

Exceptions to the 12-month requirement may be made for independent persons and their dependents who locate in South Carolina for full-time employment and for military personnel and their dependents. A student who believes he/she meets the state criteria should contact the Graduate Admissions Office at least two weeks prior to registration.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International graduate students must have a proficiency in the English language that will enable them to succeed at FMU. The following steps must be completed in order for international students to be considered for admission to the graduate program:

1. Graduate Application Form – Prospective students must submit a graduate application for admission, two letters of recommendation, a personal statement, and a nonrefundable application fee. All application materials must be sent directly to the Graduate Office at FMU.
2. Exam Scores – An applicant must submit scores on the entry exam required by the intended program of study. See the individual department headings in the “Graduate Section” of the catalog for details.
3. Financial Certification – An applicant must provide proof of his or her ability to pay for cost of attendance at the University. This sum includes graduate tuition, room, food, books, and miscellaneous expenses. Support can come from the applicant’s family or sponsor. The University requires an official statement from a bank, employer, or sponsor or some other official affidavit of support. Financial certification must be sent to the University before an I-20 can be sent to the student. The student can expect to use one-half of the total each semester. Financial certification should come directly from the source. No facsimiles will be accepted.
4. Transcripts – An applicant should request a transcript from each college or university attended at both the undergraduate and graduate level. To be considered official documents, all transcripts must be sent directly from the institution to the Graduate Office at FMU. No facsimiles will be accepted. Students who have completed courses or degrees from institutions located outside the U.S. must have those transcripts certified by the World Education Services (WES). More information is available at www.wes.org.
5. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) – The TOEFL is required of all applicants except those whose native language is English. For graduate admission, the required level of proficiency on the TOEFL is a score of at least 550 on the paper-based version, 213 on the computer-based version, or 79 on the Internet version. Note: Appropriate scores on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) may be used in lieu of TOEFL scores.

Information about the TOEFL can be found at many schools or at U.S. embassies, consulates, or offices of the United States Information Service. If information is not available in the applicant’s country, it can be obtained by writing to TOEFL, Box 6161, Princeton, NJ 08541-6161, U.S.A.

Undergraduate students who have completed an undergraduate degree from an accredited postsecondary institution in the United States will be allowed to waive the TOEFL requirement.

TRANSIENT STUDENTS

Degree-seeking students enrolled in graduate studies at institutions other than FMU and who wish to take graduate courses at FMU must complete the following requirements:

1. Submit a graduate application for admission and pay the non-refundable graduate application fee.
2. Submit a transient permission form from the Academic Officer or Registrar of that institution.

Professional Development Courses (EDPD or PDPD courses), whether taken at FMU or at another institution, cannot be applied toward the Master of Education, Master of Arts in Teaching, Master of Science in Applied Psychology, or Specialist in School Psychology programs (see pages 181 and 193).

SENIOR CITIZENS

Applicants 60 years or older wanting to take graduate courses for credit or personal enrichment (audit status) need to contact the Office of Financial Assistance for the requirements for being classified as a senior citizen. Although general University fees are waived for eligible senior citizens, all other fees must be paid.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

1. Students should meet with faculty adviser to select courses to be taken.
2. Students must confirm schedules and pay fees in the Cashier’s Office.

Registration procedures are outlined in the class schedule for each session.

FEES & OTHER EXPENSES

All fees and other expenses, housing and meal plan costs, payment deadlines and refunds applicable to graduate students are explained in the section on “Financial Information” of this catalog.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Details about financial assistance are explained in the section on “Financial Information” of this catalog. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Assistance at FMU.

STUDENT LIFE

Graduate students are eligible to participate in all student activities and organizations that are described in the section on “Student Life” of this catalog.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

GRADING SYSTEM

A (Distinction) - indicates achievement of distinction and carries four quality points per semester hour.

B+ - carries three and a half quality points per semester hour.

B (Acceptable) - indicates acceptable achievement and carries three quality points per semester hour.

C+ - carries two and a half quality points per semester hour.

C (Marginal) - indicates marginal achievement and carries two quality points per semester hour.

F (No Credit) - indicates unsatisfactory achievement or withdrawal with unsatisfactory standing from the course after completion of one-third of the course. Semester hours are included as work taken in computation of grade point average. No quality points or credits are earned.

W (Withdrawal) - indicates withdrawal during the term without academic penalty. Semester hours are not included as work taken in computation of grade point average. No quality points or credits are earned.

