

# Admission to the Graduate Program

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<http://www.jmu.edu/gradschool>

Only the following materials should be submitted (preferably in one large envelope) directly to the Graduate School, MSC 2602:

- official graduate application form
- \$50 nonrefundable application fee
- official transcripts (in individually sealed envelopes from all previously attended institutions) \*
- official standardized test scores (GRE or GMAT) \*

Graduate applications will not be processed without application fees. Fee waivers are not available. \*Official transcripts and standardized test scores may be submitted separately from the application and fee; however, to ensure faster processing, all required materials should be submitted in one envelope.

Any supporting documentation or additional program-specific requirements should be mailed in a separate envelope directly to the graduate program to which application is being made. The envelope containing these additional materials should be clearly marked "graduate application materials."

Many departments/schools have specific deadlines for application review; be sure to check with the specific program area to see if additional deadlines apply.

Applications which are not completed within 150 days will not be processed for admission. Students are advised to check on the status of their application.

## Admission Requirements

Admission requirements for graduate study at JMU are as follows:

- graduation from a regionally accredited college or university;
- satisfactory grade point average;
- satisfactory test scores from a standardized test commonly used and deemed appropriate for the particular discipline (generally 25th percentile);
- official transcripts from all colleges or universities attended; and
- such additional requirements as may be established by individual programs and schools. These may include personal interviews, auditions, submission of a portfolio or other materials.

An application cannot be given final consideration until all required credentials and supporting documents have been received. Applications for admission to the Graduate School will be reviewed by the department heads or school directors in which the applicant wishes to major or minor. Applicants must be accepted by the departments or schools in which they desire to study and be approved by the dean of the Graduate School. Students will be notified of the disposition of their applications by the Graduate School office.

## Application Deadlines

The Graduate School has a rolling admission policy. However, to guarantee your application will be reviewed in time to meet your anticipated date of registration, you should submit your completed application by the following dates:

- Summer session – April 1
- Spring semester – November 1
- Fall semester – July 1

Additional admission information is required for international students.

## Reserve Graduate Credit (Admission to Graduate Courses of Undergraduates Seeking Graduate Credit)

Undergraduate students nearing completion of their undergraduate degrees may take up to nine hours of graduate course work for reserve graduate credit during their senior year after being accepted to the Graduate School in the usual manner. Graduate credit earned prior to completion of an undergraduate degree is held in reserve to be applied later toward a graduate degree.

Written permission to seek reserve graduate credit must be obtained from the dean of the Graduate School prior to enrollment in these courses; forms are available in the Graduate School office. It is the student's responsibility to obtain all required signatures.

Students enrolled in five-year programs must abide by the policies governing reserve graduate credit stated above.

Approval for reserve graduate credit does not imply that credit so earned will be accepted at another graduate school. Credit for the same course is not given toward both graduate and undergraduate degrees.

## International Students

JMU encourages applications for graduate study from qualified international students. In order for the university to qualify with the U.S. government as an educational institution for international students, certain criteria must be determined.

Requests for information concerning federal regulations, visa, health and insurance should be directed to Dr. Bijan Saadatmand, Director, Office of International Student and Foreign Faculty Services, (540) 568-6119; [saadatbx@jmu.edu](mailto:saadatbx@jmu.edu); or <http://www.jmu.edu/dir.isfs>.

Requests for application, admission or any academic issues must be forwarded to the Graduate School. All initial inquiries must be conducted through the Graduate School. Correspondence with particular departments or program coordinators is strongly discouraged.

All international students applying for admission to the Graduate School must satisfy the following requirements:

- have the necessary ability and educational background to benefit from experiences in this institution;
- demonstrate proficiency in English sufficient to carry a full program of graduate study through submission of a satisfactory score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (<http://www.toefl.org>);
- have all funds necessary for expenses during the entire period of the student's stay without resorting to employment while in the United States (although the university has no financial assistance reserved exclusively for international students, after acceptance they may compete for appropriate financial aid);
- official transcripts sent directly to JMU from the institution granting the baccalaureate degree. An external evaluation of the academic record must be submitted to ensure that it is comparable to an American baccalaureate degree;
- allow 12 months between application for admission and the semester the applicant requests to enroll at the university, if the student is residing outside the United States;
- submit an application and \$50 nonrefundable application fee (in U.S. dollars) six months in advance of the intended term of entry if transferring from another college or university in the United States or after completing a baccalaureate degree in a U.S. institution; and
- enter the United States on a valid student or other visa.

Effective April 1, 1997, graduate program coordinators will have 150 days from the program application deadline or from the date mailed from the Graduate School to the program coordinator to act upon student applications. Applications which have not been acted upon by the stated deadline will receive notification from the Graduate School that their application has not been reviewed favorably and that they will not be accepted into the Graduate School. Applicants are advised to apply only if they meet (or can quickly meet) all minimum criteria.

