

# Oglala Lakota College

## GRADUATE POLICY



**Oglala Lakota College**  
**Graduate Studies Department**  
**Kyle, South Dakota 57752**  
**(605) 455-6006**  
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## **GRADUATE STUDIES DEPARTMENT POLICY**

### **POLICY**

Oglala Lakota College develops and offers graduate level degree programs and courses in harmony with the mission and purposes of the College. These programs emphasize the Lakota perspective.

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### **PROCEDURES**

#### **I. Graduate Studies Oversight:**

- A. Oglala Lakota College offers the following graduate degrees:
  - 1. Master of Arts in Lakota Leadership and Management
  - 2. Master of Arts in Lakota Leadership and Management: Education Administration
  
- B. The Director of Graduate Studies chairs the Policy and Review Committee consisting of the Vice President for Instruction, four (4) academic department chairpersons and three (3) faculty members with earned PhD's. The Policy and Review Committee's functions include:
  - 1. Approval of graduate faculty members.
  - 2. Review of graduate degrees, programs, and courses.
  - 3. Recommend new graduate degree programs and courses to Instructional Affairs Committee.
  - 4. Review and recommend changes in graduate policies and procedures.
  - 5. Approve advisory board membership.
  
- C. Each degree program will have an advisory board composed of community members, field professionals, full time faculty, and one graduate student carrying at least three (3) credit hours. Advisory boards shall:
  - 1. Provide wolakolkiciyapi to each degree program.
  - 2. Serve as external advocates to the program.
  - 3. Assist in fund raising for the program.
  - 4. Provide advice to the Director of the Graduate Studies Department.
  - 5. Meet at least biannually.
  - 6. Consist of not less than five (5) or more than seven (7) members.

## **II. Student Related**

All students must submit a completed graduate application for admission form prior to enrolling in graduate courses and have a bachelor's degree or an earned graduate degree from an accredited academic institution.

- A. There are two (2) types of admission.
  - 1. Degree Admission – a degree admission is intended for students seeking one of the Master's degrees.
    - a. Students must meet admission requirements for the specified master's degree they are seeking as defined in Graduate Studies Handbook.
  - 2. Non-Degree Admission – a non-degree admission is intended for students seeking continuing education, certificate renewal, and personal enrichment.
- B. Student Course Load
  - 1. Full time status is six (6) graduate credit hours per semester.

## **III. Degree Programs**

- A. Academic Progress
  - 1. All graduate degree programs require nine (9) credit hours of Graduate Studies Department core courses.
  - 2. All graduate students enrolled in a degree program must receive at least a "B" in any course or will be placed in probationary status (student is restricted to taking three (3) credit hours the next semester and must receive a B or better).
  - 3. Students admitted to a graduate program may retake a core or required course once. If they receive less than a "B" grade the second time, they are on academic suspension. Suspended students must reapply for admission to the Graduate Program.
  - 4. Graduate students are required to apply for degree candidate status after completing nine (9) credit hours.
  - 5. Graduate students must complete all professional degree requirements specific for each Master's degree, including but not limited to core and professional course and program assessments.

B. Class size

Minimum class size for graduate courses is six (6), maximum size will be fifteen (15) or, at the discretion of the Graduate Studies Director, class size may be adjusted.

C. Grading

1. The instructor will grant credit for the course when course objectives are achieved and meet the rigor and competency of graduate coursework.
2. Instructors will assign grades according to Oglala Lakota College grading Policy, (A-B-C-D-F).
3. Incomplete grades are strongly discouraged. Only extreme, extenuating circumstances should result in an incomplete grade which must be made up before a student may enroll in additional graduate level courses.
4. Students enrolling in flex numbered, non-approved degree program graduate courses are subject to approval through the appropriate department, Graduate Director, and Vice President for Instruction.
5. Change of grade (See Appendix A, OLC Policy 76-200).

D. Attendance Policy

It will be at the discretion of graduate faculty to establish their attendance policy as stated in the course syllabus. Due to graduate level course expectations, it is recommended that faculty drop graduate students who miss 9 course contact hours.

E. Transfer Credits

1. Graduate students may transfer in six (6) graduate credit hours from another accredited institution upon review of official transcripts by the Director of the Graduate Studies Department.
2. Transfer credits cannot replace graduate studies core courses LakM 603, LakM 613, and LakM 633.
3. A maximum of nine (9) credit hours may be transferred from a non-degree seeking student status to a degree-seeking student status.
4. Time limitations on all professional degree required course credits transferred to the Oglala Lakota College Graduate Program from other accredited

institutions shall be no more than six (6) years, unless authorized by Graduate Department chair in specific instances.

5. OLC Graduate core and professional degree required course credits older than six (6) years from the date successfully completed must be retaken if the student has been inactive in graduate studies for six (6) or more years. (See Appendix B, OLC Policy 70-920 for authorization).

