

Priority Deadlines Frequently Asked Questions

For more information on Priority Deadline Graduation for international students, please visit the [International Student Services Office](#).

What does graduating following the Priority Deadlines mean?

Starting Fall 2020, a Priority Deadline schedule will replace the *In Absentia* option for doctoral and master's candidates. Priority Deadlines allow more time for candidates to complete all dissertation or thesis requirements without enrolling in courses.

Students who apply to graduate before the graduation application deadline may elect not to enroll in any semester credit hours. Ordinarily, students must be registered for the semester in which they graduate. The Priority Deadlines allow candidates to apply to graduate without formally enrolling in courses.

Why graduate following the Priority Deadlines?

Doctoral and master's candidates who do not make the semester deadlines for finalizing their dissertation or thesis and need additional time to complete requirements may benefit from the Priority Deadlines. Also, students who wish to graduate early in their intended graduation semester have the option to graduate following the Priority Deadlines.

PhD Candidates who follow the Priority Deadlines can request an immediate Certification Letter from the Office of Graduate Education after meeting all dissertation requirements. Both master's students and PhD candidates can also receive a guaranteed one-on-one formatting session with a Graduate Reader prior to the Initial Submission Deadline, upon request.

Who is eligible to graduate following the Priority Deadline schedule?

This is an option available to both doctoral and master's candidates. Students following the Priority Deadlines must meet the following criteria:

- Must have completed all graduation requirements with the exception of completing their dissertation or thesis
- Must submit and defend no later than the required Priority Deadlines submission and defense dates
- Must have been enrolled in the preceding long semester (students may graduate under Priority Deadlines in the Fall semester if they were enrolled in the preceding Spring or Summer semester)
- All International Students should check with ISSO regarding enrollment requirements to graduate using the Priority Deadline option

What happens if I don't meet the Priority Deadlines?

- If you do not or will not meet the Priority Deadlines, you must enroll in credit hours for the second 8 weeks session to maintain continuous enrollment and be eligible to graduate
- There are no extensions for Priority Deadlines

When will I receive my diploma?

- If you meet the October Priority Deadlines, you will graduate and your degree will be awarded in the Fall semester (December). PhDs will receive their diplomas in December and master's students will receive diplomas in early spring.
- If you meet the March Priority Deadlines, you will graduate and your degree will be awarded in the Spring semester (May). PhDs will receive their diplomas in May and master's students will receive diplomas in early summer.
- There is no Priority Deadline schedule in the Summer semester.

What is the procedure to graduate following the Priority Deadlines?

- Finish all requirements to graduate by the [Priority Deadlines](#) posted on the Office of Graduate Education website.
- Contact your Program Office if you need to be made "eligible to graduate."
- Submit an Application for Graduation online through Galaxy for the semester you will graduate **before the graduation application deadline**.
- Pay the \$100 Priority Deadline fee which will be applied to your account after [Census Day](#). For questions regarding this fee, please contact the Registrar.