The university has a director of international student services to assist all international students with adjustment to the university.

## Entrance Examinations

In addition to other student achievement records as a basis for admission to the Graduate School, standardized examination scores offer evidence concerning the qualifications of students seeking to undertake graduate work.

All JMU graduate programs must consider the scores from an appropriate and commonly used standardized test, such as the Graduate Record Examination and Graduate Management Admission Test in the admission process. Applicants must also achieve a satisfactory score on the entrance examination required by the program to which admission is sought.

## Graduate Record Examination

An official record of scores on the general test of the Graduate Record Examination must be submitted with the student's application for admission to the Graduate School. A minimum score of 25 percent is expected. For information on the GRE, contact <http://www.gre.org>.

The subject test in the area of specialization may be required upon recommendation of the department head, school director or major adviser.

Test scores are unacceptable if dated more than five years prior to the date they are submitted to the Graduate School.

## Graduate Management Admission Test

Prior to admission, applicants for the Master of Business Administration and the Master of Science in accounting degrees will be required to take the Graduate Management Admission Test. A minimum score of 25 percent is expected. For information on the GRE, contact <http://www.gmat.org>.

The GMAT measures general verbal and mathematical skills and is designed to aid assessment of student qualifications for advanced study in business and management.

Test scores are unacceptable if dated more than five years prior to the date they are submitted to the Graduate School.

## Application

Application may be made to only one graduate program at a time. No provision is made at JMU for dual-program graduate study. Application forms and materials may be obtained from the Graduate School. If requested, the graduate catalog, information regarding financial aid, GRE and GMAT testing information, and class schedules for the following semester can also be mailed or picked up at the Graduate School office.

Graduate program coordinators will have 150 days from the program application deadline or from the date mailed from the Graduate School to the program coordinator to act upon student applications. Applications which have not been acted upon by the stated deadline will receive notification from the Graduate School that their application has not been reviewed favorably and that they will not be accepted into the Graduate School. Applicants are advised to apply only if they meet (or can quickly meet) all minimum criteria.

Applicants who have properly submitted all requested materials are encouraged to contact program coordinators directly to check on the status of their application.

## Procedures

- Complete and return the application for graduate admission along with the nonrefundable and nontransferable application fee of \$50. These must be received at least 60 days prior to the time an applicant requests enrollment. A late application will be considered for admission whenever possible, but may require registration as a special student.
- Include official transcripts in sealed envelopes or request all previously attended colleges to send official transcripts of college records directly to the dean of the Graduate School.
- Submit official GRE or GMAT standardized test scores.
- If admission as a full-time student is indicated, a medical form will be forwarded to the applicant. Full-time graduate students must have a completed health record on file at the JMU Health Center before registration.

## Offer of Admission to the Graduate School

The dean of the Graduate School will send a written offer of admission to an applicant who has been accepted. This specifies the effective date of admission (which normally coincides with the semester requested on the application), the category of admission being offered, and the name of the faculty adviser assigned to the applicant. The offer of admission is good for one year.

The applicant should send a written acceptance or rejection of the offer of admission to the Graduate School admission office as soon as a decision on graduate study has been made.

A student who enrolls at another institution is considered to have rejected the university's offer of admission. An individual whose offer of admission has lapsed must submit a new application and fee to be reconsidered for admission at a later date.

## Reapplication

Students who are accepted but do not enroll within a one-year period from the semester date for which they were accepted must obtain new application forms from the Graduate School, initiate the application process as new students and pay all fees as stated in the application process.

## Reactivation

Students who have enrolled previously but have taken no course work during a two-year interval will be deactivated. Once deactivated, a student must reapply to the Graduate School, submitting a new application form with required application fees to continue with graduate studies. Transcripts of any course work taken during the two-year interval from any other college or university will also be required.

## Change of Degree Program

Admission to the Graduate School in one program does not entitle a student to transfer to another department or school without applying and being accepted by the new department or school as a new student. Any student wishing to change a degree or major must submit a new application to

the Graduate School as well as all materials and fees required of a new applicant.

## Attendance and Continuance

Once admitted, it is anticipated that a graduate student will enroll in classes each semester until the degree is awarded. After beginning work on the thesis or dissertation, students are required to enroll in thesis or dissertation continuance each semester. (See Page 18 for thesis/dissertation continuance.) All graduate students must be registered during the semester they graduate. (See Page 18 for comprehensive continuance.)

## Time Limitations

Graduate students must complete all degree requirements within six years. Academic work, including transfer credit, taken more than six years before the date at which the master's or doctoral degree is awarded may not be used to satisfy the degree requirements. Students may, however, submit petitions through their advisers and department heads or school directors to the dean of the Graduate School to receive extensions of time in the event of extenuating circumstances.

A student whose status is deactivated due to a two-year lapse in course work at this university, and later is reactivated through application to the Graduate School, may not count the six-year time limit as beginning on the date of reactivation.

