Master of Geospatial Information Science & Technology (MGIST): Student Guide

1 INTRODUCTION

This handbook serves as a guide for students in the Master of Geospatial Information Science & Technology Program (MGIST). This guide contains program specific policies related to student performance, academic progress, and general academic guidance. Students should use this guide as an initial reference when questions arise, but should always consult with their instructor, advisor, or program director or program associate for clarification and additional guidance.

2 IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Director of Graduate Programs (MGIST and Certificate) – Dr. Eric Money, esmoney@ncsu.edu
Graduate Program Associate (MGIST and Certificate) – Ms. Anju Singh, asingh4@ncsu.edu

3 IMPORTANT DATES

The Graduate School’s Academic Calendar provides up to date information regarding important student and advisor deadlines. It can also be added to your Google Calendar. http://www.ncsu.edu/grad/faculty-and-staff/academic-calendar.html

4 ADVISOR INITIATED ACTIONS

Your advisor’s name is listed in MyPack Portal. You should contact your advisor first for the following:

- Releasing advising holds: advisors should release advising holds at the beginning of each semester, with the exception of the first semester of enrollment. Prior to the first semester of enrollment, the DGP or Graduate Program Associate will remove holds until advisors are assigned.

- Course selection: advisors are the primary contact for helping with course selection, with the exception of the first semester of enrollment. Prior to the first semester of enrollment, the DGP or Graduate Program Associate will serve as the point of contact for course selection questions.
Plans of Work: advisors are the first point of contact for helping to develop a student’s plan of work.

Transfer credit request: advisor can initiate the paper work for transfer credit request, with final approval from the DGP

5 MGIST PROGRAM POLICIES

The majority of the MGIST Program Policies related to academic progress mirror the Graduate School Policies. The Graduate Handbook provides up to date policies of the Graduate School and should always be referenced when interested in a specific policy. [http://www.ncsu.edu/grad/handbook/index.php](http://www.ncsu.edu/grad/handbook/index.php)

The Graduate Catalog can also serve as a source of information:
[http://www.ncsu.edu/project/grad/catalog/](http://www.ncsu.edu/project/grad/catalog/)

5.1 ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION POLICIES

**Add/Drop:** Mypackportal allows you to add/drop classes. It will not let you drop a class if that is the only class you are enrolled in as that is taken as “withdrawal” from university and you will be required to contact the counseling office or go there personally.

**Enrollment Advising:** Registration typically opens in the 3rd week of October and 3rd week of March. Your advisor and the program will notify you approximately 3 weeks prior as a reminder and to discuss course selection and plan of work if needed.

- A mass email will be sent by the Graduate Program Associate 2 to 3 weeks prior to registration alerting students to advising holds, etc.

**Advising Holds:** Each student will have an advising hold placed on their account at the beginning of each semester. This hold must be removed by your academic advisor before you can enroll for a particular semester. Student’s should consult with their advisors prior to the enrollment period each semester on progress and intended courses.

- All Cashier Holds can only be removed by the Cashier’s office, students must contact them directly.

**ELECTIVES:** Students have a choice of many electives to meet the 30 hour requirement in the program. Courses in other departments are controlled by those departments. If a course in another department is waitlisted, has a restriction, or a pre-requisite, the student should contact the instructor directly to inquire about course content and permission to enroll in the course. For courses with these types of restrictions, the respective department will manually enroll you in the course if they grant you permission to take it.
**Interinstitutional Courses:** Students should always consult an advisor before taking a course at another institution to make sure it meets the requirements of our program. Students are allowed to take courses at several local universities towards an elective. **Distance courses are not allowed.** Procedures and forms can be found here: [http://www.ncsu.edu/registration/inter-institutional/index.html](http://www.ncsu.edu/registration/inter-institutional/index.html)

**NOTE:** Students should plan to enroll early in the registration period, as courses can fill up and it may be difficult to get into your desired courses if waiting until later in the semester to register.

### 5.2 Transfer Credits

Several criteria must be met in order for students to be able to transfer credits into the program. A maximum of 12 credits can be transferred into the MGIST from all sources. The following criteria must be met in order to transfer courses into the MGIST. A Transfer Credit Form must be completed and signed by the DGP prior to counting these credits towards the Plan of Work.

