

## **CIAS Graduate Policy and Guidelines (RIT policies D12.0; D0.08)**

### **1.0 Policy Overview and Guidelines**

#### 1.0.1 Mission

Imaging arts and sciences play a significant and fundamental role in all of higher education, and especially at RIT where its long established graduate programs are internationally renowned and nationally ranked. The College of Imaging Arts and Sciences' (CIAS) graduate programs constitute the required advanced knowledge and skills for professions in art, photography, design, media sciences, film and animation, and crafts. The College prepares graduates for careers in imaging arts and sciences through the granting of graduate degrees in these areas.

#### 1.0.2 Introduction

CIAS Policy and Guidelines constitute the academic and personal expectations of graduate study in the College. It addresses significant aspects of graduate academic affairs, including advising, student conduct, academic honesty policy, probation and suspension, leave of absence, co-ops, thesis requirements, and the seven-year rule. CIAS Policy and Guidelines exist in compliance with those published by Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in its Institute Governance Policies (see <http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/universitypolicies>).

#### 1.0.3 Honor Code

Integrity and strong moral character are valued and expected within and outside of the CIAS community. As members of the larger RIT campus community, including students, staff, faculty, administrators, trustees, CIAS students will:

- a. Demonstrate civility, respect, decency and sensitivity towards fellow members of the CIAS community, and recognize that all individuals at this university are part of the larger RIT family, and as such are entitled to that support and mutual respect
- b. Conduct themselves with the highest standards of moral and ethical behavior. Such behavior includes taking responsibility for one's own personal choices, decisions and academic and professional work.
- c. Affirm through the daily demonstration of these ideals that CIAS is a college devoted to the pursuit of knowledge and a free exchange of ideas in an open and respectful climate.

## **1.1 Academic Advising**

Academic advising and scheduling are a primary responsibility of a degree program's graduate director. Detailed files are kept for each graduate student through the use of RIT's automated transcript audit system and program-specific documentation in the Office of Student Services and may be consulted for academic advising by the student's graduate director.

Graduate students should seek an appointment with their program graduate director on a semester basis to review course scheduling, thesis process and requirements, and take up any academic issue or personal issue that impacts satisfactory progress in their degree program. In emergency situations and if the program graduate director is unavailable, the Administrative Chair of the School shall serve as the primary advisor. In all cases, detailed records of all interactions and deliberations should be maintained to ensure fair and appropriate outcomes.

For general academic information, including program audit and certification of the graduate degree, the Office of Student Services and its academic advisors may assist the student directly or refer to an appropriate source.

## **1.2 RIT Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Matriculated students in CIAS maintain rights and responsibilities as outlined in the University's published RIT Student Rights and Responsibilities (see <http://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/studentconduct/rr.php>). This Policy outlines student responsibilities as to Honor Code, Student Conduct, Privacy and numerous other expectations of proper student conduct as a member of RIT and CIAS' community. This policy also addresses the Institute's Academic Conduct and Appeals Procedures.

## **1.3 Academic Conduct and Appeal Procedures**

Refer to this policy and see Institute Governance Policy D17.0 at

<http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/sectionD/D17.html>.

## **1.4 Academic Integrity Policy**

CIAS strictly adheres to RIT's Governance Policy regarding Student Academic Integrity Process (see section D8.0).

As a college of creative communities, CIAS is committed to the pursuit of knowledge and the free exchange of ideas. In such an intellectual climate it is fundamentally imperative that all members of the academic community behave in the highest ethical fashion possible in the manner by which they produce, share, and exchange information (e.g., images, data, text, etc.). In the case of students, academic integrity

demands that at all times student work be that of the individual student and that any information, images or data which a student uses in a work submitted for evaluation be properly documented. Any violation of these basic standards constitutes a breach of academic integrity and thus becomes academic dishonesty.

All CIAS graduate students will sign an Academic Integrity form documenting their understanding of the policy and its consequences. The form will be signed by graduate students during their program orientation at the beginning of their first academic year in CIAS. The signed form will be held in the student's file in Student Services (See Appendix A for Student Academic Integrity form).

#### 1.4.1 Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty falls into three basic areas: cheating, duplicate submission and plagiarism.

