Environmental Science program section in the CNU Graduate Catalog.

## **C. Periodic Review of Admissions Policies**

1. Each program coordinator, in consultation with the faculty members teaching in the program, will review the program's admission policies and criteria and will submit a written report of their conclusions and recommendations to the Admissions, Graduate Assistantships and Degrees Committee during the third year of the program's six year program review cycle. Such written report of each program's admission policies shall also be included in each program's normal six year program review.
2. The Admissions, Graduate Assistantships and Degrees Committee will review such reports to determine if each program's admission policies and criteria are proper and if each program is following the set standards. The Committee will forward such reports, along with its recommendations, to the Graduate Faculty Council for its action.
3. The Admissions, Graduate Assistantships and Degrees Committee reserves the right to review such program polices and criteria at any other time for cause.

## **SECTION II: GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

### **A. Terms.**

1. Amount of money to be determined each year.
2. Hours of work required per week: based on the amount of the stipend (1/4 time would be 10-12 a week)
3. Course load: a recipient must be enrolled for a minimum of six and a maximum of nine credit hours/term.
4. Length of time a graduate student may receive an assistantship: a combination of four semesters and two summers in a two year period.
5. Types of assistantship activities:
  - a. Teaching and/or related activities;
  - b. Research and/or related activities;
  - c. Administration (e.g., of tutorial programs).
6. There can be no outside employment without prior approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

### **B. Procedures.**

1. The Director of Graduate Studies will notify Program Coordinators of the amount of assistantships available for the next academic year.
2. Assistantships are to be awarded from applications submitted directly to the Program Coordinators.
3. Deadlines for receipt of applications will be announced by the Office of Graduate Studies.
4. Program Coordinators will notify the Director of Graduate Studies of the names and social security numbers of the recipients, the amount of the assistantships, and the duration of the assistantships.
5. The Program Coordinator (or appropriate committee) will inform recipients and non-recipients. The recipients will be responsible for completing all paperwork required by the Office of Human Resources. The Associate Director of Graduate Admissions and Records will coordinate with the Office of Human Resources for the assistantship recipients.

6. As long as the applicants satisfy the requirements for all graduate assistantships and the additional requirements for graduate teaching assistantships, the individual program will be allowed to determine how recipients are selected.
7. Recipients of a graduate assistantship will be required to sign and abide by the *Graduate Confidentiality Agreement* and the *Assistantship Contract*.

**C. Criteria.**

1. Graduate Status. Degree-seeking status and enrolled in a minimum of six and a maximum of nine credit hours in the semester of the award;
2. Examination Scores as required by the degree program;
3. Graduate Grade Point Average;
4. Undergraduate Grade Point Average;
5. Two letters of reference;
6. Provide an essay explaining how the award will further career goals.
7. Those applying for graduate assistantships that involve teaching activities must have earned 18 graduate credits in the content area of teaching. The Graduate Program Coordinator would be responsible for verifying that the credits are in the content area, and that the graduate program develops a system of mentoring/monitoring the graduate teaching assistants. Graduate Assistants engaged in assignments such as assisting in laboratory sessions; attending or helping prepare lectures, grading papers, keeping class records, and conducting discussion groups need only satisfy criteria 1 through 6 and all terms 1 through 5.
8. Graduate Assistants engaged in other than the assignments mentioned above (7.) must be under the direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline;
9. Graduate Assistants involved in teaching activities must receive in-service training prior to each teaching assignment;
10. Graduate Assistants involved in teaching activities must be evaluated at the end of each teaching assignment by the supervising faculty member; and
11. Graduate Assistants involved in teaching activities for whom English is a second language may be appointed only when the TOEFL test of written English and a standardized test of spoken English, or other appropriate measures, indicate the appointment is appropriate.
12. The administrative oversight of teaching assistant criteria will be the Graduate Council or its designated committee.

**SECTION III. Degrees**

**A. Summary of Minimum Requirements for a Master's Degree**

1. Successful completion of minimum hours of the master's degree program course work;
2. An overall graduate grade point average of 3.00 in all CNU courses submitted for graduate credit (no more than two grades of C);
3. Submission of the Intent to Graduate form by the following dates:
 

Graduation Date	Due Date
May Graduation	September 15 preceding graduation date
August Graduation	February 1 preceding graduation date
December Graduation	February 1 preceding graduation date
4. Successful completion of the comprehensive examination, if applicable;
5. Thesis students are required to be enrolled in at least one thesis credit hour during any semester in which they are working on the thesis and must be enrolled in one thesis credit hour during the semester of degree completion.
6. Successful defense of a culminating project, or thesis and presentation of the appropriate number of approved copies to the Graduate Studies Office by the published deadline on the Graduate Studies web site.