- **Graduate Credits Earned at Other Universities**
  - Course was classified as a graduate course
  - Completed while student was classified as a graduate or post-baccalaureate
  - Course was not taken as part of a previous master’s degree program at another institution
  - The grade was B or better
  - The college/university is properly accredited

- **Credits earned while enrolled as an undergraduate at NC State**
  - Course must have been at the 400 level or higher
  - Grade of B or better
  - It was not counted towards the undergraduate requirements (must perform a degree audit to determine this)
  - Recommended by the DGP at the time of enrollment in the Graduate School

- **Credits earned while enrolled in previous Graduate degree at NC State**
  - 500 level or higher
  - Grade of B or better

- **Credits earned while in PBS status at NC State**
  - 500 level or higher
  - Grade of B or better
  - Maximum of 12 credits

### 5.3 Course Waivers/Substitutions

No course substitutions are allowed for any required course in the MGIST program, with the exception of GIS 510 under exceptional circumstances. If a waiver for GIS 510 is granted, it can be replaced with a suitable elective.
Under no circumstances can the credit hour requirement be waived. 30 credit hours must be achieved through coursework or combination of coursework and allowable transfer credit.

GIS 510 may be waived and substituted with an appropriate elective only under exceptional circumstances. In order for a student to be granted a waiver, the following conditions must be met:

- Student has demonstrated proficiency in all aspects of the material covered in GIS 510 through previous coursework (provide previous syllabus) and/or work experience (student must provide a statement to this affect).
- Student is comfortable with content delivered through Distance Education (if DE student)
- Student received a B or better in previous coursework and/or has at least 2 years of work experience directly related to the content covered in GIS 510.
- Student must provide a written statement to his/her advisor, to be reviewed by the instructor of GIS 510 and final approval from the DGP.

5.4 Plans of Work

Students should consult with their advisor during their first semester in the program to discuss a DRAFT plan of work. Plan of Work advice can be found here: [http://www.ncsu.edu/grad/faculty-and-staff/sis-resources.html](http://www.ncsu.edu/grad/faculty-and-staff/sis-resources.html) (under student, there is a video link on preparing a POW)

Advisors should comment on the Plan of Work in SiS when changes or recommendations are made.

The Plan of Work should be submitted to your academic advisor for final approval after you have completed a minimum of 12-15 credit hours in the program. The advisor will then approve the POW through MyPack Portal and it will be sent to the DGP for final approval. The DGP may return the POW to the student if it does not meet all the necessary requirements.

The Plan of Work must match exactly the courses you take to meet the program requirements before approval to graduate will be granted.

5.5 Academic Progress

Student’s having academic difficulty should first consult with the appropriate instructor(s) and their academic advisor. The advisor will work with the student, and if necessary, the DGP to develop a plan for the student to meet his/her academic goals and the expectations of the program.

Leave of Absence and Withdrawals

Students must remain continuously enrolled for the duration they are in the program. This means registering for at least one course during the Fall and Spring semesters (Summers are not required). Any student that foresees needing to skip a semester must request a Leave of Absence prior to that semester by contacting the DGP with justification. Students are only allowed two LOA’s for the duration of the program.
Students who experience hardships after the official drop period (census day) in a given semester and wish to withdraw for that semester (withdrawal requires removal from all courses in which the student is registered for that semester), will be required to follow the Counseling Center process for withdrawal and must contact the DGP. **Students who withdraw after census day do NOT need an LOA to meet the continuous enrollment requirement, students withdrawing between the start of the semester and census day will also need an LOA.**

No grade below a C- can be counted towards Graduate Credit on the student’s plan of work.

- **Repeating courses:** A student that makes below a C- in a required course, will be allowed to repeat the course and make better than a C- to meet the requirements of the degree. If they make below a C- a second time, the student, advisor, instructor, and DGP must meet to discuss continued progress in the degree.

- If a student makes below a C- in an elective course, the student has the option of retaking the course or choosing another course.

- Any course with grade below a C- will still be factored into the student’s overall GPA, even if that course is repeated (both grades will count).

**Students must have a CUMULATIVE GPA of 3.0** or better in order to remain in good standing and be allowed to graduate. If a student is terminated from the program, they must petition for reinstatement with the Graduate School by contacting the DGP.

The following warnings will appear on your transcript if you meet the following criteria in a given semester:

- Academic Warning: Students that have completed < 18 hours and have a GPA < 3.0
- Academic Probation: completed > 18 hours and GPA between 2.667-2.999
- Termination: completed > 18 hours and GPA < 2.667

**5.6 Academic Integrity**

Academic Integrity is taken very seriously at the University, College, and Program level. Each student will be required to sign an Academic Integrity Pledge during Orientation or their first semester of enrollment. The same polices apply to both Distance Track and On-Campus students.

Advisors and students are referred to NC State Policy: [http://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-11-35-01](http://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-11-35-01) In addition to these polices, the MGIST program does not allow, under any circumstances:

- Sharing of homework, exams, keys, or completed assignments among students in the program, this includes computer code, maps, and protocols
- Unauthorized group work on assignments
- Bullying, inappropriate language, demeaning language towards students, instructors, or staff in a classroom, message board, or any other physical or online setting will not be tolerated.

Any student interpreted as violating any one of the stated policies will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct for proper action.