

REVISION – August, 2006

**Graduate School
Handbook for the Director of
Graduate Studies**

Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to describe the role of the Director of Graduate Studies as it relates to activities within the program and the Graduate School Administration. The Graduate School welcomes comments and suggestions. We hope to help bring definition and order to the position of Director of Graduate Studies and that the booklet helps plan and direct the conduct of graduate education within the program.

The Graduate School
August, 2006

The Director of Graduate Studies

Typical functions of the DGS, with those in bold and italics as the ones in which the DGS interacts directly with the Graduate School:

- 1) Spearhead the program's efforts in recruiting and attracting qualified applicants.
- 2) *Coordinate the admission of new students to the program and nominate new students for honor fellowships.***
- 3) Lead in the orientation of new students into the program, the Graduate School, the University and the city. DGS should also be responsible for updating the guidelines for the program.
- 4) *Aid students and the Graduate School in the registration process.***
- 5) *Request the transfer of credits from the graduate school of an accredited institution or from a professional degree program at Vanderbilt.***
- 6) *Maintain records on students and monitor the progress of the students.***
- 7) Assure that teaching and research activities assigned to the student contribute to professional development and that the performance of these is appropriate.
- 8) Provide to the student information about funding opportunities from the Graduate School, such as Travel Awards and Dissertation Enhancement Grants, and from other sources, such as the NIH, NSF and private foundations.
- 9) *Submit requests to appoint or revise a Ph.D. committee, arrange for the Qualifying Examination, and return to the Graduate School the completed and signed examination results form.***

10) On behalf of the student, request extension to complete requirements for the Ph.D. or an extension for taking the Qualifying Examination.

11) Request, on behalf of the student, a leave of absence.

12) Submit to the Graduate School, the date, time and place of the Dissertation Defense and when completed, see that the completed and signed defense results form is returned to the Graduate School, and ensure that the student has submitted an Intent to Graduate Form.

13) Act as the program's spokesperson to the Graduate School office, keeping the Graduate School informed of developments affecting the students, e.g., the termination or withdrawal of a student.

14) It is also important that the DGS be knowledgeable of the rules and regulations that govern the Graduate School. This can be found in the Graduate School Catalogue and at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/catalogs/grad/GRAD01.html>

This document provides **specific instructions**, **suggestions** and **direction** for the suitable conduct of the office of Director of Graduate Studies.

Recruitment

Attracting highly-qualified applicants is of extreme importance. By increasing the size and quality of the applicant pool, the program can be assured of a sufficient number of students of high caliber to fill the available places. The DGS should be at the forefront of this effort. Students must have some means of learning about the program. Some of the things that might be considered are the following:

- a) Send letters/e-mails to programs at other institutions, particularly those departments that are considered the best in your program's area.
- b) Advertise in professional journals and at meetings.
- c) Participate in college fairs.
- d) Have faculty and students help recruit when visiting other institutions; former students and present students can also help recruit from their previous institutions.
- e) Create a brochure that describes the program – its faculty, research activities, and resources.
- f) Develop an internet site to describe program – requirements, faculty, coursework, etc.
- g) Subscribe to a service that provides names of potential applicants, such as the GRE Search Service, provided by ETS, which oversees the Graduate Record Examinations (<https://gresearch.ets.org>).

The Graduate School maintains that diversity among faculty and students is important and hopes that you will join in its efforts to increase the number of students from underrepresented minorities entering into graduate studies at Vanderbilt University.

Admission of New Students

Admission activities for Fall Semester are concentrated in February and March. With the new electronic application, each department has direct access to the database and may not need the application forms provided by the Graduate School; however, there are always some applicants who will be applying by mail. When any information is received in the Graduate School, it will be sent to the program for review and recommendations. With the electronic application, each department will be able to monitor the status of the application, and if interested in a particular student who has not completed the application, the program can contact that individual to urge him/her to complete the process.

A complete application includes the following: 1) a completed application form; 2) transcripts of previous academic work; 3) three letters of recommendation; and 4) official Graduate Record Examination scores. Following a review of the applications, the DGS will submit to his/her School Dean's office recommendations for admission and admission with award. In most situations, the individual school Dean decides on approval or disapproval of the recommendation made by the program. Decisions are announced to applicants by March 15. On request from the DGS, the decision on admission can be made earlier than the normal cycle in February and March, and late applicants can be considered throughout the spring and summer. The latter depends on the program and its willingness to accept late applications.

