

Section A: Overview Updated September 2009

Principles of Graduate Education at BYU

Graduate education is distinguished by advanced systematic study and experience in depth—depth in knowledge, understanding, scholarly competence, inquiry, and discovery. Graduates are equipped to teach and transmit knowledge within their disciplines, to conduct research and produce creative works, to apply their learning in the everyday world, and ultimately to extend service to their disciplines and to humanity.

Although diversity in focus, methodology, and implementation is expected across the spectrum of graduate programs at BYU, strong programs are characterized by selective admission of highly qualified students, a graduate faculty committed to excellence, and rigorous programs of study conducted in a context of faith.

A few fundamental principles characterize all strong graduate programs and emerge from and complement *The Mission of Brigham Young University* and *The Aims of a BYU Education*. These principles are listed below.

1. *Mastery of the subject matter.* Graduate education facilitates mastery over the content and skills of the discipline at a level appropriate to the degree sought.
2. *Critical thinking.* Graduate education develops and refines critical thinking skills, including a thorough knowledge of the assumptions of the discipline and an understanding of viable alternative assumptions.
3. *Theoretical understanding.* Graduate education provides an understanding of the theoretical bases of the field of study. It grounds application and performance in theory.
4. *Proficiency in research and/or creative activities.* Graduate education develops proficiencies that advance the knowledge and activities of the discipline. These proficiencies include good writing skills, as well as the ability to present original insights and creative expressions.
5. *Spiritual discernment and moral integrity.* Graduate education facilitates the growth of integrity and wisdom and the integration of faith into the pursuit of knowledge within the discipline.
6. *Service orientation.* Graduate education instills responsibility to return the special benefits of graduate training to the larger community.
7. *Wide representation of perspectives.* Graduate education presents an

intellectually and culturally rich encounter with the discipline. Study and inquiry are conducted in a context sensitive to ethnic and cultural diversity.

Although the implementation of these principles is primarily the responsibility of departments and colleges, the university Graduate Council and the Dean of Graduate Studies provide guidance and support.

The Mission of Graduate Studies

The mission of Graduate Studies at Brigham Young University is to contribute to the mission of Brigham Young University and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by producing future generations of scholars and practitioners who will pursue truth in humility, expand the frontiers of knowledge, and lift and inspire others around the globe. Through advanced systematic study characterized by depth in knowledge, understanding, inquiry, and discovery, we seek to create a rich learning environment that integrates spiritual knowledge with secular insights. In fulfilling our mission, we develop, communicate, and monitor best practices in graduate recruitment, admissions, advisement, and mentoring. We provide innovative resources and efficient services for graduate students and faculty to enhance the graduate culture and facilitate excellence in graduate programs.

The Mission of Brigham Young University

The mission of Brigham Young University—founded, supported, and guided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—is to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life. That assistance should provide a period of intensive learning in a stimulating setting where a commitment to excellence is expected and the full realization of human potential is pursued.

All instruction, programs, and services at BYU, including a wide variety of extracurricular experiences, should make their own contribution toward the balanced development of the total person. Such a broadly prepared individual will not only be capable of meeting personal challenge and change but will also bring strength to others in the tasks of home and family life, social relationships, civic duty, and service to mankind.

To succeed in this mission the university must provide an environment enlightened by living prophets and sustained by those moral virtues which characterize the life and teachings of the Son of God. In that environment these four major educational goals should prevail:

- All students at BYU should be taught the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Any education is inadequate which does not emphasize that His is the only name given under heaven whereby mankind can be saved. Certainly all relationships within the BYU community should reflect devout love of God and a loving, genuine concern for the welfare of our neighbor.

- Because the gospel encourages the pursuit of all truth, students at BYU should receive a broad university education. The arts, letters, and sciences provide the core of such an education, which will help students think clearly, communicate effectively, understand important ideas in their own cultural tradition as well as that of others, and establish clear standards of intellectual integrity.
- In addition to a strong general education, students should also receive instruction in the special fields of their choice. The university cannot provide programs in all possible areas of professional or vocational work, but in those it does provide the preparation must be excellent. Students who graduate from BYU should be capable of competing with the best in their fields.
- Scholarly research and creative endeavor among both faculty and students, including those in selected graduate programs of real consequence, are essential and will be encouraged.