F. Independent Study

1. Students may enroll for three (3) graduate credit hours of independent study in their final semester(s) of coursework prior to enrollment in the six (6) credit hours of LakM 706 Community Action Project (CAP); LMEA 796 School Community Action Project (SCAP)/Internship; or in conjunction with LakM 703 A or LakM 703 B upon approval of Graduate Studies Director and appropriate faculty.
2. Students must have a GPA of 3.0 or better within their program of study before they are allowed to register for an independent study graduate course.
3. Students must not be on academic probation.

G. Status Sheets

Once a student enters a degree area, the student must obtain a status sheet for that degree program from the counselor or academic advisor and keep it as a permanent record of his/her progress. Students should always consult their status sheets when making course decisions and upon advisement of the Graduate Studies Department faculty and staff. If a student fails to maintain enrollment for one semester, and changes have been made to the status sheet, that student must follow the new status sheet. The Graduate Studies Office will retain copies of the status sheets.

H. Readmission

1. Degree seeking students who have been suspended must reapply for admission to the graduate program. Students must meet admission requirements for the specified master's degree they are seeking as defined in Graduate Studies Handbook.
2. Degree seeking students of the Oglala Lakota College Graduate program not enrolled for four (4) semesters or longer, must apply for readmission to the graduate program. Students must meet admission requirements for the specified master's degree they are seeking as defined in Graduate Studies Handbook.

I. Incomplete

1. Faculty and student must provide all information necessary to warrant incomplete grade. Faculty and student must sign an incomplete contract. Contract must be approved by the Chair of the Graduate Studies Department.
2. Incomplete grade must be made up before a student may enroll in additional graduate level courses. Incomplete grade cannot be extended beyond one calendar year.

J. Graduation requirements

1. All students must successfully complete 36 credit hours within the plan of study with a B or better, 3.00.
2. All students exiting their program of study must complete all assessment requirements specific for each Master's degree. Student must meet expectations as define in the OLC Graduate Studies Handbook.

K. Withdrawal from Graduate Classes

1. Students wishing to withdraw from a class must obtain a withdrawal card and send the official card to the Registrar's office and return a copy to the Graduate Studies Department. When the card has been properly completed and submitted, permission to withdraw will be given. It is the student's responsibility to complete the withdrawal process and to verify that the course is officially dropped.
2. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from the course if he/she fails to attend the first six (6) contact hours of class without notification to the instructor.
3. If the student discontinues the course and fails to follow the withdrawal procedure within the specified time frame, it may be recorded on his/her permanent record, and/or recorded as a failing grade and/or student will be liable for the total cost of tuition and fees (See Appendix D, OLC Policy 81-300).
4. See Appendix C, OLC Policy 81-400 for withdrawal refund.

**IV Graduate Faculty**

- A. All Oglala Lakota College full-time instructors and administrators with an earned doctorate are eligible to become members of the graduate faculty.

- B. Individuals without an earned doctorate may be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies, provided they have demonstrated expertise in the area to be taught and are able to supervise graduate research and or graduate level projects.
- C. Full-time faculty of undergraduate departments are approved to teach graduate courses by the Director of Graduate Studies or Vice President for Instruction in consultation with the appropriate Department Chairperson.
- D. Adjunct graduate faculty are approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.
- E. Scheduling:

The Director of Graduate Studies, in coordination with the Vice-President for Instruction, may schedule courses as part of special project offerings to designated constituencies.

- F. Faculty Teaching Load:
  - 1. One graduate course is equivalent to one and a half (1 ½) undergraduate course teaching loads per semester. The maximum teaching load for a full-time graduate instructor is nine (9) credit hours per semester. The minimum teaching load for a full-time graduate faculty member is six (6) credit hours. An approved non-teaching assignment will constitute the remainder of instructor's academic teaching load. No overloads are allowed when teaching graduate courses fulltime.
  - 2. Adjunct faculty instructors may teach one (1) graduate course per semester and may not teach any other graduate course during that semester. Exception: In the case that an interim class is taught an adjunct instructor may teach a second class as long as the dates in which the classes are taught do not overlap. Compensation is at 5/4 the associate rate for teaching undergraduate courses.
  - 3. Full time faculty for other departments may teach one (1) graduate course per semester upon approval from their respective Department Chair.
  - 4. Overload may be considered only when a full time faculty has not been approved to teach a graduate course as part of undergraduate teaching load. (Full-time faculty may teach one (1) graduate course (nine (9) hours undergraduate.
- G. Assessment
  - 1. Graduate faculty and adjunct faculty must complete all student course assessments related to student learning.



2. Graduate faculty, in coordination with the Graduate Studies Department chair and staff, must participate in student and program assessment as related to the degree, course and Graduate Studies Department.