The act of admission denotes the willingness of the program faculty to enter the applicant into professional status as a colleague in their discipline. This is obviously a fundamental decision. The more information the program has about the applicant, the wiser can be its decision. It is doubtful that any application can give the admissions committee all the information needed for a wise decision. Thus, the DGS is encouraged to solicit further information and clarification through communication with the applicant and even suggest a visit to the campus. This could be done to obtain further evidence of the applicant's research and writing experience, depth of pertinent academic preparation, commitment to advanced training, and degree of interest in Vanderbilt University.

The minimum standards for admission, as established by the faculty and the Graduate School, are the following:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, or the equivalent, and proof of the degree;
- Better than a B average in the undergraduate work and especially better than a B-average in the field of intended graduate study;
- Adequate scores on the Graduate Record Examination including a record of official scores;
- Strong letters of recommendation.

Recommendations for admission of students who fail to meet these minimum standards are reviewed and may be challenged by the Dean of the individual School. Students near the minimum may be challenged, especially if the program persistently recommends such students. Programs may see evidence that justifies admission of students whose standard qualifications seem modest. Clear statements and assessment of this evidence should be presented with the recommendation to admit on the Recommendation of Action form found in the application.

At the time that recommendations for admission are made to the School Dean, the department/program will also indicate any scholarship or fellowship awards that it wishes to make. Keep in mind that not all admissible students will receive an award. The Recommendation for Action Form can be found on the application website and is submitted electronically to the deans' offices.

From the students that are being admitted, the program should also select those who should be considered for honor fellowships. In December, a notice will be mailed to all departments asking for nominations. The honor (topping-up) fellowships include the University Graduate Fellowships (\$5000 stipend); the Harold Stirling Vanderbilt Graduate Scholarship (\$3000 stipend); the Provost's Graduate Fellowship for African Americans (\$16,500 stipend, plus tuition and fees) and the Sidney P. Colowick Scholarship (\$5000 stipend). The UGF and HSV awards are for five years and programs must commit at least five years of other support to nominees, i.e., these are topping-up awards. The PGF is for five years, with the department/program providing their standard level of support as a teaching/research assistant the third year. The Colowick Scholarship is a one-year award to be added to another honor fellowship to recognize our very best applicants. All nominees must be seeking the Ph.D. degree unless your program offers only the Master's degree, in which case they would be two-year awards. These nominees are then reviewed and evaluated by the Graduate Faculty Council in February. It is extremely useful to the Graduate Faculty Council to have nomination letters that clearly detail why you think each of your nominees is outstanding and how you and the program rank them. Nominators can upload these letters to the application, using the "Submit a Comment" link on the application profile page. Each program may nominate up to a total of six applicants for the topping-up awards and there is no limit to the number of nominees for the PGF. Nominations should include, besides the letter of nomination, a copy of the student's file, i.e., the complete application, transcripts, and letters of recommendation. Please keep in mind that these awards are given to outstanding students who have applied to several different universities and who, with the addition of an honor fellowship, will more likely be recruited to Vanderbilt.

International applicants of good quality may be overlooked because it is difficult to evaluate credentials and equate records to the U.S. system for purposes of comparison. In programs that receive a number of foreign applications and students, the DGS will want to maintain a file of various credentials by country. In this way, it is possible to become familiar with the quality of various institutions in each country, the meaning of the grading systems, etc. Credentials of applicants can also be compared to those of former students in the program who have come from that particular country and institution. Questions concerning the accuracy and validity of international applicants should be forwarded to the Graduate School. It is our goal to address these questions before the application is complete. Questions concerning visas and admittance to the

US should be directed to the office of International Student and Scholar Services. There are also reputable credential evaluating services, such as World Education Services (www.wes.org) that evaluate foreign educational credentials for a fee, which can be paid by the prospective student.

English ability of foreign students is a continuing concern. The university requires that international students, whose native language is not English and who received their degree from a non-English-speaking university, take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam to demonstrate English proficiency. A score of 230 or better on the computer-based test (570 on the paper-based test and 88 on the internet-based test) is recommended for students pursuing graduate degrees at Vanderbilt. Scores on the TOEFL should not be used as a measure of the student's intelligence or ability nor should a low score be used as a yardstick for rejecting the student. If the program feels that the student is academically acceptable but that English ability is not sufficient, this should be clearly indicated. The student can then be encouraged to improve language proficiency if still interested in attending Vanderbilt. This can be done before arriving or through courses offered at the English Language Center (www.vanderbilt.edu/elc).