In meeting these objectives BYU's faculty, staff, students, and administrators should be anxious to make their service and scholarship available to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in furthering its work worldwide. In an era of limited enrollments, BYU can continue to expand its influence both by encouraging programs that are central to the Church's purposes and by making its resources available to the Church when called upon to do so.

We believe the earnest pursuit of this institutional mission can have a strong effect on the course of higher education and will greatly enlarge Brigham Young University's influence in a world we wish to improve.

Policy on Graduate Faculty Status

Graduate and undergraduate programs at Brigham Young University share the aims of a BYU Education, to be spiritually strengthening, intellectually enlarging, character building, and to promote life-long learning and service. Graduate education goes beyond undergraduate preparation; especially in the area of intellectual enlargement. The aims state that graduate preparation includes "undertaking advanced systematic study—all at a depth that clearly exceeds the undergraduate level. In addition, graduate programs should prepare students to contribute to their disciplines through their own original insights, designs, applications, expressions, and discoveries."

Graduate education requires a level of faculty mentoring that guides students

to sufficient understanding of their disciplines to permit the generation of new knowledge. In addition, mentoring must be sensitive to students' needs and illustrate the advancement of world knowledge through the blending of spiritual and intellectual endeavor. In order to assure the kind of mentoring required for excellent graduate programs, colleges designate a graduate faculty.

The graduate faculty consists of those individuals who are responsible for designing and implementing graduate programs. (Graduate faculty members virtually always have responsibilities in undergraduate programs as well.) Graduate faculty members are authorized to sit on graduate committees and teach the majority of graduate courses. Graduate faculty members are appointed at the college level on departmental recommendation and approved by Graduate Studies. Colleges devise appointment criteria appropriate for the disciplines within their departments. Criteria include the following as a minimum:

- Terminal degree (highest degree awarded within a discipline)
- Commitment and availability to mentoring graduate students throughout their programs of study
- Sustained, substantial, and consequential research effort or creative endeavor evidenced by regular publications or creative works in visible and influential peer reviewed or juried forums

College or department criteria for graduate faculty status may exceed these criteria and may specify varying levels of responsibility (e.g., acting as a committee chair vs. a member, chairing master's vs. doctoral committees).

Colleges submit criteria for designating graduate faculty status and a description of the procedures followed to identify graduate faculty to the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council and the Dean of Graduate Studies work with each college to determine that criteria are in harmony with those specified above. Thereafter, departments submit a list of graduate faculty to be included in the graduate catalog each year. This list is approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Exceptions are approved by the Academic Vice President.

Administration at the University Level

The Graduate Council

Chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Council establishes and maintains standards of quality in graduate education at BYU. The Council evaluates proposals for new programs and current program changes. Additionally, the Council formulates policy governing graduate study. Decisions of this body are presented as recommendations to the Associate Academic Vice President for

Graduate Studies and Research and the Academic Vice President.

Membership in the Council originates with the Dean of Graduate Studies, who, when appropriate, solicits nominations from college deans and submits recommendations to the Academic Vice President, who must approve each appointment. All Council members are graduate faculty representing the various disciplines on campus. The Council meets monthly to discharge its obligations.

Graduate Studies

Graduate Studies, located in 105 FPH, takes care of the central procedures concerning university graduate programs, including graduate admissions, advising on policy and procedure, clearing students for graduation, facilitating graduate student evaluations, and monitoring graduate student progress. Graduate Studies represents and advocates the interests of programs and students to other support offices at BYU. Additionally, Graduate Studies serves as a clearinghouse for questions, problems, exceptions to policy, and requests for policy changes.

Graduate Studies receives all materials related to applications for admission to graduate study, either online or via regular mail. Graduate Studies records the credentials pertaining to each application, assesses the finances and English competency of all international applicants, notifies all applicants of admission decisions, and maintains records on all admitted students. The administrative procedures (as well as tracking of student progress after admission and graduation) are performed in AIM, BYU's student information system. The AIM system enforces University and Graduate Studies policies while allowing departments to customize according to their individual requirements. Graduate Studies is responsible for the design, upgrade, and maintenance of the AIM system for graduate studies administration.

Graduate Studies sends various reports to departments throughout the year, including correspondence summaries, lists of admitted students by semester, directory reports of address information, graduate faculty committee assignments, GPA lists, lists of students who are reaching their time limit, degree posting lists, lists of applicant files that may be purged, and other reports.

