

## Academic Advisement: Getting and Staying on Track in Graduate School

Now that you are a graduate student, it is important that you adhere to all requirements of the School of Graduate Studies to remain in graduate school. There are three types of admission and based on the category you have been designated, you must be reminded of the following.

**Unconditional:** If you are classified as an Unconditional student, you have met all entrance requirements. The next step is to contact your advisor for advisement to remain on track for graduation. You must maintain the required 3.00, take all required exams and pass (Core, Area), and submit all Candidacy documents.

**Conditional:** If you are a Conditional student, you have specific requirements to meet before you can be considered Unconditional, i.e. you may have been admitted with a GPA less than 2.50, or you may not have met the required score of 3.0 on the Analytical Writing on the GRE or 3.50 on the GMAT. There may be other reasons specified in your acceptance letter that have to be met. You cannot declare candidacy for graduation as a Conditional student.

**Non-Degree:** If you are a Non-Degree student, you are limited to taking nine (9) hours before you must declare an area of concentration. This means you must meet all admission requirements for the specified degree/concentration and must submit these required documents to the School of Graduate Studies.

It is important for the success of graduate students that you are advised during your course of study at Alcorn State University. Each graduate student pursuing a degree is assigned an advisor or mentor within the area in which the student is concentrating. Safeguards are in place to insure students plan their academic program with an advisor. Upon admission, each student is responsible for contacting his/her advisor to be advised about his/her program of study. Students are issued an alternate PIN number each semester through advisement in order to develop a student's course schedule and to make sure students stay on track for graduation. The advisor is also responsible for making decisions about degree requirements, monitoring the student's educational growth and development and making sure students are cognizant of all policies and procedures of the academic unit and the School of Graduate Studies.

Students sometimes encounter problems when it's time to graduate if they have not taken the time to be advised properly. Graduate advisors specialize in matters that are directly related to your program and degree requirements. Research studies have shown that graduate students with advisors or mentors tend to do better in graduate school and complete their degrees in a more timely manner.

### Specific Responsibilities of the Advisor:

- Help you plan your academic program based on the Program of Study Sheet
- Advise and give you aids to help you prepare for various examinations such as the Core and Area.
- Assist you in selecting a thesis or project topic.
- Give you pointers for defending your thesis or project.
- Give you constructive criticism about your performance and degree pursuit
- Serve as an advocate for you within your academic unit.