International students who are enrolled in graduate programs at Vanderbilt may find that they need to improve their language skills after they enroll in courses. The English Language Center offers courses in Academic Speaking, Academic Writing and Pronunciation for graduate students who need additional help in these areas.

Students enrolled in graduate programs at other institutions, who want to come to Vanderbilt to carry out research, must be admitted to the Graduate School to allow them access to the various university services and facilities. The student must complete the Graduate School Application Form, provide a copy of his/her transcript, and have a letter sent by the Director of Graduate Studies of the department at their home institution, indicating that he/she is a student in good standing in that department. If all is in order, they will be admitted as a Special Student, with the understanding that they will receive his/her degree from the other institution.

Students who are transferring to Vanderbilt to complete their degree, e.g., the thesis advisor is relocating to Vanderbilt University, must have a complete application on file. They must complete the entire application and provide official transcripts of their undergraduate and graduate studies and copies of letters of recommendation. Indeed, it would be advantageous to the student to request that his/her original file at the other university be sent to Vanderbilt. If this happens, it is still imperative that the student complete the application form, and if not in the file, include official transcripts.

A Ph.D. and a Master's degree student may transfer maximally up to 48 and 6 hours of credit, respectively. It should be kept in mind that this will count toward earned hours and not quality hours (didactic credits); however, in some cases, some of the hours may actually be applied as quality hours, particularly if the courses taken elsewhere are similar to those at Vanderbilt and required by the program. Pass/fail grades are not transferable nor are research hours. This can be done by a request, including a justification, from the DGS to the Graduate School who must approve the exception. When the application is complete, the student will be admitted to Graduate

School and will be expected to follow the rules and regulations set forth for all graduate students and Vanderbilt University.

Students who are transferring to the Graduate School from a professional degree program offered by other teaching schools at Vanderbilt must submit a formal application for admission and are expected to do so no later than at the end of their first year of graduate-level studies at Vanderbilt.

Please note that no student will be permitted to enroll **10** days after classes have begun. This is a particular concern for international students who may arrive late, but must be enrolled to maintain legal immigration status. If you know that there will be a significant delay in a student's arrival, encourage him/her to defer admission and come the following semester. Please consult with the International Student and Scholar Services office if you have specific questions or concerns regarding the student's immigration status and visa application process.

Orientation of the New Student

Keep in communication with the students during the summer prior to enrollment. Correspondence, telephone calls, and/or e-mails will let the students know that they are expected and welcome. Communication with the students gives them the opportunity to ask questions and request information. Make an effort to attend the new Graduate Student orientation at the beginning of the Fall term

Relocation to Nashville can be difficult for students and many come long distances, often bringing their families with them. Finding appropriate and affordable housing can be a challenge. Near campus housing is in short supply. Enlist the help of currently enrolled students in locating suitable and available accommodations. Also, contact the Off-Campus Housing Office (Ext. 2-2594) for assistance and suggestions.

Having an informal social event before classes begin is a great ice-breaker. A reception, a coffee hour, or even a picnic in one of the nearby parks might be planned. Care should be taken to assure that the event is a time for the students and faculty to interact in an informal, non-academic setting. An off-campus location lends to the social nature of the occasion and decreases anxiety. Families should be included.

Students, individually and/or as a group, should meet with the DGS prior to the beginning of the semester to orient the students to the department or program and to Vanderbilt University. This would be a good time to discuss and distribute information about the program's curriculum and research interests, the rules and regulations of the department, and the program's philosophy of graduate education. At the time of this meeting, students can be given preliminary help with their schedules for the semester. Information concerning the university facilities (libraries, cores, recreation center, etc.) and research activities in related disciplines should be mentioned as well. The students

should be made aware of what is available to them as a graduate student at Vanderbilt University.

Planning the Graduate Programs for New Students

An appointment for planning and scheduling should be set up with each new student entering your program. If the student has already chosen a faculty mentor, then this meeting should include the mentor. Several things should be accomplished during this appointment.