- a. Cheating: Cheating is any form of fraudulent or deceptive academic act, including falsifying of data, possessing, providing, or using unapproved images (in part or entirety), materials, sources, or tools for a work submitted for faculty evaluation.
- b. Duplicate Submission: Duplicate submission is the submitting of the same or similar work or images for credit in more than one course without prior approval of the instructors for those same courses.
- c. Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the representation of others' ideas as one's own without giving proper credit to the original author(s) and image maker(s). Plagiarism occurs when a student copies direct phrases from a text (e.g., books, journals, internet) or willfully appropriates all or any part of an image or object) (painting, photograph, design, film, craft, etc.) and does not give credit to the author(s) and/or image maker(s) of this information in the form of quotation marks, paraphrases or summaries. In all cases, if such information is not properly and accurately documented with appropriate credit given, then the student is guilty of plagiarism.

#### 1.4.2 Consequences of Academic Dishonesty

Any act of academic dishonesty will incur the following possible consequences. After notifying and presenting the student with evidence of such misconduct, the instructor has the full prerogative to assign an "F" for the offense, or to assign an "F" for the entire course. The instructor will inform and, if possible, meet with the student concerning the decision reached on the "F" grade for the offense, or the "F" grade for the entire course. A student may be brought before the Academic Conduct Committee of the College and may face academic suspension or dismissal from the

university (see policy D17.0, Academic Conduct and Appeals Procedures, and policy D18.0, RIT Student Conduct Process).

### **1.5 Academic Probation and Suspension Policy**

CIAS complies with RIT's Governance Policy pertaining to Academic Probation and Suspension (see policy D05.0).

Matriculated graduate full-time and part-time degree students will be placed on probation or suspended from the university according to the criteria enumerated below. Each matriculated graduate student will generate two different grade point averages. The university average reflects all course work completed at RIT. The program average reflects course work completed at RIT applicable to graduation in a student's current academic program. The current academic program refers to the university and the college degree course requirements specified by the degree granting college and noted in the graduate catalog. All actions are taken at the end of the quarter.

- a. Any matriculated graduate student whose semester program grade point average falls below a 3.00 (B average) after 9 semester credit hours will be placed on probation and counseled by the program graduate director in consult with student services concerning continuation in the graduate program.
- b. Those students placed on probation must raise their program semester grade point average to the 3.00 level within 9 semester credit hours or be suspended from their graduate program and the University.
- c. Should it be necessary to suspend a graduate student for academic reasons, the student may apply for readmission after one academic year via written appeal to the program graduate director upon demonstration of adequate reason for readmission.
- d. A student may petition the program graduate director for reconsideration of probation or suspension should the removal of an Incomplete grade "I" by the grading faculty member raise the program grade point average above those previously stated.

### **1.6 Leave of Absence**

A Leave of Absence may be considered if circumstances (family, personal emergencies, etc) preclude a graduate student from making satisfactory progress in their degree program. A Leave of Absence must have the prior approval of the

student's program graduate director in consult with the degree program's academic advisor.

A Leave of Absence may only be taken for a maximum of three consecutive semesters, including summer. Students should remember that they must complete their degree program of study within seven years from the time they took their first class toward their graduate degree (See section 1.10). Any student who fails to enroll for a course or for continuation of thesis after three consecutive semesters of Leave of Absence will automatically be withdrawn from the Institute. Students who wish to resume their degree program of study after being officially withdrawn from the University must apply for approval from their program graduate director for reinstatement of student status but only within the seven-year period since the first class taken toward the graduate degree.

### **1.7 Grading**

A 3.0 GPA (grade point average) must be maintained throughout graduate study. RIT policy states "D" or "F" grades do not count toward the fulfillment of degree requirements (see policy D.5, section E.2). However, they do count as part of the GPA calculation. Students earning a "D" in a course must re-take the course. All courses taken after completion of required credits are calculated in a graduate student's GPA.

### **1.8 Graduate Co-op Policy**

Co-op educational opportunities are optional for CIAS graduate students. Traditionally, co-ops are fulltime paid positions lasting three months of duration equal to one academic semester timeframe. Non-academic credit is granted for the co-op, but formal recording of the co-op is made on a student's transcript indicated by a grade of "S" or "F." Students are not eligible to receive scholarships or assistantships while on co-op.

#### **1.8.1 Eligibility**

To be eligible for a co-op, a CIAS graduate student must:

- a. Have an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher in graduate level courses;
- b. Be in good academic standing (i.e., not be on academic probation);
- c. Have successfully completed at least 6 graduate level courses.

