



VCU

Graduate School

Guidelines for Graduate Program Directors and Advisors for eServices Graduation Checkout/Graduate School Application to Graduate Process

I. E-mail Notification of All Graduate Students

- A. At the beginning of each semester, all matriculated graduate students will receive an e-mail reminder from the Records & Registration/Graduation Office to initiate the application to graduate process if they intend to graduate **in the current semester**.
1. The online eServices process is available and required for undergraduate and graduate students only. Students in professional programs (D.D.S., D.P.T., M.D., Pharm.D.) should continue to follow application to graduate guidelines provided by their professional program advisors unless otherwise notified.
 2. Students enrolled in more than one undergraduate and/or graduate program (i.e., B.S. and M.T., B.S. to M.S., Graduate Certificate/M.S., Graduate Certificate/Ph.D., etc.) may initiate the eServices graduation checkout procedure for both programs at the same time; however, they still must complete a separate application to graduate package for each program from which they intend to graduate.
 3. Students who intend to graduate from both a graduate and professional program (i.e., M.D./Ph.D.) may initiate the online eServices graduation checkout procedure for the graduate program only and will need to apply to graduate from the professional program according to the guidelines provided by their professional program advisors.

NOTE: All graduate students in the **School of Medicine** are asked to complete a preliminary review before initiating the online eServices graduation checkout procedure and are referred to the School of Medicine guidelines or to their advisors/graduate program directors regarding application to graduate procedures.

- B. The e-mail notification will be sent to the student's official VCU e-mail address.
- C. The e-mail will include submission deadlines for students.
1. Advisors will be notified of their processing deadlines via separate e-mails from the R&R/Graduation Office to all Deans and the Graduate School in order to minimize the last-minute submission of applications to advisors.

2. Students may apply to graduate for a current semester only. Retroactive awarding of degrees is not allowed, and processing for future graduation periods will not be available until e-mail notification for that semester has been sent.
 3. The graduation checkout process may still be initiated by students and processed by advisors after the posted deadlines; however, the posted deadlines **MUST** be met in order to ensure that students' names, etc. will be included in the appropriate Commencement program (December, May graduations).
- D. The e-mail will remind graduate students that they must be enrolled in the semester in which they intend to graduate.
- E. The e-mail will remind students that initiation of the online eServices checkout portion of the application to graduate process will prohibit future registration in the program.
1. If students initiate the online eServices checkout by mistake, they should contact the R&R/Graduation Office (828-1917) **immediately** to have the action rescinded and the registration restriction removed.

II. E-mail Notification of Graduate Program Directors

- A. The Graduate School will e-mail all graduate program directors via their Dean's Offices with a reminder of all processing deadlines
- B. Graduate program directors and faculty will be directed to the VCU Reporting Center to access various reports/queries that exist to assist them in the application to graduate process.

The Graduate School Graduation Check Report is available on the VCU Reporting Center web site. Entries are updated overnight, so there is a one-day lag before actions are reflected in the report.

- Sign on to your myVCU portal
- Click on the VCU Reporting Center
- Click on the Graduate Program Directors folder
- Choose the Graduate School Graduation Check report

The Graduate School Graduation Check Report is NOT a full degree audit and does not check for curricular requirements. The report is run against:

- (1) students who have received grades of C, D, F [impacts graduate GPA and "C" or below calculations]
- (2) students who have received grades of U [Did/will students receive final grade of S?]
- (3) students who have cumulative graduate GPAs below 3.0
- (4) students who have ungraded classes [Report will also show ungraded UG courses which you do not need to resolve unless they were prerequisite or provisional requirements for the graduate degree.]

On the report - the final grade column is either blank or shows a code of NR.

On the student's academic history – the NR code appears in semester during which the course was taken. If a grade is completely missing, the ungraded course will show up at the end of the academic history under the "Courses in Progress" heading.

(5) students with temporary grades of I or FI that must be converted to final grades

Other requirements that cannot be captured by the report still need to be addressed. Please notify us ASAP of these issues, since we have no way to identify them from the report. For example:

(1) The requirement that 50% of required course work be designated exclusively for graduate students

(2) The graduate GPA is calculated against all graduate course work ever taken, so there may be some grades that should be discounted from GPA and/or 20% C or below calculations.

Refer to the Graduate Bulletin

<http://www.pubapps.vcu.edu/BULLETTINS/graduate/?uid=10045&iid=30072> and the front page of the graduation application http://www.enrollment.vcu.edu/rar/docs/grad_app_v3.pdf for a complete listing of all graduation requirements established by the University Graduate Council.