1) Discuss with the student his/her background, current level of attainment, and specific area of academic interest.

2) Provide an explanation of the rules and regulations of your program and the Graduate School. It is essential that the student, when entering, know what must be done and what is expected, as there are considerable differences in the requirements among the programs. The student should be given a copy of any information, e.g., a handbook that describes the requirements and expectations for a student in this program. It is very important that this handbook be updated with any new guidelines or courses being offered. The DGS should take the lead in this process.

3) Plan the first semester's work. Select the courses and seminars that the student will be taking. Enroll the student for a full course load unless there is good reason for not doing so. The student must sign a Registration Data Form (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/current_students/registration_instructions/index.html) or, if the online form is unavailable, sign a paper Registration Form (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/current_students/registration_instructions/pdf/RDF.pdf) each semester that he/she is enrolled at Vanderbilt.

4) Prepare a list of courses and seminars that the student may expect to take in future semesters. Attention should be given to meeting language requirements, if required, and to when it would be reasonable to take the qualifying examination (within the first 4 years). The relative emphasis on courses, seminars and independent research should be discussed. In planning, it should be kept in mind that Qualifying Examinations are to be taken after the student completes at least 24 hours of didactic work. If the student is not using the online registration, then he/she should complete a Course Request Form, which can be obtained from either the Graduate School office, the departmental office or the website (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/current_students/registration_instructions/index.html).

The following factors should be kept in mind in planning the student's first registration:

a) Courses at the 300-level are advanced courses intended for graduate students. Approved 200-level courses are considered appropriate for graduate students and advanced undergraduates, but graduate students should be placed in 200-level courses only if there is not a suitable 300-level course. Graduate students in a 200-level course are expected to perform at a significantly higher level than undergraduates in the same course. This may be accomplished through additional assignments and/or a grading scale reflecting the expectation of higher attainment. Assure that, over time, most of the student's course/seminar credits are at the 300 level.

b) Care should be taken to avoid placing students in what appears to be a standardized curriculum. It is understandable that in smaller departments where limited 300-level work is offered each semester, all graduate students in the program will tend to take the courses when they are available. It is also understandable that it is necessary for students to take certain preliminary and professional courses in the first year, but in most programs, and especially in those in which there is diversity of interests among the faculty and within the course offerings, the student's program should be individualized.

c) Credit for instruction in other units of the University (e.g., School of Law, School of Medicine, Owen Graduate School of Management) can be approved for graduate credit on petition to the Graduate School. Use the Request for Graduate Credit Form.

d) Registering for Course 399. It is the intent of the faculty that Course 399 indicates registration for Ph.D. research. Thus, registration in 399 during a student's first year of graduate study is inappropriate without special reason. If a student needs to register for research hours during his/her first years of graduate study (before passing the Qualifying Examination), it would be advantageous to create a new 'research course' with a new number, as the student has not been entered into candidacy for the Ph.D.

e) Registering - When the schedule for the first semester has been determined, the entering student is ready to complete his/her first registration. Students must register using OASIS (On-line Access to Student Information System). Computer links to this program can be found at multiple sites across the campus and most departments have a site(s) readily available. At the beginning of each semester and the summer session, students must fill out the Online Registration Data Form at http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/current_students/registration_data_form/index.html or, if the online form is unavailable to them, sign a paper Registration Data form (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/current_students/registration_instructions/pdf/RD_F.pdf). Some departments (departments in the School of Engineering and the Departments of English, Economics, Political Science and Religion) require an Advisor Approval Card that must be signed by the Director of Graduate Studies. Alternatively, if registering by OASIS, the students in these departments must use an advisor-approval code to enter OASIS.

At the time the student's initial registration is being planned, the DGS should again explain the rules and regulations of the University and the program. Each program should have copies of its regulations concerning graduate degrees. If not already done, a copy should be given to the student and necessary explanations made. The student should understand at the outset the rules under which he or she will be operating. The DGS should review with the student the general rules of the Graduate School and the University, as found in the Graduate School Bulletin, available at the

Graduate School Office (411 Kirkland Hall) and on-line at (<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/catalogs/grad/GRAD01.html>). Students should understand that if changes in regulations occur during their graduate career, those in force when they first enrolled will apply to them unless all parties agree that the new rules should apply.