Exceptions to this rule are

- i. In the case of two year graduate programs in which the summer term between the first and second year may be applicable to co-op status;
- ii. A graduate student enrolled in School of Media Sciences, who may choose to participate in a co-op at the end of their second year but prior to certification of

- their degree.
- d. Have at least one fulltime, credit-bearing academic term remaining in their graduate degree program, be enrolled in continuation of thesis credits or non-required elective courses;
  - e. Not have applied or received full-time equivalency status.

### 1.8.2 Co-op Approval

A co-op registration form must be completed by the student and approved by the student's program graduate director before the co-op is started. Graduate students should consult with personnel in the Office of Cooperative Education and Career Placement concerning the registration form and fill out the form on RIT's Job Zone (<https://careerservicesapps.rit.edu/coopCas/login?service=http://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/DrupalScripts/jobzone>). If this registration is not completed, the student will receive a grade of "I."

CIAS approves only one co-op registered per semester and only 2 non-consecutive co-ops registered in a student's entire academic degree program.

### 1.8.3 Co-op Requirements

Within the last two weeks of the semester in which the co-op is completed, the student must electronically submit a short written summary describing their employment and the co-op experience to RIT's Job Zone. The summary will be reviewed and approved by the graduate director of the student's degree program. This summary should include:

- a. Co-op job responsibilities and major achievements including job title, projects assigned, and daily responsibilities;
- b. Describe how your academic preparation (specify graduate core and elective courses) assisted you in your co-op;
- c. Explain how this experience satisfied your professional and career expectations in your field of study.

Students who have not submitted the required co-op report prior to the deadline of the end of grading period will be given a grade of "I" for their co-op. The incomplete grade of "I" will roll to an "F" grade after two consecutive semesters unless a change of grade form is submitted prior to end of second semester.

### 1.8.4 International Students and Co-op

International students with an F or J visa must have written authorization from an RIT international student services advisor and the student's program graduate director to be eligible for a co-op.

International students must have completed at least 2 semesters of full-time graduate study at RIT and have at least one fulltime, credit-bearing academic semester remaining in their degree program prior to continuation of thesis to be considered eligible for a co-op.

### **1.9 Advancement to Candidacy**

In CIAS, advancement to candidacy is a formal benchmark that signifies a graduate student has completed all of their required course work and is at the thesis stage of the degree program. The exception is the Master of Studies (MST) in Teaching that has no advancement to candidacy in its one year degree program. Graduate students should consult their degree program handbook for particular guidelines regarding advancement to candidacy and the constitution of the thesis process, including formation of a thesis committee, the writing and/or display of the thesis, and any formal public defense of the written and/or displayed thesis appropriate to the degree program. The thesis must be successfully defended and recorded on the graduate student's permanent record for final certification of their degree.

### **1.10 Seven-Year Rule**

In all cases, a graduate student must complete all the requirements of their degree within seven years from the date of the first class counted towards their degree program.

Extensions of the seven-year rule may be granted through a written petition to the dean of Graduate Studies who decides on behalf of the Graduate Council. In cases of unusual complexity, the dean of Graduate Studies may refer the matter to the Graduate Council for review. The dean of Graduate Studies will report annually to the Graduate Council, including all decisions for extensions. Students can apply through the program graduate director offering the master's program. Students may appeal any decisions of the dean of Graduate Studies to the Graduate Council (see RIT Governance Policy D12.0). CIAS graduate students should also consult the website of Office of Graduate Studies for policies, guidelines and resources (see <http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/gradstudies/index.html>).

### **1.11 Continuation of Thesis Policy**

CIAS adheres to the Institute's Governance Policy pertaining to Continuation of Thesis (see RIT policy D12.0, section H).

Once thesis work has begun, it is viewed as a continuous process until completion. If the graduate student has met all other requirements for the graduate degree, the student **must** register for Continuation of Thesis credit each semester until all degree requirements are fulfilled. This includes summer semester. The Continuation of Thesis course costs the equivalent of one-semester credit hour, although it earns

no credit. Tuition costs are waived for the summer semester, but graduate students must still register all three semesters of the academic year.

Graduate students registered for continuation of thesis credit but do not complete the thesis within the semester registered will receive an “R” grade from the program graduate director if thesis progress is deemed satisfactory. This grade is not used in GPA calculation. If thesis process is deemed unsatisfactory by the program graduate director, then an “F” grade will be given for continuation of thesis credit. Students should seek guidance from program graduate director and professional academic advisor concerning grading questions or issues.