## V. Student Grievance Policy

The grievance procedure set forth herein is designed to provide a method to resolve differences **excluding grievances regarding grades (76-200)**. Time lines are to be adhered to unless all parties involved in the grievance agree to modifications.

A grievance is defined to be a claim (request or complaint) by a student not covered under **the Personnel Complaints and Grievance** procedures.

### A. Student Grievance Procedure

Step 1: Student hereafter referred to as grievant, will submit a written grievance within ten (10) working days of the incident to the Director of Graduate Studies with proper documentation and stated outcomes.

Step 2: Director of Graduate Studies will attempt to resolve the issue by calling a meeting with the concerned parties. This meeting will be called within five (5) working days of receiving the written grievance.

Step 3: If the issue is not resolved at this level, the grievant will take it to the Vice President of Instruction. The Vice President for Instruction will attempt to resolve the issue by calling a meeting with the concerned parties. This meeting will be called within five (5) working days of receiving the written grievance from the student.

Step 4: If the issue is not resolved at this level within five (5) working days, the grievant will take it to the "Appeals Committee" which consists of one member each from the Graduate Advisory Board, student membership, graduate faculty, and Policy and Review Committee.

Step 5: If the issue is not resolved at this level within five (5) working days the grievant may make written submission to the President who must rule on the issue within ten (10) working days.

Step 6: If the issue is not resolved at this level within 10 working days, the grievant may request that the President's Secretary place this on the agenda of the next Board of Trustees Personnel/Grievance Committee.

#### NOTE:

- A. In the event the grievance involves the Director of Graduate Studies, the Vice President of Instruction will assume the role of the Director in this process.

- B. Student can have representation at their own expense.

## **VI. Academic Dishonesty**

To promote the value of honesty, plagiarism by a student will result in a hearing for immediate dismissal from graduate studies.

The Director of Graduate Studies will call a meeting within ten (10) days after receiving written complaint for plagiarism by the faculty member. A committee that consists of the Director for Graduate Studies, full time graduate faculty member, Graduate Policy Review Committee member, and Vice President of Instruction will hear the complaint. The student will be informed in writing by the Director for Graduate Studies of the committee decision within five (5) days.

There will be no appeal from a finding of dismissal.

**GRADING/CHANGE OF GRADES (POLICY)**

1. The instructor of each course shall be satisfied that the student has achieved competency in expected course objectives if credit is to be granted. Grades and assessment of students for credit work shall be the prerogative of the approved and assigned instructor within the grading policy of OLC.
  - A. The assigned instructor shall normally be the sole judge of the quality of student work and grades.
  - B. If an instructor becomes unavailable before completion of the course or of giving grades, another instructor may either complete the course or grade by special examination.
2. Change of Grade
  - A. Changes of grades occur only upon written notification to the Registrar by the assigned instructor. A grade becomes permanent and cannot be changed after two semesters have passed from the end of the semester in which the grade was assigned.
  - B. Grades given by an assigned instructor may be changed only by written notice to the Registrar by the same instructor.
  - C. If the instructor is no longer available, the student must consult with the appropriate department chairperson for a grade change.
3. Grade Grievances

Students with a grievance over a grade that has been assigned them by a faculty member may avail themselves of the following process to ensure that a careful review of the grade and the basis for it in the instructor's syllabus has been provided. However, in the end, it must be clear that only the faculty member can change the grade given. Students need to understand that grades have to represent a professional judgment on the level of academic performance and that hardship factors should not lead to a lowering of standards for student performance.

- A. The first step is for the student to request a meeting with the faculty member to present their case for a different grade than that assigned. If the faculty member finds they had overlooked some work, not calculated correctly, or been unfair, etc. He/she can submit a Change of Grade. If not, and the student is not satisfied, the student may proceed to step two.
  - B. If not satisfied with or unable to arrange step one, the student asks the Graduate Studies Director to arrange a meeting with the faculty member, and the Vice President for Instruction (within 12 weeks).
- I. The student and the faculty member are then to give each of these people a copy of documentation of their case and the reasons for their actions. The syllabus should be a key reference in each case.

- II. If the Director of Graduate Studies and the Vice President for Instruction agree with the grade assigned by the faculty member, the grade stands and no further action is warranted.
- III. If the Director of Graduate Studies and/or Vice President for Instruction come to a conclusion with the instructor that a change of grade is called for, the instructor will submit a Change of Grade.
- IV. If the Director of Graduate Studies and/or Vice President for Instruction feel a change is warranted and the faculty member cannot bring himself/herself to the same conclusion, no Change of Grade will be submitted and the faculty member's rights will stand inviolate. No further review is provided or allowed.

(Cross Ref.: 86-200 Student Grievances)