f) Transferring Credit. Many students will enter the Graduate School with previous graduate credit. At the time the program of studies is planned, transferring this work to the Vanderbilt record must be considered. With transfer students, one of the most important considerations is the assessment of previous graduate work for purposes of allocating Vanderbilt degree credit. Transfer is made on the recommendation of the department chair, program director or DGS and approval of the Graduate School. Transfer of credits should be accomplished before the end of the first month of enrollment. This early assessment is essential for planning the student's program of study. A memo from the DGS asking that certain courses be transferred and a copy of the transcript with these courses highlighted should be submitted to the Graduate School for approval. The DGS should keep in mind that a maximum of 6 hours transfer credit may be applied toward the Master's degree and 48 hours toward the Ph.D. degree, although the latter should be considered the upper limit in very special cases. It is also important to note again that transfer credit hours do not count toward the required quality (didactic) hours, but are included as earned hours. There are exceptions, for example, when a student transfers because his/her mentor is moving to Vanderbilt University.

Registration

Students must maintain registration until the completion of the degree. If a student has completed all of the required hours and has passed the Qualifying Examination, he/she can register for 0 hours of Ph.D. research and pay \$200 minimum tuition, which will confer full-time student status and eligibility for all student services. Registration during the summer session is at the discretion of the student and the Director of Graduate Studies; however, students receiving stipend support during the summer must register. Students wishing to receive credit for summer work should take care to validate their registrations with the Graduate School; retroactive registration is not allowed. Of particular note, international students should consult with the International Office of Student and Scholar Services if there are any questions or concerns about the need to register for a particular semester.

Registration for currently enrolled students is held in November for the Spring semester and April for the following Fall semester. A pre-registration conference should be held between the student and the DGS to determine courses to be taken. Once decided, the student can register by OASIS. Each semester every registered student must fill out a Registration Data Form. This form is online at (www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/current_students/registration_data_form/index.html) or, if the online form is unavailable, a paper Registration Data Form is available at (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/current_students/registration_instructions/pdf/RD F.pdf).

In addition to the guidelines for registration mentioned above, the following notes might be helpful:

a) The scheduling conference is an ideal time to review the student's progress. The registration process should be looked upon as an academic activity rather than a mechanical activity of "signing up" the student. Progress and plans should be reviewed. This probably should be done along with the student's advisor.

b) Students who receive financial award should be making full-time progress toward their degrees. These students should register for at least 9 semester hours (12 hours preferred), unless the program has made explicit alternate arrangements with the Graduate School. Students of exceptional ability are allowed to undertake even more than 13 hours, the number that has traditionally been considered the upper limit of full-time registration. Nine (9) hours is considered full time, 6-8 hours, half time and less than 6 hours, part time. Registering for less than 9 hours may impact upon repayment of student loans, visa status, health insurance, etc. Please note again, that once a student has completed the required number of hours (72), he/she can register for zero hours of 399, pay the minimum tuition of \$200, and still be considered full time. This reflects full time effort on research and prevents any loans from coming due. Registering for more than 72 hours is an unnecessary expense to the department, student or mentor and should be avoided if possible.

c) 300-level courses should be scheduled whenever possible. As the student progresses into the second and third years of the Ph.D. program, 200-level courses become less and less reasonable or desirable.

d) The most appropriate use of 399 registration is for the advanced student who has passed the qualifying examination. Where a limited amount of 399 work is allowed before the qualifying as a means of preparing the dissertation proposal, the method and purpose of this usage should be reviewed and understood by the DGS (see paragraph b, above).

e) In counseling the students, the DGS should help them understand that grades in courses may not reflect the talents expected in qualifying examinations and the dissertation. Course grades may not capture sufficiently a talent to synthesize, to bring information to bear on issues, or to define a significant research problem and devise or model a suitable approach or method to solve it.

Course change and course drop period.

Students may change their course registration during the first 10 days of classes each semester using OASIS. Students may withdraw from a course after the 10th day of classes until the mid-point of the semester but will receive a W grade for that course; however, students should be reminded that they will still be responsible for a percentage of the tuition based upon the date on which they withdrew from the course. These dates can be found in the Financial Information section of Graduate School Bulletin. After the mid-point in the semester, the only way a student's enrollment in a class can be altered is to withdraw formally from the university.