Registration for Continuation of Thesis course enables students to access RIT services, including Wallace Library, academic computing, faculty and administrative support, Student Life Center and Student Health Center.

### **1.12 Full-Time Equivalency**

Graduate students may maintain full-time status in their degree program by filling out a full-time equivalency form, available online via the RIT’s Registrar’s office. With signed approval of the program graduate director, this form enables the student to have full-time status subsequent to the completion of all required classes and prior to completion of all thesis requirements. Full-time equivalency can only be taken for a maximum of three semesters.

### **1.13 Thesis**

Graduate students should consult their individual program handbook for policies and guidelines for completing thesis requirements. These policies include advancement to candidacy, thesis particulars per degree program, submission of the thesis and its accompanying paperwork to the program, CIAS Student Services, and to the university via the thesis/dissertation department in RIT’s Wallace Center, and electronic submission of the thesis to UMI Proquest.

### **1.14 Graduation Requirements**

#### **1.14.1. Intent to Graduate Application**

MFA students are required to file an “Application for Graduation” form within 30 credits of completing all requirements of the degree program. MS and MST students are required to file an “Application for Graduation” form within 15 credits of completing all requirements of the degree program. Program graduate directors sign this form noting their approval that the requesting student will complete all degree requirements by the date indicated on the “Application for Graduation” form. Available online and submitted via RIT’s Registrar office, this form prompts a comprehensive audit of a student’s required and elective classes as well as thesis progress to date of submission of the signed and approved form. Audits are based on the



receipt of a student's final grades and successful completion of progress towards a graduate thesis requirement.

#### 1.14.2. Financial Responsibility

All financial obligations must be reconciled prior to certification of a graduate degree.

#### 1.14.3 Graduation Credits

A minimum of 30-60 semester credit hours is required for the master's degree. At least 80% semester credit hours of graduate level course work and research (courses numbered 600-900) are required to be earned in residence at the university.

#### 1.14.4 GPA

A cumulative program grade point average of 3.00 (a "B" average) must be maintained for certification of graduation for a graduate degree program in CIAS.

**Responsible Office: CIAS Dean's  
Office Effective Date: July 2013  
Policy History: Revised March 2016**

## Appendix A: CIAS Student Academic Integrity Policy

At RIT, all members of the community must behave in the highest ethical manner by which they produce, share, and exchange information and work. Academic Integrity demands student work will only be work or images of that individual or an assigned team project. Information or work submitted for evaluation must be properly documented.

I understand the three basic areas that breach Academic Integrity are:

1. **CHEATING** is any form of fraudulent or deceptive academic act, including falsifying of data, possessing, providing, or using unapproved images (in part or entirety), materials, sources, or tools for a work submitted for faculty evaluation.
2. **DUPLICATE SUBMISSION OF WORK** is submitting the same or similar work or images for credit in more than one course without prior approval of the instructors for those same courses.
3. **PLAGIARISM** is the representation of others' ideas as one's own without giving proper credit to the original authors(s) and image maker(s). Plagiarism occurs when a student copies direct phrases from a text (e.g. books, journals, internet, code) or willfully appropriates all or any part of an image (painting, photograph, design, film etc.) and does not give credit to the authors(s) and /or image maker(s) of this information in the form of quotation marks, paraphrases or summaries. In all cases, if such information is not properly and accurately documented with appropriate credit given then the student is guilty of plagiarism.

I understand the handling of alleged breaches of **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**. The course instructor bringing the allegation forward is responsible for assembling evidence and making an initial determination of appropriate action to be taken, up to and including failing the student in the course. After notifying and presenting the student with evidence of such misconduct, the instructor has the full prerogative to assign an "F" for the offense, or to assign an "F" for the entire course. The instructor will inform and, if possible, meet with the student concerning the decision reached on the "F" for the offense, or the "F" for the entire course. A student may be brought before the Academic Conduct Committee of the college in which the alleged offense occurred, and may face academic suspension or dismissal from the university (see D8.0, "Student Academic Integrity Process," D17.0 Final Grade Dispute Process," and D18.0, "RIT Student Conduct Process").

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand the difference between Academic Integrity  
(Print: First Name & Last Name)  
and breaching Academic Integrity related to my academic studies in the College of Imaging Arts & Sciences at RIT.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*NOTE:* Graduate and undergraduate students will sign this form during their Orientation session. The signed form will then be given to the Office of Student Services for placement in the student's folder.