Graduate Studies program administrators oversee admissions and advisement respectively. They are thoroughly familiar with all policies and procedures related to graduate study, as well as the use of the student information system. They provide assistance to departments and students relating to admissions, student progress through graduate programs, and the requirements necessary for graduation. These administrators are also available to train new department graduate coordinators and staff.

Graduate Administration at the Department Level

Graduate Coordinator

Each department appoints a graduate faculty member to the position of graduate coordinator to oversee the graduate programs of the department. In the absence of the coordinator, the department chair may act as the coordinator. Graduate coordinators work closely with Graduate Studies to keep abreast of university policies and procedures regarding graduate study. They must work directly with faculty and students to ensure that graduate programs comply with university guidelines, departmental requirements, and recognized graduate standards.

Graduate Secretary

Graduate secretaries work under the direction of a graduate coordinator to handle many of the procedures concerning graduate programs. Graduate secretaries and coordinators actively track progress of prospective applicants and students from the time that an application arrives until admitted students graduate. Graduate secretaries are responsible for maintaining files on graduate applicants and students and for dispersing reports sent to their department by Graduate Studies. They are often required to respond to questions about the application process, as well as the department graduate program policies and procedures.

Graduate Faculty

The strength of each graduate department resides in its faculty. The graduate faculty consists of individuals responsible for designing and implementing graduate programs. The university policy on graduate faculty status specifies criteria for graduate faculty, including a terminal degree, a commitment to mentor graduate students, and sustained, substantial, and consequential research efforts or creative endeavors evidenced by regular publications or creative works in visible and influential peer-reviewed or juried forums.

BYU Graduate Student Society (BYUGSS)

All BYU graduate students are automatically members of the BYU Graduate Student Society (BYUGSS), a university-wide organization that operates in conjunction with department organizations. Presiding officers work directly with the Dean of Graduate Studies to represent graduate student needs and concerns. The purposes of the BYUGSS are as follows:

- Enhance the graduate student culture by integrating graduate students into the larger BYU intellectual community

- Advise the Dean of Graduate Studies, Assistant Dean, and Graduate Council in matters of policy affecting graduate students
- Inform graduate students of research grants, seminars, and journals
- Advocate graduate students' needs with administration
- Offer workshops on professional and academic topics
- Connect with department graduate student associations

The BYUGSS provides workshops and symposia throughout the year. They solicit proposals and recommend funding for research presentation awards provided by Graduate Studies. The BYUGSS Council, comprised of a student representative from each department, meets regularly to discuss the needs and concerns of graduate students. The BYUGSS Presidency consults with and makes recommendations to the Dean and Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies.

Campus Privileges for Graduate Students

Most academic services for graduate students are provided at the departmental level; therefore, the following items present only general information. Information related to specific interests, such as employment in a particular department, can be accessed in individual departments.

Graduate students who are registered for at least 2.0 credit hours per semester or 1.0 credit hour per term receive a university activity card (ID card) and are eligible for all on-campus privileges afforded students who are registered full time (i.e., on-campus employment, student housing, student insurance, intramurals, use of physical education facilities, graduate parking permits, and discount admission to sporting and cultural events). Students enrolled in the executive management programs, EMBA and EMPA, are not eligible for all privileges; however, physical education facilities are available to these students for a fee.

Graduate students with at least 9.0 credit hours per semester or 4.5 credit hours per term are automatically enrolled in the Student Health Plan. Graduate students with at least 2.0 hours of credit are eligible for student health insurance but are not automatically enrolled. Rates for all graduate students are not included in the price of tuition and fees, but require additional funds. Information describing the Student Health Center and the Student Health Plan is available from the Health Center (1750 North Wymount Terrace Drive) and online at <http://health.byu.edu/>.

There is no charge for campus parking privileges. The university has reserved some parking spaces for graduate students (G spaces). G permits allow students

to park in designated G and Y stalls when space is available. Students may obtain a permit through the parking registration online pages located in Route Y or at the Traffic Office (PTSB). Students may request that the permit be mailed when they register online. The vehicle identification number (VIN) and the current registration of the vehicle are necessary for the process to be completed online. There are no cutoff dates for picking up a parking permit or requesting a new permit, but permits all expire in September of each new academic year.