

3.1.6 Policy on Graduation

Purpose

To earn any academic credential from RIT, students must satisfy a number of requirements. Graduation requirements may vary significantly from program to program, and all students should seek out and use the academic advising resources within their colleges. This policy governs the general stipulations for graduation.

A. Diplomas and Degree Certification

A student who is expected to complete the requirement for their degree must apply for graduation through their SIS account before the end of the semester in which they expect to graduate. The Academic Advisors will review the student's records to ensure that all requirements have been met, and this will be verified by the department on the main campus. At the end of each semester, the students who were expected to graduate will be reviewed by their department, and the names of students who successfully completed all requirements will be sent to the Registrar's Office for certification.

The Registrar's Office will be responsible for ordering diplomas and degrees.

The date to be used as the date of requirement completion is the Saturday following the last day upon which there is academic activity in that semester. In the instance where in a student departs from the university prior to completion of degree requirements and subsequently satisfies these requirements by submission of thesis/dissertation and transfer credit, the date of requirements completion shall be the last day of the semester during which either thesis/dissertation, "co-op" report, removal of incomplete grades, or transfer credit is accepted.

Students who are expected to graduate at the end of the fall, spring, or summer term will be included in the spring commencement program of that academic year.

The Registrar's Office will then send the diplomas to the Academic Advising Office here at RIT Dubai. Diplomas will be released to students only upon clearance from all the relevant departments, including Admissions, Finance, Visa, Housing, Student Affairs, IT, Alumni, Institutional Effectiveness, Library etc. certifying that all the obligations have been met. Clearance should be completed within six months after the student has completed the program. The Registrar's Office will also enter completion of the degree requirements and the degree awarded as part of the student's academic record. The diplomas of the students who fail to collect them within the required timeline of six months will be archived. The students will be charged a penalty fee paid to the University to release their diploma after they have been archived.

B. Requirements for Undergraduate Degrees

Students are expected to satisfy the following requirements before they can graduate with a bachelor's degree from RIT:

1. Completion of Academic Curricula

- Students must satisfactorily complete all of the courses in their academic program.
- Program curricula may include several types of courses, including cooperative education, field experience, practicum, thesis and research, and wellness. Many academic programs require one or more semesters of experiential learning, including cooperative education or internships.
- The curriculum in effect at the time of admission into a program will normally be the curriculum one must complete in order to graduate. Occasionally, with departmental approval, course substitutions and other minor curricular modifications may occur. Although there is no time limit within which students must complete their course requirements, the curriculum under which a student is certified to graduate must be no more than seven years old.

2. Grade Point Average Standard

Successful candidates for an undergraduate degree, diploma, or certificate must have a program cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0.

3. Residency and Minimum Earned Hours

At least 50% of the credit hours used toward a degree program must be earned by successfully completing RIT courses. Credit earned through transfer, credit by exam/experience, College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or audits are excluded from these residency calculations.

RIT Dubai academic programs vary as to the total number of credit hours required; however, under no circumstances will a student be allowed to graduate with a bachelor's degree with fewer than 120 cumulative earned hours. This is in line with the U.A.E National Qualifications Framework which states that all bachelor's degrees require a minimum of 120 semester credits (or equivalent). Cumulative earned hours include RIT courses, transfer credit, credit by exam/experience, CLEP, AP, and IB credits.

4. Demonstration of Writing Skills

Students must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Vice President for Academic Affairs that they have the writing skills needed for successful entry into their chosen careers. Each academic department determines the criteria and standards for evaluating abilities.

5. Full Payment of All Financial Obligations to RIT Dubai

Refer to Section H of Academic Affairs Policies 3.1.7 (Academic Responsibility Policy) for more information.

6. The General Education Requirement

All undergraduate students, regardless of chosen major, must complete the general education requirement of at least 60 credits.

7. Transfer Credit

Refer to Section B.1 of Academic Affairs Policies 3.1.2 (Credit and Placement Policy) for more information.

C. Requirements for Graduate Degrees

To earn a master's degree from RIT Dubai, graduate students must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Completion of Academic Curricula

Students must complete all required courses of the university and the college. All the graduate work must be completed within seven years, starting from the time the first course is applied towards the degree. The observance of the seven-year requirement is a joint responsibility of the graduate student and the department chair. The students' Academic advisor will track the academic progress of the students and notify the Department Chair and the student. The following guidelines apply to the seven-year requirements:

- a. The department chair is responsible for informing students of the seven-year graduation requirement. When a student's program is projected to exceed the seven-year limit, the department chair may petition to the dean of the Graduate program on the main campus for an extension to the seven-year graduation requirement. The student should not be encouraged to take courses or work on a thesis, final project, or dissertation unless an extension is granted by the dean of the Graduate program on the main campus or, when necessary, the Graduate Council, with the understanding that a decision has not been made and an extension may not be granted.

b. Petitions for Extensions to the Seven-Year Graduation Requirement

In cases where the fulfilment of degree requirement may extend beyond the seven-year limit, the student's department chair will petition the dean of the Graduate program on the main campus for a formal extension. The request must originate with the graduate student. The student must document extenuating circumstances that prevent completion of the degree within the seven-year limit. The graduate student may generally be required to demonstrate currency with the content of the courses that have been expired past the 7-year limit. Please note the following important requirements for these petitions:

