Nomination for Distinction Policy & Petition

Deadlines: December / May (Second Friday AFTER grades are due)

Carefully read all of the instructions provided BEFORE filling out this form.

Indicate semester and year:  
☐ Fall  
☐ Spring

Indicate level:  
☐ MA / MS  
☐ Ed.S  
☐ Ed.D. / Ph.D.  
☐ DPT  
☐ Credential  
☐ Other:  

Student ID #:  

Last Name  
First Name  

Program:  
Current GPA:  

Nominating members of the dissertation/thesis/project examination committee or program:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Type of Culminating Experiences (check one):

☐ Dissertation  
☐ Thesis  
☐ Project  
☐ Comprehensive Examination

Attach a one-page letter that outlines the qualities of the student’s dissertation/thesis/project/examination that merit the award of distinction (e.g., originality of the work, mastery of knowledge of the discipline, and/or broader significance as a contribution to learning).

I certify that the student has met the department or program standards for distinction.

________________________________________________________________________

Graduate / Program Coordinator (print)  
Signature  
Date

______________________________  

Department Chair (print)  
Signature  
Date

FOR OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES APPROVAL

Number of Units in Residency:  
Student’s Final Cumulative GPA:  

Petition:  
☐ Granted  
☐ Denied

________________________________________________________________________

Dean, Graduate Studies  
Date

Comments:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Updated: 10/2013
For the purpose of awarding graduate degrees with distinction, the overall performance of degree candidates in each department or equivalent academic program will be judged in relation to the performance of degree-seeking students in that unit, not in relation to other university graduate students. Two criteria will be used in evaluating students to determine if they merit a notation of distinction: grade point average and the quality of the student’s culminating experience work.

To graduate “with distinction,” a graduate student must:

1. have a cumulative grade point average of 3.8 or higher at the time the student’s degree is posted,
2. have completed at least 18 units in residency; and
3. be nominated for distinction by a unanimous vote of his or her dissertation/thesis/project/examination committee or equivalent academic program committee.

Each department or equivalent academic program may establish a graduation with distinction policy, but is not required to establish such a policy. The University recognizes that each discipline has its own mechanisms and standards for evaluating student work. Departments or equivalent academic programs desiring to nominate students to graduate with distinction must specify the standards and procedures that will be used to judge or measure distinction in the culminating experience, including but not limited to originality of the work, mastery of knowledge of the discipline, and/or broader significance as a contribution to learning.

Although there can be no rigorous quota on the number of graduate students awarded distinction, the standard of merit should be such that no more than ten percent of graduating students in each department or equivalent academic program will be selected to receive the designation of distinction. Departments or equivalent academic programs may elect not to nominate any candidates for this designation in a given semester.