III. Graduate students who do not plan to graduate in the current semester should disregard the e-mail.

IV. Completion of online eServices portion of application to graduate checkout procedure

1. Students planning to graduate in the current semester should proceed to the eServices web site <http://www.eservices.vcu.edu/> to complete the online eServices portion of the graduation checkout procedure.
2. The student will log into the student's eServices account and then go to the STUDENT tab.
3. The student selects Student Records.
4. The student selects APPLY TO GRADUATE.
5. The student selects the Primary Degree. Click CONTINUE.
6. If the student has more than one program listed, the student will select the Primary Degree and continue through the process. Once complete, they will have to start the process over again to select the Secondary Degree.
7. The student selects the appropriate GRADUATION DATE. Click CONTINUE.
8. The student selects the appropriate ATTEND CEREMONY option. Click CONTINUE.
9. The student selects one of the DIPLOMA NAME options.
10. If the student selects NEW, then the student will be able to make changes for graduation purposes only to the current Banner name. Click CONTINUE.
11. The student can make name changes here. If the Diploma Name appears correct, then the student selects CONTINUE. If changes need to be made, then the student can make them in the appropriate fields. Click CONTINUE.
12. The student then verifies the information. If everything appears correct, then the student selects SUBMIT REQUEST.

13. Once the student has completed the online eServices process, the student will receive a message advising them to complete the Graduation Application.
14. The student should exit the eServices system and go to the Graduation Forms website address provided at the bottom of the Academic Program and Graduation Checkout screen to complete the application to graduate forms www.vcu.edu/enroll/forms/graduation.

V. Completion of Application to Graduate documentation for submission to advisors for review and approval

1. The graduation forms of the application to graduate process are provided in PDF format so that the student can complete the forms online, print, and save in document form. Adobe Acrobat Reader is required.
2. A separate set of graduation forms must be completed and submitted for each program from which a student intends to graduate
3. Students are reminded that they should have first completed steps 1-3 on eServices. If the student has not done so, the student should go to the eServices website provided in the original e-mail notification to complete the online eServices portion of the graduation checkout process first.
4. Graduate students are instructed to complete and submit the following to their academic advisors:
 - a. One copy of the Academic Program and Graduation Checkout screen with the message showing that the student has successfully completed the online eServices degree checkout portion of the process (**printed from eServices**)
 - b. One copy of the unofficial graduate transcript (**printed from eServices**)
 - c. One copy of the Application to Graduate – For All Graduate Students (Parts I through IV)
5. Special instructions for submission of these forms for School of Business and School of Allied Health Professions students are provided. All other graduate students are instructed to submit their applications to their academic advisors.

NOTE: All graduate students in the **School of Medicine** are asked to complete a preliminary review before initiating the online eServices graduation checkout procedure and are referred to the School of Medicine guidelines or to their advisors/graduate program directors regarding application to graduate procedures.

6. A direct link to the Application to Graduate for Graduate Students is provided. The application consists of:
 - a. Part I: Instructions/Checklist including
 - 1) Instructions for students and advisors regarding submission of documentation and the approval process
 - 2) A checklist, divided into current and pending actions, summarizing for all advisors and graduate program directors the academic policies and requirements for graduation as

determined by the University Graduate Council and articulated in the Graduate Studies at VCU section of the *Graduate and Professional Programs Bulletin*
<http://www.vcu.edu/bulletins/200304/gpb/>

- b. Part II: Approval Sheet, requiring a preliminary review/approval, a final review/approval, and a process by which advisors can notify the R&R/Graduation Office of students who do not complete their programs of study by the end of the current semester.

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) Preliminary and final approval signatures indicate that all graduate academic advisors, program directors, and deans' designees are confirming their reviews of all **current and pending** documentation against all major, school, Graduate School and Graduate Council degree requirements, are certifying that all degree requirements have been fulfilled, including (if applicable) the successful defense of thesis/dissertation **and all related Electronic Thesis Dissertation (ETD) processing**, and are approving the candidate for the awarding of the degree.
- 2) The final approval signature confirms that **all pending actions have been finalized** (especially the conversion of all temporary grades to final grades and the submission of all documentation related to ETD processing).
- 3) **The R&R/Graduation Office DOES NOT CHECK these pending actions. Submission of Part II: Approval sheet with the final approval signature(s) in Section C is confirmation to the R&R/Graduation Office that the deans' designees have done so.**
- 4) No degree will be posted, nor will any diploma be released until the R&R/Graduation Office has received a copy of this signed form.

Please remind students to complete a final check of their academic records BEFORE they exit the university to ensure that all temporary grades have been converted, that the record accurately reflects their academic histories, and that their degrees have been posted. The university is required to maintain student files, documentation supporting grading actions, student correspondence, etc. for three years only. Students frequently leave with grades of Incomplete still recorded for courses that were not required for their graduate programs. These Incompletes convert to F's after they have graduated; however, students do not realize that this action has occurred until they request transcripts, sometimes as much as a decade later, at which point, it is impossible to obtain documentation to support the change of grades.

C. Part III: Commencement Program/Diploma Information

1. Information must be submitted no later than the deadlines provided in the e-mail notification to the student in order to ensure inclusion in the appropriate Commencement Program.
2. Students are required to sign a statement at the bottom of this form acknowledging that they are responsible for settling all financial obligations with the Office of Student Accounts and that the University will not release official transcripts or diplomas until all financial obligations are met.

D. Part IV: Graduation Worksheet (OPTIONAL)

1. This form is labeled Optional, since some program directors have indicated a preference to work directly from/on the academic transcript.
2. Any program wishing to use the worksheet should instruct their graduate students to complete and submit the form in addition to the required documentation.