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EAST TENNESSEE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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## **Graduate School Admission Policy for Non-Degree Seeking Students**

# **Policy Name: Graduate School Admission Policy for Non-Degree Seeking Students**

## **Policy Purpose**

This policy specifies the admission process for Visiting and Non-Degree Seeking Graduate Students to East Tennessee State University.

## **Applicability**

This policy is applicable to applicants who plan to attend ETSU as a graduate Visiting Student or as a graduate Non-Degree Seeking Student. This policy does not apply to applicants who are exclusively enrolled in Quillen College of Medicine in pursuit of the M.D. degree or the Gatton College of Pharmacy in pursuit of the Pharm.D. degree.

## **Responsible Official, Office, and Interpretation**

The Dean of the Graduate School and Graduate Council are responsible for the review and revision of this policy. For questions about this policy, please contact the Dean of the Graduate School. The Provost, in consultation with the Office of University Counsel, has the final authority to interpret this policy.

## **Defined Terms**

*A defined term has a specific meaning within the context of this policy.*

### Application Deadline

Application deadlines are those published on the Graduate School website.

### Approved Agency

A defined agency that accredits institutions of higher education, formerly known as “regional accreditors.” ETSU’s [Approved Agencies](#) policy lists all approved agencies for ETSU.

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## Attestation

A statement signed by the student which certifies that all information and documents provided are accurate, true, and not fabricated.

## Domestic Applicant

Any individual who applies to ETSU and who is a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent resident.

## International Applicant

Any individual who applies to ETSU and who is not a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent resident.

## Legally Protected Class

Those classes protected under state and federal law including but limited to race, color, religion, creed, national

## Non-Degree Seeking Graduate Student

A prospective graduate student who wishes to enroll in graduate courses, but who is not admitted into a graduate degree or certificate program.

## Notice of Decision

A written communication from the Graduate School to a prospective student notifying of admission or denial to ETSU.

## Residency

A prospective student's classification as in-state or out-of-state for residency purposes will be determined pursuant to ETSU policies, ETSU regulations, federal, and state law.

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## Visiting Graduate Student

A prospective graduate student who is enrolled in a degree program at another higher education institution and intends to earn a limited number of credits for transfer to another college or university (not ETSU).

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## **Policy**

### **1. General Statements.**

The Graduate School provides an application process for prospective graduate students who qualify and want to take graduate courses without being admitted into a degree or certificate program. ETSU has two categories of non-degree seeking students: Visiting Graduate Student and Graduate Non-Degree Seeking Student.

The Graduate School reviews all Visiting and Non-Degree Seeking Graduate Student applications; the Dean of the Graduate School or designee makes the decision to admit or deny a Visiting or Non-Degree Seeking Graduate Student. The Graduate School will issue a written Notice of Decision to the applicant. The decision of the Dean is final.

Admission as a Visiting or Non-Degree Seeking Graduate Student shall not lead to a degree or certificate awarded by East Tennessee State University.

Departments have prerogative to allow Visiting and Non-Degree Seeking Graduate Students into courses based on capacity and ETSU program needs. If a course has prerequisites, Visiting and Non-Degree Seeking Graduate Students must meet the prerequisites (or have equivalents as determined by the department chair or program coordinator). Prior to applying, the Graduate School strongly recommends that Visiting and Non-Degree Graduate applicants discuss their plans with the academic department chair, graduate program coordinator, or faculty for the course(s) in which they wish to register.

### **2. Graduate School Requirements.**

The Graduate School will consider a prospective student for admission as a Visiting or Non-Degree Seeking Student if, prior to the Application Deadline, the individual:

- 2.1.** Submits a complete admissions application that includes the following documents:

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2.1.1. For Visiting Graduate Students, a letter from the Registrar of the applicant's current institution indicating that the student is in Good Academic Standing

2.1.2. For Non-Degree Graduate Students: An Attestation that the applicant holds a bachelor's degree or equivalent, indicates the highest degree earned, and meets the minimum GPA requirements.

2.2. Has a minimum undergraduate GPA of

2.2.1. Domestic applicants: 2.5 or higher (on a scale of 4.0)

2.2.2. International applicants: 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale)

2.3. For International Students or Domestic Students educated outside of the U.S., Proof of English proficiency in one of the manners approved by the Graduate Council and [published](#) by the Graduate School on its website.

2.4. Pays the non-refundable application fee or qualifies for an approved waiver as outlined in this policy.

To be accepted the student's previous or current institution must be accredited by an Approved Agency unless an exemption is granted by the Dean of the Graduate School.

## 3. Application Fee.

The Graduate School charges an application fee that must be paid to submit the application. Application fees for admission to the Graduate School may be waived for these applicants:

3.1. McNair Scholars;

3.2. a currently admitted or enrolled ETSU graduate student, whether admitted as degree-seeking or non-degree seeking, who applies for admission to an additional graduate degree or certificate program; or

3.3. Active duty or honorably discharged members of the U.S. military or National Guard.

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On occasion at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate School, the Graduate School may provide a limited fee waiver as part of a special promotion published on the Graduate School website.