After the first 10 days, changes and withdrawals are conveyed to the Graduate School on a Change of Course Card that is signed by the DGS and becomes a record of the program's approval of the change. This also can be accomplished by sending a memo or e-mail from the DGS or department education coordinator to the Graduate School Registrar.

Care should also be taken to ensure that the student's schedule does not go below 9 hours unless the student has already obtained the required 72 hours. Adequate progress is required for supported students, and international students must maintain a full time enrollment. If a proposed course drop brings the schedule of a supported student below 9 hours, the recommendation must be accompanied by a petition and signed by the DGS, explaining the reasons for the drop.

Maintain Student Records

Accurate records are necessary if the DGS is to be effective in counseling students and monitoring progress. In addition to a file for correspondence and information about the student, the DGS should maintain a running cumulative record of the student's accomplishments, which includes the following information:

Courses taken and grades received

Transfer credit – what and how much

Number of hours taken each semester

Cumulative hours earned

Dates when language requirements, if appropriate, were met

Results of preliminary and qualifying examinations

Number of incompletes

Record of financial aid

List of Ph.D. Committee members

All communications with the student from DGS, adviser, Graduate School

Important: About one month after the beginning of each semester, the Graduate School sends to the DGS a copy of an updated transcript that the Graduate School has generated for each student in his/her program. This should be used by the DGS to monitor the student's progress and help make decisions about the next semester's registration. Also, if the department sends a request to the Graduate School,

the DGS can be added to their students' records to access by AAI (Access to Academic Information), which allows the DGS to monitor this information online.

Monitor Student Progress

As information is added to the student's record, the DGS will need to review the record to determine if progress is satisfactory and that no problems have arisen. Again, this should be done at a meeting with the student and his/her adviser. Has the semester's work been satisfactory? Have there been delays in meeting requirements? The Graduate School also reviews student progress each semester. Students who have failed to maintain standards may be placed on academic probation or dismissed by the Graduate School.

Careful attention should be made to the following when reviewing students' progress:

- a) **Grade point average.** Average should be B (3.0) or above. A student will receive a letter from the Graduate School placing him/her on probation if his/her cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0. If this continues through the next semester and in consultation with the DGS, the student may be dismissed
- b) **Number of hours completed.** Attention should be given to the number of hours in formal course work – seminars, classes, and dissertation research credits. If the student has more hours than required, he/she should be discouraged and prohibited from registering for more coursework. It is an unnecessary expense for the student or the department/program.
- c) **Language Requirements (if required).** The DGS should ensure that meeting the language requirements is not delayed so that it interferes with the completion of graduate studies. The results should be conveyed to the Graduate School as soon as completed so they may be posted on the student's transcript.
- d) **Qualifying Examination.** The Qualifying Examination is a major step in a Ph.D. program, but students' apprehension must not permit an unreasonable delay in taking the examination. A student should pass the Qualifying Examination no later than the end of their fourth year (8 semesters) of graduate studies. Requests for an extension of this deadline should include an explanation of the need for an extension, and must be approved by the Graduate School.

The recommendation for appointments to a student's Ph.D. Committee is the responsibility of the DGS, the student's adviser and the student. Members of the Ph.D. Committee should be Graduate Faculty. All Ph.D. committees appointed must be comprised of at least 4 faculty members, three from the student's department and one from outside the department. There may be more than 4 members on a committee. The Graduate School may approve one non-Graduate Faculty member to serve on a committee. This requires a letter of justification, i.e., why this person should be on this committee, and a copy of the proposed committee member's curriculum vitae. **It is very important for the Graduate School to receive requests to appoint the Ph.D. Committee and schedule the qualifying examination at least two weeks before the**

date of the examination. This is necessary in order to approve and appoint the committee and to verify the status of the student. A student must have completed his/her 24 hours of didactic coursework and must have passed the language requirement, if required, before taking the exam. The results form indicating the outcome (pass or fail) should be sent to the Graduate School immediately after the examination. The Qualifying Examination results form must be signed by the DGS. A student is usually given two opportunities to pass the examination. If unsuccessful on the second attempt, the student is officially dismissed from the Graduate School unless he/she has been given the option of receiving a Master's Degree.

e) **Progress on the dissertation.** After the qualifying examination is passed, there is a four-year (8 semester) limit for completing the dissertation. An extension beyond this time can be sought and given with the approval of the Graduate School. The DGS should determine that adequate progress is being made through reports from the adviser and the Ph.D. Committee and conferences with the student. The Ph.D. Committee should check the dissertation progress at least semi-annually and report to the DGS any concerns.

