



Instructions for Requesting an Extension of Time Limit

Students seeking a master's degree or graduate certificate have six years, from the time they first register after being admitted to their programs to graduate. Doctoral students have six years from the time they first register after being admitted to their programs to advance to candidacy. Once they advance, they have five years to complete their dissertation and graduate. When students fail to complete their requirements within these time limits, they must request an extension from the dean to continue in their program.

Extension requests are addressed to:

Jamie Cooper, Assistant Dean for Graduate Academic Affairs
College of Arts and Sciences, MSN 3A3
George Mason University
4400 University Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

Please note that although the request is addressed to Dr. Cooper, the student should submit the request and all documentation to the program first. The program should then submit the request to the dean's office with their recommendations and comments.

An extension request should include the following:

Master's degree or graduate certificate students:

1. The untoward, extenuating circumstances that precipitated the need for an extension and documentation supporting the request.
2. A list of the degree requirements that need to be completed and a timeline as to how this will be accomplished, approved by the faculty advisor.
3. The semester and year in which the student will complete the requirements and graduate.
4. The approval of the faculty advisor and program graduate coordinator.

Doctoral degree students:

For students who have not advanced to candidacy:

1. The untoward, extenuating circumstances that precipitated the need for an extension and documentation supporting the request.
2. A list of the degree requirements that need to be completed before advancement and a timeline as to how this will be accomplished approved by the faculty advisor. (Please keep in mind that age of the student's coursework should be considered. That is, are the courses taken at the beginning of the program still relevant? Should additional coursework be required?)
3. The semester and year that the student will advance to candidacy.
4. The semester and year that the student will submit their dissertation and graduate. (Students have five years from the time they advance to candidacy until they graduate. Since they are being given more than six years to advance to candidacy consideration should be given to the length of time they have to graduate.)
5. The approval of the faculty advisor and graduate coordinator.

For students who have advanced to candidacy:

1. The untoward, extenuating circumstances that precipitated the need for an extension and documentation supporting the request.
2. A list of any degree requirements that need to be completed and a timeline for accomplishing it, approved by the advisor.
3. The semester and year the student will submit their dissertation and graduate.
4. The approval of the advisor and graduate coordinator.

Please Note: All extension requests that exceed the university's time limits by more than one year, also require the approval of the provost.