Beyond these exclusions, there are no additional application fee waivers.

#### 4. Application Materials.

All application materials become the property of the university and will not be forwarded or returned.

#### 5. Credits Earned as a Non-Degree Seeking Student.

When a Non-Degree Seeking Student receives admission as a Certificate or Degree-Seeking Student pursuant to the [Admission as a Certificate and Degree-Seeking Graduate Student Policy](#), they may petition to have a maximum of nine credits earned as a Non-Degree Seeking Student accepted for transfer into the certificate or degree program as allowed by the Graduate School's [Transfer of Credit Policy](#).

#### 6. Limitations of Visiting and Non-Degree Seeking Status.

##### 6.1. Federal Financial Aid Usually Not Permitted.

Students admitted as a Non-Degree Seeking Student are usually not eligible for Federal Financial Aid; however, non-degree students may qualify for Federal Financial Aid if they are:

6.1.1. Seeking certification or re-certification of a teaching license in the state where they plan to teach; or

6.1.2. Taking courses required as prerequisites to a graduate degree or professional program (i.e., PMED, PDNT, PPOD, PPHY, PCHI, PPAS, PVET, POPM).

6.1.3. The student must submit an [Educational Plan \(EDP\) Form](#) to the Office of Financial Aid if they meet one of the two conditions,

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Visiting Students may be eligible for federal financial aid through their home institution.

## **6.2. NCAA Requirements.**

The NCAA may not recognize Non-Degree status as meeting NCAA enrollment requirements.

## **6.3. Visa Limitations.**

International Non-Degree Seeking Students are only eligible for a J-1 visa. They must follow the same state and federal rules as the F-1 visa in terms of enrollment, physical presence, and the like.

## **7. Tuition.**

Students designated as Visiting or Non-Degree will be charged tuition based upon their Residency. Non-Degree students who are part of special grant-funded programs will be charged tuition that may be paid by the grant or funding agent.

## **8. Rescinding an Offer of Admission.**

The Graduate School reserves the right to rescind an offer of admission for, but not limited to, the following reasons:

- 8.1. If any part of the application contains misrepresentations, including plagiarism;
- 8.2. If the applicant submits fraudulent documents as part of the I-20 process;
- 8.3. If the applicant engages in behavior that brings into serious question their honesty, maturity, and/or professional suitability; or
- 8.4. If the applicant engages in conduct that violates University policies and/or state or federal law.

## **9. Accommodations.**

To the extent possible the Dean of the Graduate School, or their designee, may grant accommodations to this policy and other academic adjustments when necessary.

## **10. Discrimination.**

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In accordance with ETSU's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment, ETSU does not discriminate against applicants for admission of a Legally Protected Class.

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## **Procedures**

Prospective Visiting Graduate Students and Non-Degree Seeking Students should review the Graduate School Admissions website before applying to ETSU. The application and review process related to this policy are as follows:

### 1. Visiting Student.

#### 1.1. Applying as a Visiting Graduate Student.

The procedure for a prospective Visiting Graduate Student to apply to ETSU is as follows: (1) submit a completed application; (2) submit a letter or certificate of good standing from the college or university in which the student is currently enrolled in a graduate program; and (4) pay the application fee.

#### 1.2. Review of Application.

After a prospective student has: (1) submitted a completed application; (2) paid the application fee (if required); and (3) submitted supporting documentation required by this policy, a graduate specialist reviews the application and required documentation. After a decision is made by the Dean of the Graduate School, or designee, the prospective student receives a Notice of Decision. Once accepted, the student must accept or decline the offer of admission.

### 2. Non-Degree Seeking Student.

#### 2.1. Applying as a Non-Degree Seeking Student.

The procedure for a prospective student to apply to ETSU under this section is as follows: (1) submit a completed application; (2) pay the application fee.

#### 2.2. Review of Application.

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After a prospective student has: (1) submitted a completed application; (2) paid the application fee (if required); and (3) submitted supporting documentation required by this policy, a graduate specialist reviews the application and required documentation. After a decision is made by the Dean of the Graduate School, or designee, the prospective student receives a Notice of Decision. The student must then accept or decline the offer of admission.

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## **Applicable Forms and Websites**

## **Authority and Revisions**

**Authority:** TCA § 49-8-203, et seq.

**Previous Policy:** N/A

The ETSU Board of Trustees is charged with policy making pursuant to TCA § 49-8-203, et seq. On March 24, 2017, the Board delegated its authority to ETSU's President to establish certain policies and procedures for educational program and other operations of the University, including this policy. The delegation of authority and required process for revision to this policy can be found on the [Policy Development and Rule Making Policy webpage](#).

To suggest a revision to this policy, please contact the responsible official indicated in this policy. Before a substantive change to the policy section may take effect, the requested changes must be: (1) approved by the responsible office; (2) reviewed by the Office of University Counsel for legal sufficiency; (3) posted for public comment; (4) approved by either Academic Council or University Council; and (5) approved by ETSU's President.

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