The DGS must maintain continuing relationship with the out-of-residence Ph.D. candidates to remind them of deadlines for completing the work and to encourage the committee to read and return materials quickly.

It is also the responsibility of the DGS or the Chair of the Ph.D. Committee to notify the Graduate School of the date, time, and place of the defense and the title of the dissertation. Since this is a public event, information about the defense should be provided at least two weeks prior to the examination to allow time for posting and circulating the information throughout the university. It is also important that the DGS ensure that the signed results form be sent to the Graduate School immediately after the Dissertation Defense. Once the student submits an Intent to Graduate form, the Registrar of the Graduate School will send a form for the DGS to complete to ensure further that the student has indeed met all the requirements of the program and the Graduate School and is eligible for graduation. There are three graduation dates – May, August and December. Those students receiving degrees in August and December may participate in the May graduation ceremony.

Appropriateness and Quality of Teaching and Research Duties

The duties assigned to a graduate student must be appropriate to the student's academic career. Teaching fellowships should be viewed as part of the educational experience; the University is training teachers as well as scholars. The graduate student must not be treated as a method for covering the necessary classes or laboratories. Variety of training and growth in command of the particular discipline should determine the assignments.

Research activities should be appropriate to the student's academic interests, and assignments should offer a variety of opportunities. The student should not be considered a research assistant and just another 'pair of hands' for the laboratory.

The DGS should be aware of the work assignments of each student and make suggestions for changes, if necessary.

The DGS may also want to contact or have the student contact the Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. Founded in 1986, the Center for Teaching (CFT) works to foster and sustain a culture at Vanderbilt that practices, values, and rewards university teaching and learning as vital forms of scholarship. We're eager to work with you as you support the teaching and professional development of your graduate students. The staff page of our web site provides information about liaison areas that will help you determine whom to contact when consulting with the CFT about graduate student teaching and professional development in your department or program.

The CFT offers a variety of programs and services to meet the needs of graduate students entering the teaching ranks. Programs specifically designed for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows include:

Teaching Assistant Orientation (TAO) prepares graduate students to assume their teaching duties with confidence by engaging them in interactive sessions about teaching methods and resources.

International Teaching Assistant Orientation (ITAO) introduces international teaching assistants to the culture of the American classroom and the International Teaching Assistant Program (ITAP), which helps them develop the English language and teaching skills to thrive in this culture.

The Teaching Certificate Program has been designed to help graduate students, professional students, and post-doctoral fellows develop and refine their teaching skills through three cycles of teaching activities, each consisting of inquiry, experimentation, and reflection phases.

International Teaching Assistant Program (ITAP) assists and supports international graduate students as they prepare for and begin their teaching duties at Vanderbilt.

Graduate Student Teaching Event for Professional Development (GradSTEP), held in January each year, invites all graduate and professional students, as well as post-doctoral fellows, for a day of exploration of teaching and professional development issues across the disciplines.

The Center strives to offer helpful information about all of these programs to academic departments and to work with DGSs as they communicate with graduate students in their departments in particular about TAO, ITAO, and ITAP. If you need further information or clarification about any of these programs, please consult the Graduate Student Programs section of our web site or contact a CFT staff member.

Additionally, they provide a number of services, open to any member of the university teaching community, that we hope you'll encourage graduate students to take advantage of. The services that graduate students at Vanderbilt most frequently use are: teaching observations, digital video consultations, SGAs (Small Group Analysis), student evaluations consultations, and consultations on teaching

documentation. Detailed information about these services is available in the Services for Individuals section of the CFT web site.

You may also find the **Graduate Student Professional and Personal Development Collaborative (GSPPD)** helpful as you mentor your graduate students and attend to their professional development. The GSPPD provides links to essential resources for graduate students on the services and resources page of its web site (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/gspdp/services_and_resources/index.html). This site is used as a means to disseminate, in a single location, information about the services, programs, activities, and events sponsored by GSPPD members. The participating offices—and others are welcome and regularly added—include the Graduate School, Center for Teaching, Career Center, International Student and Scholar Services, Women's Center, Psychological and Counseling Center, Biomedical Research Education and Training, the Graduate Student Council, and a number of school dean's offices. The Collaborative meets regularly to discuss emerging issues of common interest (e.g., orientation for new students, dissertation support groups, mental health resources, harassment) and co-sponsorship of events. The GSPPD is well publicized with the assistance of the Graduate Student Council and through the member offices.