IN (Incomplete) - indicates that a student has not completed the required work in a course before its conclusion. Upon completion of the required work and with the approval of the department chairperson or dean, the IN will be converted into an A, B+, B, C+, C, or F by the professor. Semester hours are not included in work taken in computation of grade point average until the IN is converted. All work must be completed by the next semester's Reading Day (see the "University Calendar"). If the student does not complete all required work by the next semester's Reading Day, the IN will be converted to an F.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Grade points for a course are computed by multiplying the number of semester hour credits per course by the quality points associated with the grade earned. The grade point average is computed by dividing the total number of grade points by the total number of net hours taken. For effects of course repetition on calculation of grade point average, see "Course Repetition" in the business, education, nursing, physician assistant, or psychology sections. (Other institutions, however, may recalculate a student's grade point average and include all grades in that calculation.) All grades will appear on the student's FMU transcript.

GRADE CHANGES

If a mistake was made in calculating or recording a term grade, the instructor of the course may change the grade. A change of grade may occur only within one calendar year from the receipt of the grade.

1. A faculty member seeking to change a student's term grade because of a mistake must request the change on the appropriate form, which may be obtained from the Office of the Registrar.
2. The department chairperson or dean shall approve or disapprove change-of-grade requests. If approved, the requests will be sent to the Registrar with instructions to make the necessary corrections on the official record.

GRADE APPEALS POLICY

MEMBERSHIP: The Grade Appeals Committee will consist of five faculty members to be elected by the faculty at large. The committee will elect the chair.

FUNCTION: The committee will hear final course grade appeals not resolved at the level of the academic unit.

GROUND FOR APPEAL: Unless the faculty member has acted in an arbitrary or capricious manner in the assignment of the final course grade in question, or unless the instructor's grading policy is in violation of the guidelines established by the University or his/her own policies as noted in the syllabus or other written documents, it is the right of the instructor to determine whether or not the final course grade should be changed.

PROCEDURES: The committee will meet as necessary and is called by the Committee Chair. Appeals for grade changes may not be made after 60 days from the date the grade was given. The following procedures will be followed:

1. The student will first attempt to resolve the issue by consulting with the instructor.
2. If the issue is unresolved after consultation with the instructor, the student will then consult with the department chair/school dean to attempt a resolution.
3. If the matter is not resolved after consultation with the instructor and the chair/dean, then the student may petition the chair/dean, who will forward the matter to the Grade Appeals Committee. The petition must include the following items: a completed petition form signed by the instructor of the course (unless the instructor is no longer a member of the FMU faculty), the student's adviser, and the chair/dean of the academic unit that offered the course; a letter explaining the basis for the grade appeal; and if applicable, supporting documents and a list of any other evidence to be presented. The student's argument will be limited to statements from the student and the evidence delineated in the petition.
4. Upon receipt of a completed grade appeal petition, the chair of the Grade Appeals Committee will promptly inform the faculty member, the appropriate department chair/school dean, and the Provost. The Committee Chair will also make available to the faculty member a copy of the petition and the supporting documentation.
5. The Grade Appeals Committee, upon receipt of a student's grade appeal petition, might seek additional information and advice, as it deems necessary. In some cases, the committee may conduct a hearing, as when the student, faculty member, and committee members might ask for one. Because this hearing is for informational purposes only, it should not replicate judicial proceedings. No legal counsel shall be permitted to appear.
6. Within 10 workdays after a decision, the Chair of the Grade Appeals Committee will notify the student, the faculty member, and the appropriate department chair/school dean of the committee's findings and recommendations. If the Grade Appeals Committee, through its inquiries and deliberations, determines that the grade should be changed, it will request that the instructor make the change, providing the instructor with a written explanation of its reasons. Should the instructor decline, he or she will provide an explanation for refusing.
7. If after considering the instructor's explanation the Grade Appeals Committee concludes that it would be unjust to allow the original grade to stand, the Committee may then recommend to the appropriate department chair/school dean that the grade be changed. The chair/dean in consultation with the instructor will assign the appropriate grade. Only the chair/dean, upon the written recommendation of the Grade Appeals Committee, has the authority to effect a change in grade over the objection of the instructor who assigned the grade.

REPEATING COURSES

For information, see "Course Repetition" in the business, education, nursing, physician assistant, or psychology sections. Once a student has completed, either successfully or unsuccessfully, a course at FMU, he/she may not repeat that course at another institution for transfer credit to FMU.

When a student repeats a course, all grades appear on the transcript. A grade of W is not used in the calculation of grade point average and is not counted in the repeat regulations.