

# Graduate Admission

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## GRADUATE ADMISSION

Students are admitted into graduate study at Sacred Heart University using a portfolio approach. This allows the University to review an application using a variety of factors such as prior work experience and other nonacademic activities that may be relevant to the student's planned area of study.

In addition to the admission requirements specified by each graduate program, all applicants must have a bachelor's degree or equivalent from a higher education institution accredited by a regional association of colleges and schools recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and recognized as accredited by the Connecticut State Department of Education or a Connecticut higher education institution accredited by the Connecticut Board of Governors of Higher Education. Applicants are expected to have a cumulative undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) or higher. However, applicants with an undergraduate cumulative GPA below 3.0 may be provisionally accepted if they demonstrate those qualities needed to succeed in the University's graduate programs.

### Application Process

Applications and all supporting materials (test scores, letters of recommendation, writing samples, transcripts, etc.) should be sent directly to the Office of Graduate Admissions. Students are responsible for the submission of all application materials. Once an application is received, the Office of Graduate Admissions will generate a file for the candidate. When a file is complete, it will be delivered to the program office for consideration. Candidates will be notified as soon as possible concerning any decision regarding their application. Submission of some materials, such as transcripts and test scores, may take several weeks to arrive. Early submission of these materials is advised.

### Application Deadlines

There is no formal University-wide deadline for applications for graduate study. However, several departments and programs have established their own deadlines. For all other programs, it is recommended that all application materials be submitted at least two months before the first day of class. International applicants should submit their materials four months before the first day of class. Applicants who are interested in obtaining an assistantship or financial assistance should submit applications as soon as possible to allow additional time for processing.

### Completion of the Application File

In order to complete an application for graduate study, the following materials must be sent to the Office of Graduate Admissions.

#### Application

A completed application form and any supplemental forms must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Admissions. Incomplete or unsigned applications will be returned.

#### Fee

A nonrefundable fee must accompany the application. Checks should be made payable to Sacred Heart University. Applications without the fee or proof of payment will be returned.

#### Transcripts

Official transcripts from all prior colleges and universities attended must be submitted directly to the Office of Graduate Admissions. Official transcripts are those sent by the registrar of a college directly to the Office of Graduate Admissions. Hand-carried transcripts will not be accepted. All transcripts from foreign institutions must be accompanied by an evaluation completed by a translation service. The Office of Graduate

Admissions has several recommended agencies for prospective students to contact.

### **Test Scores**

Any test scores required for admission must be forwarded by the testing service to Sacred Heart University. For more information, contact the Office of Graduate Admissions at 203-365-7619.

### **Letters of Recommendation**

Two letters of recommendation on behalf of the applicant must be submitted directly to the Office of Graduate Admissions.

### **Résumé**

A résumé highlighting career and academic accomplishments should be sent to the Office of Graduate Admissions.

### **Initial Teaching Certification Applicants**

Candidates applying for their initial teaching certificate must complete an essay stating their reason(s) for wanting to be a teacher and describing any experiences that may have influenced that decision. Applicants must also submit a passing score on the Reading, Writing and Mathematics sections of the Praxis I examination or obtain a Praxis waiver from the Connecticut State Department of Education. Applicants who have an undergraduate cumulative GPA under 2.75 (on a 4.0 scale) must request a waiver of this requirement from the Graduate Education program in order to be considered for admission.

### **Certified Teachers**

Certified teachers who are applying for the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), the Intermediate Administrator Certification or the Certificate of Advanced Studies program must submit a copy of their certification.

### **International Applications**

International graduate students must possess the

equivalent of a four-year bachelor's degree from a U.S.-accredited college or university. In addition, international applicants should have achieved an excellent academic record that includes at least 16 years of primary, secondary and college-level education.

In addition to the application for graduate study, international applicants must complete an application supplement for international graduate students, which can be obtained from the Office of Graduate Admissions.

International applicants must have a TOEFL score of 550 or higher to be admitted. Test scores must be forwarded from Educational Testing Service to Sacred Heart University. Exemption from TOEFL requirement may be possible if the applicant's native language is English or the applicant has studied at a four-year college or university in the United States. All admitted international graduate students must take a placement test that includes an essay.

International graduate students must demonstrate that sufficient financial support is available to study at Sacred Heart University for one year, as well as a reasonable expectation of continued support. A bank statement must be made available to the University verifying that such an amount is available. Once verification is received and the student has been accepted to the graduate program, the University International Center will issue the student an I-20 for the purpose of obtaining an F-1 Visa. For more information on international admissions, contact the Office of Graduate Admissions at 203-365-7619.

### **Incomplete Applications**

The Office of Graduate Admissions will keep incomplete applications on file for one year. If an application has not been completed after one year, it will be considered withdrawn. Incomplete applications are destroyed after two years.

## Interviews and Advisement Sessions

The University encourages prospective graduate students to meet with a representative from the Office of Graduate Admissions regarding their opportunities for graduate study. The University also suggests that prospective students meet with faculty advisors or program directors for academic advising. For more information on our various information sessions held throughout the year, call 203-365-7619.

## Acceptance

Graduate students may be accepted under four categories: Fully Matriculated, Provisionally Accepted, Special Student and Auditor. The application process must be completed in order to be considered a Fully Matriculated or Provisionally Accepted student. Special students must register through the Office of Graduate Admissions. Auditors may register for courses through the Office of the Registrar.

## Fully Matriculated Students

Those who have met all of the requirements for admission and have been accepted by the graduate program are considered Fully Matriculated Students.

## Provisionally Accepted Students

Applicants whose undergraduate cumulative GPA falls below the minimum standard for admission, those who require additional prerequisite course work or who may benefit from close academic supervision may be admitted as Provisionally Accepted Students. Provisionally Accepted Students must complete any requirements outlined in the letter of provisional acceptance sent by the Office of Graduate Admissions. Upon completion of the requirements, the application file will be reviewed for consideration as a Fully Matriculated Student.

## Special Students

Special Students are those who are taking courses and have not decided to matriculate into a graduate program. Special Students are considered non-matriculated students and may only complete a maximum of 6 to 9 credit hours at the University. Students who want to take courses beyond these initial credits must be admitted into a graduate program. According to state regulations, Special Students considering a program for teacher certification or administrative certification may register for and complete a maximum of 6 credits as a non-matriculated student.

## Auditors

Students who want to take a course and not receive a grade or credit may register as an Auditor. A notation of audit is placed on a student's transcript. Students who want to audit a course must register for each course separately. Auditors are expected to participate in the learning process.

## Readmission

Graduate students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment in their graduate program must complete an Application for Readmission. Continuous enrollment is defined as attendance for one of any three terms (for the purposes of this policy Late Spring and Summer count as one term) per academic year. The Application for Readmission must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Admissions. Students who are readmitted must adhere to the guidelines set forth in the current catalog.

Graduate students who fail to register for more than six consecutive terms will be considered withdrawn from the University and must reapply under the current admission standards stipulated by the graduate program.

## **Transfer Credits and Residency Requirements**

The minimum number of credit hours that must be completed in residence at Sacred Heart University to earn a Sacred Heart University graduate degree is 60 percent of the total credits.

Graduate credits may be transferred to the University provided that these credits were taken within the past six years at the graduate level from a regionally accredited college or university. Only those courses with a grade of B or better are eligible to be transferred to the University. A maximum of 40 percent of the required degree credits may be transferred to the University, at the discretion of the program director.