## Admissions Classifications

Applicants may be admitted to the Graduate School or to graduate study at the university under three classifications: unconditional, conditional, or provisional admission.

### Unconditional Admission

Unconditional admission is admission to a graduate program without reservation and indicates a sound academic background in preparation for a specific program of graduate study.

### Conditional Admission

Conditional admission is admission to a graduate program with reservations as indicated in the letter of acceptance. Such reservations are usually deficiencies in undergraduate preparation which must be removed by the applicant. Upon removal of the conditions, the student may make a written request directed through their adviser to the dean of the Graduate School for a change of status to unconditional.

### Provisional Admission

Students who have not fully met the requirements of the program or school to which admission is sought may be granted admission with a provisional status as prospective candidates for a degree. Such students must have as their initial objective the removal of provisional conditions to achieve advancement to regular status.

Provisional admission is a probationary status; the requirements for advancement to regular status are specified in the student's provisional admission letter. To change from provisional to regular status, students must submit a written

request to the major adviser. The adviser will forward the request to the dean of the Graduate School.

Approval for graduate credit earned while enrolled in a provisional status will be determined by the dean of the Graduate School upon recommendation of the appropriate department head or school director. Up to nine hours of graduate credit taken in this status may be transferred to a degree program upon the recommendation of the department head or school director and approval of the dean of the Graduate School. Only six hours of 500-level workshop courses can be applied to a degree program.

Regulations concerning unsatisfactory progress (Page 20) apply to this classification.

Post-baccalaureate students wishing to enroll in graduate courses, but who are not admitted to the graduate school, may do so as special students.

## Office of Continuing Education

The mission of the Office of Continuing Education is to use available educational technology to extend the resources of the university community to citizens in order to provide continuing professional development and outreach services that enhance personal development of individuals and stimulate economic development.

The continuing education office administers credit courses and coordinates noncredit continuing education programs. The university recognizes that many people have educational needs but cannot or do not desire to attend college on a full-time or degree-seeking basis. JMU attempts to meet those needs.

Credit courses leading to graduate degrees are offered off campus when there is demand and sufficient enrollment to support the courses. Off-campus credit instruction features the same course work that is available on campus. Special customized training is provided when requested by community or institutional groups.

The university provides teachers with in-service training by offering courses designed for teacher licensure, relicensure and graduate degrees in selected professional teaching fields. JMU provides graduate courses pursuant to the Master of Business Administration in Charlottesville and the Master of Science (speech-language pathology) in northern Virginia.

In addition to off-campus instruction, the university also offers on-campus courses through the Office of Continuing Education to promote lifelong learning.

## Post-baccalaureate or Post-master's Students

Graduates of accredited institutions who wish to take courses and who do not wish to pursue advanced degrees may enroll as special students. These nondegree-seeking post-baccalaureate or post-master's students may register for classes but are not admitted to the Graduate School.

They may choose to take classes on a nondegree-seeking basis because they do not currently desire to work toward a graduate degree or because the university does not offer a degree higher than the one they already hold.

Post-baccalaureate or post-master's students may enroll in undergraduate and 500-level courses. They may also

register, with prior written approval, for 600 or 700 graduate-level courses.

Students who are enrolled as special students should understand that graduate work taken in this status carries full graduate credit but does not necessarily apply toward a degree at JMU or imply preferential consideration when applying to the Graduate School.

If at a later date, the student applies for and enrolls in the Graduate School, a maximum of nine credit hours taken at the post-baccalaureate or post-master's level may be applied to a degree program upon the recommendation of the department head or school director and approval of the dean of the Graduate School. Like all courses within a graduate program, such courses must have been completed during the six years immediately prior to the conferring of the degree.

Graduates of an accredited institution who wish to enroll in 600-level graduate courses offered by the College of Business must be admitted as degree-seeking graduate students.

## Transient Special Students

A graduate student holding a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution and presently working toward a graduate degree at an accredited institution other than JMU is known as a transient special student.

Transient special students must re-enroll each semester at JMU and may take up to 11 hours of graduate credit per semester.

In addition to the enrollment form for special students, transient special students must submit documentation of good standing at their home college or university and must specify that the courses undertaken at JMU are to be transferred to the home institution. These requirements must be completed prior to registration each semester. Generally, these courses should not be available at the home institution during that semester.

## Further Information

For further information pertaining to continuing education, contact the Office of Continuing Education, MSC 2502, James Madison University, Paul Street House, Harrisonburg, VA 22807, (540) 568-7088.

## Admission of Veterans

The Graduate School encourages veterans to apply for admission as full- or part-time students. For information contact the Veterans Coordinator, Office of the Registrar, MSC 1005, (540) 568-6569.

## Foreign Language

A reading knowledge of a foreign language is required in those departments or schools which so specify.