DGSs are encouraged to become familiar with the web site, check it periodically, and remind their students to be aware of the site as a resource.

Finally, we encourage you to read the CFT's web document, Resources for Graduate Education, which provides resources for department chairs, directors of graduate studies, graduate faculty, graduate deans, and others interested in the quality of graduate education.

Other Responsibilities of the DGS

The DGS should call to the attention of students and faculty the rules governing the Graduate Student Honor Code at Vanderbilt and the consequences of their violation.

The DGS should help seek external funding for graduate students. He/She should help the student explore the possibilities for outside funding to allow the program to accommodate more students. The DGS should encourage and be aware of proposals for grants to the department or individual faculty members. Principal investigators should be encouraged to put graduate student support in their research grant budget to the fullest extent possible. The DGS should also encourage students to seek external sources of support and should call to their attention any opportunities that are available. The stronger the student, the more he or she should be encouraged to enter external competitions.

The DGS, along with the student's mentor, is encouraged to help students plan and find their next positions. Through contacts within their profession, the DGS and faculty members in the program can be very influential in helping find placement for the recent graduates – postdoctoral positions, academic positions, or other forms of employment. The DGS should help coordinate placement efforts, noting openings and calling these to the attention of students, e.g., a bulletin board specifically dedicated to graduate student activities.

The Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate School

The DGS is the main point of contact between the Graduate School and the program. In addition to the formal aspects of graduate education, registration, grading, examinations, there are the ongoing, day-by-day activities that demand time and attention. Full communication between the Graduate School and the DGS is important.

Personnel in the Graduate School Office are available for consultation and interpretation. The Graduate School considers the DGS the chief source of information concerning the students in the program, thus the role is central to a successful and efficient graduate program and the Graduate School.

Personnel in the Graduate School

Dennis G. Hall, PhD, Associate Provost for Graduate Education

Steven H. Smartt, PhD, Assistant Provost for Graduate Education and Research

Richard L. Hoover, PhD, Associate Dean

Barry Kendall, Registrar, Graduate School

Liz Leis, Registrar Assistant, Graduate School

Walt Bieschke, Program Coordinator for Admissions

Jon Bates, Admissions' Coordinator

Marian McAlpin, Administrative Assistant

To be appointed, Office Assistant

To be appointed, Office Assistant

Forms that may be encountered as the Director of Graduate Studies:

1. Recommendation for Action Form (This form is now only accessible online in the Excalibur Admission System at https://graduateapplications.vanderbilt.edu/admin/admin_logon.asp.)
2. Registration Data Form (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/current_students/registration_instructions/registration_data_form/index.html)
3. Course request form (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/current_students/registration_instructions/pdf/CRF.pdf)
4. Request for Graduate Credit (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/current_students/pdf/Request%20for%20Graduate%20Credit.pdf)
5. Advisor Approval Card (Available from the Graduate School Registrar.)
6. Request to Appoint Ph. D. Committee form (Adobe PDF document http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/information_for_faculty/pdf/Request%20to%20Appoint.pdf or Microsoft Word document http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/information_for_faculty/doc/Request%20to%20Appoint%20PhD.doc)
7. Change of Course Form (Available from the Graduate School Registrar.)
8. Results of Qualifying Examination form (Adobe PDF document http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/information_for_faculty/pdf/Quals%20Results.pdf, or Microsoft Word document

http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/information_for_faculty/doc/Qualifying%20Examination%20Results%20Form.doc.)

9. Results of Dissertation Defense (Adobe PDF document http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/information_for_faculty/pdf/Dissertation%20Results.pdf, or Microsoft Word Document http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/information_for_faculty/doc/Dissertation%20Defense%20Results%20Form.doc.)
10. Submission of Final grade for Temporary or Missing Grade Form (Available from the Graduate School Registrar.)
11. Petition for Change of Grade Form (Available from the Graduate School Registrar.)
12. Student – Change of name form (http://registrar.vanderbilt.edu/namechange_form.pdf)