

## Instructions for Graduate Program of Study

The Program of Study (POS) is due at mid-term of the first semester for accelerated master’s students, and at midterm of the second semester of study for all other students. A POS includes this cover page, a DegreeWorks audit, and any necessary supporting forms. The course plan can change but the final degree audit at time of graduation must be approved by the advisor and department head. Consult with your advisor before departing from your plan.

The **Graduate Education Policy GEP VI.4. Credit Policies for All Graduate Degrees** describes limitations on credits applied to graduate degrees. They are found in the online academic catalog. Please review the policies prior to planning your Program of Study.

### I. Declare your degree type:

This step enables the Graduate Office to configure DegreeWorks (DW) to evaluate your audit correctly.

- **MS non-thesis students:** skip to part II. DW uses the non-thesis option by default for MS degrees.
- **MS thesis students:** ask your intended major professor to email the Graduate Office to confirm that he/she has agreed to supervise your thesis. The Grad Office will update DW to use the thesis option. (Note that this step does NOT assign the major professor; the major professor is formally assigned when the complete program of study is submitted and signed.)
- **PhD students without a master’s degree:** skip to step II. DW uses this option by default for PhD students.
- **PhD students with a master’s degree from another institution:** work with your major professor to complete the *Reduction of Credits for PhD* form. Submit it to the Grad Office immediately so that your DW audit can be adjusted to require the right number of credits.
- **PhD students with a master’s degree from SD Mines:** All Mines grad credits will appear on the audit. Skip to part II unless you earned an accelerated MS from SD Mines. If you earned an accelerated MS from SD Mines, please email the Graduate Office to review your double-counted course list and adjust credit counts if needed.

### II. Create your Program of Study audit and complete additional forms:

In this step, you create a course plan and make sure it meets degree requirements.

1. Check with your department or program coordinator to see if they have a future semester schedule.
2. Review your program’s requirements in the online academic catalog and develop a draft plan of courses to take each semester. You may use the POS Planning Sheet if you wish, but it is not required.
3. Meet with your advisor to review the plan. If you are a thesis MS or PhD student, your committee may be part of this review.
4. Once you have a course plan that meets the approval of your advisor/committee, use the Degree Works “What If” audit worksheet to check the planned credits for your degree.
  - a. Log into SNAP and click on the student tab on the left. Click on the DegreeWorks Dashboard.
  - b. Click on the “What If” tab to draft an audit.
  - c. Check the box “use current curriculum”. This will enter completed and pre-registered credits in the audit.
  - d. Enter each of the courses you have not yet taken and have not registered for, including any undergraduate and transfer courses that you will use toward the degree. For research/project credits (788, 798, or 898), enter the research code only once; the system assumes you will take the minimum number of credits.
  - e. Click “Process”.
  - f. Check the audit for unmet requirements. If any appear unmet:
    - i. Double-check that your audit catalog year matches the year of the catalog requirements you are using to plan your degree. If you need to change your catalog year, STOP and contact the Graduate Office. You may only request a change to a catalog year later than the one listed in your audit.
    - ii. Double check that you have entered all courses correctly. To remove or add classes, click on the arrow next to the “what if analysis” header to expand this section and adjust your entries.
    - iii. Check the Fall-Through section below the audit for classes that did not automatically fill a requirement:
      - If a course is substituting for a required course or a non-standard elective, complete the *Graduate Exception Request* form.
      - If using undergraduate credits, complete the *Transfer Undergraduate Credit to Graduate Transcript* form.

- If transferring courses from another institution, fill out a *Transfer Courses from Outside Institution* form.
5. Once you are confident that your plan will meet requirements, print the What If audit as a PDF file (the save option will not work. Click the print button and change the printer to Adobe PDF. A save box will then appear.)

### III. Complete the POS Cover Page:

6. Complete the POS Cover Page using the PDF electronic form below. **Handwritten forms will not be accepted.**

Thesis MS and PhD students: work with your major professor to select your committee members. Contact the committee members and ask them to review your course plan and agree to be on the committee. **AFTER** they have agreed to serve, type their names and affiliations on the POS Cover Page (signatures will be obtained in a later step). Include the organization name and email for committee members not from South Dakota Mines.

*A graduate committee is composed of a major professor, a graduate division representative from outside your department/program, and a minimum of one (for MS) or three (for PhD) additional committee members. Major professors and the graduate division representatives must be full-time faculty at SD Mines. Committee members may be from other universities or organizations, but additional committee members may then be required. If the desired major professor is not a full-time SD Mines faculty member, a co-major professor who is a full-time faculty member is required. See the Graduate Education Policy Section VI in the academic catalog for more detailed requirements regarding committees.*

7. Review the POS Cover Page and ensure that all information is complete and correct. Sign it electronically using Adobe Reader, taking care not to invalidate the signature box for your advisor/major professor.
8. Send an email to your major professor (program coordinator for non-thesis students) that includes these attachments: the POS Cover Page, the DegreeWorks What If audit, and any additional forms (already signed and completed in part II).
9. Your major professor or program coordinator will sign the Cover Page and forward everything to the Grad Office.
10. The Grad Office will review the documents. For thesis and dissertation students, the Grad Office will also prepare a DocuSign electronic form to gather the committee and department head signatures on the POS cover page.
11. Once all department signatures are obtained, the Dean of Graduate Education will sign the documents. The student and the advisor/major professor will receive emailed copies of the approved forms. You should retain these for reference and documentation.

### IV. Stay on track to graduate

12. Before you register each semester, review your plan and your DegreeWorks audit to ensure that you are staying on track to graduate when you intend to.
13. If you need to change your planned courses, be sure to consult with your advisor first. You do **NOT** need to submit another POS. If exceptions are needed, it is best to file the necessary form before taking the course.
14. You can use the What If audit at any time to check whether your changed plans will still meet requirements.
15. After registering for your final semester, review your audit to ensure that you meet requirements. If not, visit with your advisor and make sure you have submitted any necessary exception forms.
16. Your advisor and department will review and must approve your final audit in order for you to graduate.
17. Thesis and dissertation students: your Defense requirement will be marked complete after you submit the final Checkout form, so don't worry that it still shows as incomplete for your final audit.