1. Application for an extension shall be submitted to the dean of the Graduate program on the main campus prior to the expiration of the seven-year time limit.
2. When a student's program is projected to exceed the seven-year limit, the student should not be encouraged to take courses or work on a thesis, final project, or dissertation until a decision has been made by the dean of the Graduate program on the main campus.
3. Documents included in the petition submitted to the dean of the Graduate program on the main campus by the department chair shall include the following:
 - Petition support signed by the Dean's Office or equivalent representative.
 - Letter of support from the department chair.
 - Letter of support from the graduate thesis/dissertation advisor, if applicable.
 - As part of the petition, the department chair will provide confirmation of the currency of courses beyond the seven-year limit.

Student Originated Documents:

- Circumstances that delayed completion of degree.
- Detailed plan for completion of degree, addressing each unmet requirement. This should be developed and agreed to jointly by the student, the student's advisor, and with oversight/concurrence of the department chair.
- RIT graduate transcript (and where relevant, undergraduate transcript).
- Current resume.
- A copy of thesis proposal or final project proposal, if applicable.
- A list of courses that will be older than seven years (and by how much) at the projected date of graduation.
- Demonstration of currency with the content of the courses that have been expired past the 7-year limit.

A seven-year extension is granted by the dean of the Graduate program on the main campus on behalf of the Graduate Council. Generally, no more than one calendar year's extension will be granted.

c. Exemptions

Students who have stopped working on their degrees and more than seven years have elapsed since matriculation, may petition the dean of the Graduate program on the main campus for readmission into a program. The petition shall contain all the material described in section b. of this policy - Petitions for Extensions to the Seven-Year Graduation Requirement.

d. Appeals

In cases of unusual complexity (e.g., appeals of an unfavourable decision by the Dean of the Graduate program on the main campus or department chair, etc.), the request for an extension may be forwarded to the chair of Graduate Council to be distributed to a subcommittee of the Graduate Council for consideration. The subcommittee will consist of the following individuals or their representatives:

- Graduate Council representative from requesting college
- Graduate Council representative from another college
- The student's department chair

- Dean of the Graduate program on the main campus
- Chair of Graduate Council

The graduate faculty advisor may be present at this meeting. Decisions are usually made by the Graduate Council subcommittee at the time of the meeting and the student and the department chair are notified formally by the dean of the Graduate program in the main campus.

Note: Petitions for a one-year extension are considered on a case-by-case basis.

2. Grade Point Average Standard

Graduate students must have program cumulative grade point average of 3.00 (a "B" average) or higher to receive a master's level degree.

3. Residency and Minimum Earned Hours

A minimum of 30 semester credit hours is required for the master's degree, of which at least 30 semester credit hours of graduate level course work and research (courses numbered 700- 900) are required to be earned in residence at the university.

4. Full Payment of All Financial Obligations to RIT Dubai

Refer to Section F of Academic Affairs Policies 3.1.7 (Academic Responsibility Policy) for more information.

5. Capstone (As Required)

Each degree granting program shall reserve the prerogative to require a thesis when appropriate. The thesis requirement may be waived and replaced by other appropriate research or comparable professional achievement as an integral part of the graduate program.

An "R" (registered) grade is given to indicate that a student has registered for graduate thesis or dissertation work for a graduate paper. The student has yet to meet the total requirements for the course or has continuing requirements to be met. Completion of work represented by the "R" will be noted by having the approved thesis/dissertation title, as received by the Registrar from the program, recorded on the student's official transcript using the words "Thesis Accepted/Dissertation Accepted." "R" graded courses are allowed in the calculation of the residency requirement for graduate programs.

6. Graduate Thesis Team Size Limit

Graduate thesis must be completed individually. While a team of graduate students can collaborate, each member must submit an individual thesis based on his/her unique contributions.

7. Transfer Credit

Refer to Section B.2 of Academic Affairs Policies 3.1.2 (Credit and Placement Policy) for more information.

A full-time student may withdraw from all courses in a semester by taking a Leave of Absence or withdrawing from RIT Dubai (institute withdrawal). A Leave of Absence should be filed by students who are withdrawing from all classes in a semester but who intend to return to RIT Dubai within five semesters. This will commonly be done for students facing illness or needing personal leave. An Institute Withdrawal should be filed by students who are withdrawing from all classes in a semester, and do not intend to return to RIT Dubai. Students must apply for readmission if they wish to return to RIT Dubai.

During the e-learning period, all the above graduation requirements apply.

Effective Date: August 2010

Policy History: Last Reviewed- April 2022- Added Bullet C.6. Graduate Thesis/ Capstone Team Size Limit.

Previous Review:

February 2021- Updated section A. Diplomas and Degree Certification to include the timeline of 6 months for the collection of the diploma after which it will be archived. Students will be charged a penalty fee to release their diploma after they have been archived.

November 2020- added statement on e-learning

May 2020- Updated Section C.1. –clarified the 7-year requirements for program completion

May 2019

August 2017